

General Secretariat for Permanent Formation

General Secretariat for the Evangelization of Peoples and Justice and Peace

To live the problems of justice and peace with Our Lady

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Introduction

Dear Brothers,

To promote personal and community growth the Secretariat for Permanent Formation determines a subject for discussion each year (Cf. *2007 General Chapter*, no. 37) and provides material for shared study in all parts of the Order.

This year in collaboration with the Secretariat for the Evangelization of Peoples and Justice and Peace we are proposing this subject: *To live the problems of justice and peace with Our Lady*. The subject will be discussed in conventual chapters, in the special periods of the liturgical year (Advent and Lent) and during meetings and non-elective chapters in all jurisdictions of the Order.

We are presenting a study aid that is informative, educational and proactive. It is divided into three sections. The first section includes general guidelines, some considerations of justice and peace, principles of the Church's social teaching and a presentation of the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*. The second section presents examples of Servite efforts in the area of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation. The third section outlines operative guidelines and essential requirements for the promotion of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

We wish you success.

PART ONE

1. Guidelines

1.1 God's Dream

From the Prophet Isaiah (65, 17-25)

*Lo, I am about to create new heavens and a new earth;
The things of the past shall not be remembered or come to mind.
Instead, there shall always be rejoicing and happiness in what I create;
For I create Jerusalem to be a joy and its people to be a delight;
I will rejoice in Jerusalem and exult in my people.
No longer shall the sound of weeping be heard there, or the sound of crying;
No longer shall there be in it an infant who lives but a few days,
or an old man who does not round out his full lifetime;
He dies a mere youth who reaches but a hundred years,
and he who fails of a hundred shall be thought accursed.
They shall live in the houses they build, and eat the fruit of the vineyards they plant;
They shall not build houses for others to live in, or plant for others to eat.
As the years of a tree, so the years of my people;
and my chosen ones shall long enjoy the produce of their hands.
They shall not toil in vain, nor beget children for sudden destruction;
For a race blessed by the LORD are they and their offspring.
Before they call, I will answer;
while they are yet speaking, I will hearken to them.
The wolf and the lamb shall graze alike, and the lion shall eat hay like the ox
(but the serpent's food shall be dust).
None shall hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain, says the LORD.*

It is God's great dream that every living being be saved. In His plan of salvation God dreams about a new and different humanity, a humanity of brothers and solidarity where everyone will live fully with human dignity (each human being is created in the image and likeness of God). Humans will become genuine brothers and sisters. The resources of this world will be available to all. God dreams of a new world to be inaugurated here on earth and not in some

never achieved, always postponed distant future. God is the God of the dreams of the oppressed, of the abandoned, the exploited, the brokenhearted, all those who suffer. This is explained sublimely in the Sermon on the Mount: *Blessed are you the poor for yours is the kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger for you shall be filled. Blessed are you who weep for you shall be comforted (Luke 6, 20-21)*. This is the dream of the Trinity: it moves through human history and transforms it into Salvation History. God's dream became flesh through the incarnation of His only begotten Son who came to dwell in our midst. In His Person Jesus inaugurated the Kingdom of God amongst men; with His word and life He made the Father's loving plan clear: God wills the salvation of mankind.

1.2 The greatest challenges humanity faces

The first of the great challenges facing humanity today is that of the truth itself of the being who is man. The boundary and relation between nature, technology and morality are issues that decisively summon personal and collective responsibility with regard to the attitudes to adopt concerning what human beings are, what they are able to accomplish and what they should be. A second challenge is found in the understanding and management of pluralism and differences at every level: in ways of thinking, moral choices, culture, religious affiliation, philosophy of human and social development. The third challenge is globalization, the significance of which is much wider and more profound than simple economic globalization, since history has witnessed the opening of a new era that concerns humanity's destiny. (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 16).

1.3 The Church's Mission

The mission of the Church, and therefore of all Christians, is to collaborate with God's loving plan that His Kingdom come (*Gaudium et Spes*, 36), that the world might have life and have it in abundance and that the world created by God might be restored beginning with personal and social conversion (Cf. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 3). *They are mistaken who, knowing that we have here no abiding city but seek one which is to come think that they may therefore shirk their earthly responsibilities. For they are forgetting that by the faith itself they are more obliged than ever to measure up to these duties, each according to his proper vocation (Gaudium et Spes, 43). The expectation of a new earth must not weaken but rather stimulate our concern for cultivating this one. For here grows the body of a new human family, a body which even now is able to give some kind of foreshadowing of the new age (Gaudium et Spes 39).*

a) Proclamation of the Word, Celebration of the Sacraments, Service of Charity

The Church's deepest nature is expressed in her three-fold responsibility: of proclaiming the word of God (kerygma-martyria), celebrating the sacraments (leitourgia), and exercising the ministry of charity (diakonia). These duties presuppose each other and are inseparable. For the Church, charity is not a kind of welfare activity which could equally well be left to others, but is a part of her nature, an indispensable expression of her very being (Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas est, 25).

Evangelii Nuntiandi came out at the time of the 1974 Synod of Bishops. It tells us that evangelization proclaims "salvation" *this great gift of God which is liberation from everything that oppresses man but which is above all liberation from sin and the Evil One, in the joy of knowing God and being known by Him, of seeing Him, and of being given over to Him* (no. 9). Salvation is liberation from everything that oppresses man. This interpretation corresponds to the Biblical tradition – the God of the Exodus, the God of the Prophets and the evangelizing work of Jesus (Cf. *Luke 4, 16-21; Matthew 11, 2-6*). The document goes on to say: *(...) evangelization involves an explicit message, adapted to the different situations constantly being realized, about the rights and duties of every human being, about family life without which personal growth and development is hardly possible,[60] about life in society, about international life, peace, justice and development- a message especially energetic today about liberation* (no. 29).

b) Working for justice

Only in intimate relationship with God's dream can an attitude that cherishes peace and justice evolve; such an attitude will treasure the values of the Kingdom: love, justice, dialogue, protection of and care for the environment, collaboration, sharing, concern for the weak and outcast, equality, liberty, solidarity, pardon, reconciliation, peace ...

Working for justice and taking part in changing the world are constituent elements of proclaiming the Gospel (Cf. *1971 Synod of Bishops, Justice in the World*, no. 5). *This in no way implies that evangelization can or should overlook the importance of current, much discussed problems: justice, liberation, development and peace in the world. This would mean forgetting the Gospel lesson on love for our suffering and needy neighbor (Matthew 25, 31-46) a theme that can be found again in the teaching of the apostles (I John 4,20; James 2, 14-28). (Paul VI, Speech at the Opening of the III General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, September 27, 1974).* Today it is indisputable that strong links on various levels exist between evangelization and human advancement (development, liberation). *They also include links in the theological order, since one cannot dissociate the plan of creation from the plan of Redemption. The latter plan touches the very concrete situations of injustice to be combated and of justice to be restored. They include links of the eminently evangelical order, which is*

that of charity: how in fact can one proclaim the new commandment without promoting in justice and in peace the true, authentic advancement of man? (Evangelii Nuntiandi, no. 31).

c) Social Teaching contributes to the overall formation of Christians

To strengthen the social dimension of her service of charity and for the overall formation of Christians the Church's Social Teaching is indispensable. *The Church's social doctrine is an integral part of her evangelizing ministry. Nothing that concerns the community of men and women — situations and problems regarding justice, freedom, development, relations between peoples, peace — is foreign to evangelization, and evangelization would be incomplete if it did not take into account the mutual demands continually made by the Gospel and by the concrete, personal and social life of man (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 66).*

1.4 The Religious and God's dream

Faithfulness to mankind and for us to Christ, the Gospel, the Church and its mission in the world, to religious life and our institutional charism motivates and guides the commitment of religious to justice and peace. With Jesus as their primary focus along with a preferential option for the poor religious are called and sent to create and heal relationships in the Church and society: personal relations between individuals, relations with the environment and finally relations with God. The various activities and works which, through a diversity of charisms, characterize the mission of religious are among the most important means by which the Church carries out its mission of evangelization and human promotion in the world (Cf. *Religious and Human Promotion* 5, *Perfectae Caritatis* 1; *Lumen Gentium* 46).

The Church's social teaching provides a service and contributes to religious formation in many ways: it can help us understand modern mankind; it can establish dialogue with today's world; it cultivates discernment; it leads to involvement in the life and culture of people; it fosters the social and pastoral work of proclaiming the Gospel; it reinforces our commitment to justice, peace and the integrity of creation (Cf. RODRÍGUEZ TRIVES, *La formación y enseñanza de la Doctrina Social de la Iglesia en los Seminarios: CORINTIOS XIII* 87, 1998, pp. 149-153). We cannot promote the Church's teaching without making our personal and institutional conduct conform to it. Our social conduct is an integral part of our discipleship of Christ (Cf. *Evangelii Nuntiandi* 29). If religious cultivate moral and social virtue in themselves and promote them in society at large they will see their identity and mission as new human beings and creators of a new humanity ennobled (Cf. *Vita Consecrata*, 85; *Gaudium et Spes*, 30).

2. Dimensions of Justice and Peace

2.1 The Biblical and theological dimension

a) The Lord of Justice and Peace

The journey of Salvation History (Exodus, the Covenant, the Prophets, Jesus of Nazareth, Proclamation of the Kingdom, the Commandment of Lord) shows us that God reveals Himself in human history. Through historical events God captures the attention of human beings. We are immediately confronted with the image of a God of liberation and peace who hears the cry of the oppressed and wills the fullness of blessing and life for all humanity. We see the image of a God of Justice who demands recognition of the dignity and rights of every person. As a consequence God wills the transformation of individuals and society, God is renewing the world. The God of love, the God of the poor, is the foundation of universal brotherhood. The Biblical message is essentially a social and historical one. It describes God's plan: the coexistence between human beings and all peoples of the earth that must be achieved. The passionate and merciful love of God explains and leads all human history.

The God who is revealed is the Lord of Justice and the Lover of Peace. He seeks peaceful and peace-making relations with His creatures because He wants all His creatures to be happy and because His Kingdom is one of Justice and Peace. In Sacred Scripture justice and peace are fundamental concepts in the history of a community. These concepts gradually acquire a universal dimension that goes beyond the geographical and ideological confines of a religious culture. They are priority values for Scripture and are closely linked to liberty and liberation.

In the document *Justice in the World* (Synod of Bishops 1972, nos. 30, 31) we read: *In the Old Testament God reveals himself to us as the liberator of the oppressed and the defender of the poor, demanding from people faith in him and justice towards one's neighbor. It is only in the observance of the duties of justice that God is truly recognized as the liberator of the oppressed. By his action and teaching Christ united in an indivisible way the relationship of people to God and the relationship of people to each other. Christ lived his life in the world as a total giving of himself to God for the salvation and liberation of people. In his preaching he proclaimed the fatherhood of God towards all people and the intervention of God's justice on behalf of the needy and the oppressed (Luke 6: 21-23). In this way he identified himself with his "least ones," as he stated: "As you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me" (Matthew 25:40).*

b) Justice and peace: God's gift and man's task

The justice of God is the saving action that comes from Him and justifies human existence through assent of faith. It is coterminous with His mercy and describes both a divine attribute and the concrete gift of salvation that His generosity bestows. Christian faith leads us to trust God who will exact the justice His chosen ones are seeking. God always intervenes and His judgment is true. God is always good news for the poor who are in greatest need of justice. Mercy is a criterion that overcomes injustice. God's merciful face is revealed in the preaching of Jesus (*Luke 11, 11-32*). Believers experience the renewing power of His forgiveness. Divine mercy opens hearts to forgiving brothers and through forgiveness offered and received peace is built in families and in society. Jesus is the incarnation of justice as a living expression of love for others. From this gift we can understand His mission, His words and His works which all tend towards peace (*Matthew 5,20*).

For the Apostle Paul justice and justification are the same thing: they are only different aspects of God's grace. Through the Cross and Resurrection of Jesus this grace takes effect in us (justification) and remains within us (justice). Before God Justice is given to the one who believes and once justified the believer become genuinely and radically sanctified (*I Corinthians 1,30; Ephesians 4, 24*). According to Paul faith justifies a man before God and creates a commitment to the present (history) and to social circumstances. *Have the same regard for one another; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly; do not be wise in your own estimation. Do not repay anyone evil for evil; be concerned for what is noble in the sight of all. If possible, on your part, live at peace with all. (Romans 12, 16-18). For the kingdom of God is not a matter of food and drink, but of righteousness, peace, and joy in the holy Spirit; whoever serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by others Let us then pursue what leads to peace and to building up one another (Romans 14, 17-19).*

In Scripture peace is seen as a gift of God, the God of Peace (*Romans 15, 33, 16, 20; Philippians 4, 9; I Thessalonians 5, 23; Hebrews 13,20*); it is man's appointed task and a synonym for salvation. Peace is the result of a human being's faithfulness to God's plan of salvation. It is free, generous and benign for the most needy (*Matthew 20, 1-16*). It is a gift offered by the Risen Lord, the fruit of the new life initiated by the Resurrection. Peace is identified with the "newness" of Christ's paschal story. Christ is our peace (*Ephesians 2,14*). It derives from the profound renewal of man's heart. It is a gift to be accepted with generosity and guarded with care; it will bear fruit with maturity and responsibility. No matter how overwrought our situation, how great our stress and conflict, nothing can resist the efficacious renewal of peace brought by the risen Christ. Christ has conquered death the enemy of justice. Christ is peace for all mankind. Through His death on the Cross Christ has reconciled humanity with God and has laid a foundation for the fraternal coexistence for everyone on earth.

For James the works of love are a proof of living faith and faith is perfected through works (*James 2, 22*). *Who among you is wise and understanding? Let him show his works by a good life in the humility that comes from wisdom. But if you have bitter jealousy and selfish ambition in your hearts, do not boast and be false to the truth. Wisdom of this kind does not come down from above but is earthly, unspiritual, demonic. For where jealousy and selfish ambition exist, there is disorder and every foul practice. But the wisdom from above is first of all pure, then peaceable, gentle, compliant, full of mercy and good fruits, without inconstancy or insincerity. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace for those who cultivate peace*(*James 3, 13-18*).

c) The heart of God's justice: love and compassion

Compassionate love is the heart of justice. The Gospels confront us with compassion and love for the poor and oppressed: Jesus is moved to compassion (*Matthew 14, 14; 20, 34; Mark 1, 41; 6, 34; 8, 2*); compassion is the basis of His teaching (*Luke 10, 33-37; 15, 20-31*). Compassion is the internalization of justice. It is the impetus that moves us to practice justice spontaneously and willingly.

The truly just man is not just the individual who does what is right and just but one whose acts are motivated by a passion for justice. This is neither optional nor voluntary, rather it is a commitment that springs from faith in the revealed God.

The Gospel makes it clear that justice with our peers is the criterion of divine judgment (Cf. *Matthew 25*); justice is understood as life conduct; justice is a commitment to the vulnerable in society. The thirsty, the hungry, the sick, prisoners, all those whose suffer inequality, who are deprived of their rights – all these individuals are the living presence of Jesus. Every unjust situation challenges the faith of Christians who – motivated by passion for God and mankind – must become advocates of justice and peace. God's justice finds expression in the victory of love and this is how we establish the Kingdom of God.

2.2 Historical development and Church organizations that serve justice and peace

The Second Vatican Council clearly expressed its intention to establish a Church body to carry out the mission later given to Justice and Peace (*Gaudium et Spes*, 90). With his *Motu Proprio* of January 6, 1967 (*Catholicam Christi Ecclesiam*) Paul VI established the Pontifical "*Justitia et Pax*" Commission. "Justice and Peace is its name and its program as well" the Pope wrote two months later in *Populorum Progressio* which was presented as a "document for the application of the teachings of the Council" (*Sollicitudo rei socialis*, no. 6). Along with *Gaudium et Spes* this document is the point of departure and reference for this new organism. After a

ten-year period of experimentation Paul VI gave the commission its definitive mandate with a *Motu Proprio* dated December 10, 1976 “*Justitiam et Pacem*.”

Once the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace was established it was suggested that national commissions should be organized in the Bishops’ Conferences. This has occurred in most countries. In compliance with John Paul II’s 1988 Apostolic Constitution *Pastor Bonus* the commission was confirmed and renamed the “Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.”

a) The Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

The principal tasks of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace included research and the publication of texts to publicize and promote the Church’s social teaching in the areas of justice and peace.

In **Pastor Bonus** the scope and mandate of the Pontifical Council are defined comprehensively and with precision: *The goal of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace is to promote justice and peace in the world in accordance with the Gospel and the social teaching of the Church (art. 142). § 1. The Council makes a thorough study of the social teaching of the Church and ensures that this teaching is widely spread and put into practice among people and communities, especially regarding the relations between workers and management, relations that must come to be more and more imbued with the spirit of the Gospel. § 2. It collects information and research on justice and peace, about human development and violations of human rights; it ponders all this, and, when appropriate, shares its conclusions with the groupings of bishops. It cultivates relationships with Catholic international organizations and other institutions, even ones outside the Catholic Church, which sincerely strive to achieve peace and justice in the world. § 3. It works to form among peoples a mentality which fosters peace, especially on the occasion of World Peace Day (art. 143). The Council has a special relationship with the Secretariat of State, especially whenever matters of peace and justice have to be dealt with in public by documents or announcements (art. 144).*

The priority task of the Pontifical Council is study with a view to action. It is especially concerned with three areas:

Justice. This covers questions of social justice, the specific problems of workers, international justice and related problems of development and the area of social justice. Justice involves the examination and discussion of financial and economic systems from an ethical perspective as well as environmental concerns and the responsible stewardship of the world’s resources.

Peace. The Council will discuss war, disarmament, arms, the arms trade and the diverse and changeable aspects of violence and international security (terrorism, exaggerated nationalism, etc.) The Council will also pay close attention to political systems and remind Catholics of their responsibilities in the political arena. The Council will also promote the World Day of Peace.

Rights of man. The Pontifical Council will pay particular attention to this area which is of growing importance in the mission of the Church. John Paul II's teaching has focused especially on the dignity of the human being as the foundation for the promotion and defense of his inalienable rights. The Council's activities will pursue three goals: the study of doctrine, the study of subjects being discussed in international organizations and care for those whose human rights have been violated.

b) The Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Commission (JPIC – USG/IUSG)

After the 1971 Synod both the Union of Superior Generals (USG) and the International Union of Superior Generals (IUSG) established a Justice and Peace Commission. They collaborate with each other and assist General administrations to understand more fully the goals and objectives of the Pontifical Justice and Peace Commission and to promote effective carrying out of their programs. In 1974 the Unions gave structure to their collaboration by establishing a joint work group. In 1982 this joint work group was further formalized as the USG/IUSG Justice and Peace Commission. Since that time the Pontifical Commission (now Pontifical Council) has continued to assist the USG/IUSG JPIC by sending one of its members (without a vote) to attend meetings and provide documentation and expert help. The name of the Commission was subsequently changed to the USG/IUSG Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation Commission. In 1993 a formal request for a full-time executive secretary was presented; the request was granted *ad experimentum*. Ultimately this arrangement became permanent. This secretariat should be and is at the service of the joint USG (Union of Superior Generals – male institutes) and IUSG (International Union of Superior Generals – female institutes) Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation Commission.

The purpose of the Commission is to raise consciousness and promote clear analysis and effective action in the area of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation for members of the USG/IUSG. The Commission's objectives are:

Information, keeping members up-to-date with changing world conditions in the area of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation.

Sharing projects, experience, documents and study aids with members of other religious institutes.

Formation, creating opportunities for the study of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation with an eye to preparing personnel in this area.

Action, support and/or promotion of campaigns struggling against injustice and the violation of human rights. Through the Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation office the Commission offers the following services: documentation, seminars, emergency action campaigns, support for JPIC promoters and liaison with other groups and organizations.

In December 2007, twenty-five years after its establishment, the JPIC renewed its mission and purpose through a process of strategic planning, and collaboratively created guidelines. Agreement was reached on four strategies: promoting the centrality of the JPIC; facilitating the professional training of JPIC promoters; making the Commission the center of attention; strengthening networking.

The Commission has three work groups:

Group against human trafficking. In collaboration with the International Emigration Organization (IEO) the IUSG continues to organize international seminars for religious. There is ongoing dialogue with the USG on their projects in this area.

Group for the integrity of creation. In 2008 the group focused on two areas: to discover the extent to which religious are involved in protecting the environment and publishing an introductory booklet on ecology – similar to the one published on water in 2003. A synthesis of responses in four languages is circulating. An entry in *Wikipedia* is being created to update information.

Group for Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation training in Africa. The project to train JPIC promoters in Africa was initiated by congregations who work in Africa. It has now become one of the Commission's work groups. In August/September 2008 there was a workshop in Ghana for thirty religious from English speaking Western Africa. Two more workshops are planned for 2010.

The Commission has contacts and works with many other organizations with similar goals – SEDOS, AEFJN, Project for Southern Sudan, the Catholic inspired ONG, Decade UN for

Peace, Caritas International, the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace and especially with English, Spanish and Portuguese speaking groups.

2.3 Pastoral dimension of evangelizing the social order

The central nucleus of the Church's social doctrine is not a general appeal to brotherhood nor is it an ideology to set the world aright. Rather it is a specific orientation that will lead to a humanism of total solidarity. It involves the basic truths of anthropology and Christian ethics and corresponds to the revealed image of mankind. From this perspective certain fundamental principles of social doctrine can be discerned which will translate the command of Christian love into authentic social justice. These principles must be the center of our pastoral effort to evangelize the social order.

a) The primacy and dignity of the human person. At the root of social doctrine is the principle of the primacy and dignity of the human person. This principle derives from the fact that the human person *is the "center and summit" of all that exists on the earth (Christifideles laici 37)*, the human person *is the beginning, the subject and the goal of all social institutions (Gaudium et Spes 25)*. From the primacy of the human person in society it follows *that respect for the human person ... is a basic criterion, an essential element, in the very structure of society, since the purpose of the whole of society itself is geared to the human person (Christifideles laici, 39)*. In practice respect for the individual involves the defense and promotion of universal, inviolable and inalienable human rights. These rights are economic and cultural; they are defined by historical conditions and constitute an important criterion for discernment and political/social commitment.

b) The principle of the common good. On the social level respect for fundamental human rights involves promoting the principle of the common good. If we see the principle of the primacy of human dignity through the prism of the principle of the common good we eliminate two inadequate concepts of man in society. The first concept is individualistic: each man is a grain of sand totally unrelated to others. The second concept is collectivist: man is only a tiny cog in the great social organism. *The human person may never be thought of only as an absolute individual being, built up by himself and on himself, as if his characteristic traits depended on no one else but himself. Nor can the person be thought of as a mere cell of an organism that is inclined at most to grant it recognition in its functional role within the overall system (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 125)*.

c) The principle of solidarity. *Solidarity ... is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the*

good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all (Sollicitudo rei socialis, 38).

d) The principle of subsidiarity. For the common good to respect the dignity of each individual mutual solidarity must involve the principle of subsidiarity as it is described in *Quadragesimo Anno*: *Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do (80).*

e) The principle of sustainable and persistent development. This principle concerns justice between generations and safeguarding the environment. *Nor can the moral character of development exclude respect for the beings which constitute the natural world ... Such realities also demand respect, by virtue of a threefold consideration which it is useful to reflect upon carefully. The first consideration is the appropriateness of acquiring a growing awareness of the fact that one cannot use with impunity the different categories of beings, whether living or inanimate - animals, plants, the natural elements - simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs. On the contrary, one must take into account the nature of each being and of its mutual connection in an ordered system, which is precisely the cosmos. The second consideration is based on the realization - which is perhaps more urgent - that natural resources are limited; some are not, as it is said, renewable. Using them as if they were inexhaustible, with absolute dominion, seriously endangers their availability not only for the present generation but above all for generations to come. The third consideration refers directly to the consequences of a certain type of development on the quality of life in the industrialized zones. We all know that the direct or indirect result of industrialization is, ever more frequently, the pollution of the environment, with serious consequences for the health of the population (Sollicitudo rei socialis, 34).*

f) The principle of pardon and reconciliation. *The world of man can become "ever more human" only when we introduce into all the mutual relationships which form its moral aspect the moment of forgiveness, which is so much of the essence of the Gospel. Forgiveness demonstrates the presence in the world of the love which is more powerful than sin. Forgiveness is also the fundamental condition for reconciliation, not only in the relationship of God with man, but also in relationships between people. A world from which forgiveness was eliminated would be nothing but a world of cold and unfeeling justice, in the name of which each person would claim his or her own rights vis-a-vis others; the various kinds of selfishness latent in man would transform life and human society into a system of oppression of the weak by the strong, or into an arena of permanent strife between one group and another (John Paul II, *Dives in misericordia* , 14).*

2.4 The spiritual dimension

Justice and peace must be the sacrament of encounter and faithfulness of God and the Church with the world. For justice and peace to accomplish their mission and not get lost in bureaucracy that mission must be rooted in a spirituality that involves a life style and method of action. The spirituality of Justice and Peace can be described in the words Paul VI pronounced when the Justice and Peace Commission was established (April 20, 1967): *In our eyes you represent the realization of the Council's final vote (Gaudium et Spes, 90). In other times – and even today – once a church or bell tower was built a cock was placed at the summit, a symbol of watchfulness in faith and of the whole of Christian life. Similarly at the very summit of the spiritual building of the Council was placed this Commission; its only mission is to keep the Church's eyes open, her heart sensitive and her hands ready for the charity she is called to perform in the world.*

a) Eyes Open. Means the ability to see and analyze the reality of our world. We could add 'ears open' if we are to be truly present in the world. It is a question of paying attention to life, to what is going on, to see and hear the noise of the world in which we live, to look at life with God's eyes and to be aware of the work of the Spirit in our world. Like God who is with us to pay attention, to listen and see what is going on around us in our daily life – events and history. The Christian God can be found above all in the incarnate word, Jesus, the Son (*Hebrews 1, 1-4*). We must find Him in and beginning at the manger (*Galatians 4, 4*); *Romans 1, 3*; *Luke 2, 6-7*), in the bread we share and on the Cross (*John 6*; *Luke 22, 14, 20*; *John 13*). We all know what kind of people went out to see Jesus: the vulnerable, the outcast – those who had no power.

b) Sensitive heart. We must see, know and understand the reality of the world and the suffering of the poor. This is not something we can do from afar, aloof, remaining in our offices. If our understanding of reality is going to move us to work for its transformation we must become involved, we must plumb its depths personally and with our heart, we must experience compassion. We can only understand what we suffer – or more accurately what we suffer with others. For a Christian the only genuine understanding is that which leads to compassion. For our heart to remain sensitive and to experience compassion we must be in contact with the people who suffer and their problems. The social position we occupy, our surroundings and style of life can influence our understanding of reality to the extent that we are blinded and deserve the rebuke Jesus gave His disciples (*Mark 7, 18*).

c) Hands ready for the charity the Church is called on to perform in the world. Charity is God's love; we must make it felt in the world. Welcoming and experiencing God who is love,

leads us to see love of God and man as the most important element of our Christian life. Charity shows itself in different ways depending on the sort of relationship that exists between individuals: family, marriage, friendship, psychological or economic assistance, etc. One of the ways it shows itself is politics. We must have hands ready to transform the sinful structures that oppress so many human beings (Cf. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* 36a, 36b, 36c, 36f, 37c, 37d, 38f, 39g, 40d, 46e).

3. Principles of the Church's Social Doctrine

3.1 Fundamental Guidelines of the Church's Social Teaching

a) **Link between the religious and social dimensions of life:** The social order (the human construction of the world) is not something secular in the sense that it is outside God's plan rather it belongs intimately to the dynamic of the Kingdom. For this reason faith and justice are necessarily linked (*Gaudium et Spes*).

b) **Dignity of the human person:** Women and men were created in the image of God; they occupy the key position in the social order. Human dignity can only be recognized and protected in communion with others. The fundamental concern of social development is: what is happening to people? (*Pacem in Terris*).

c) **Political and economic rights:** Everyone has inalienable rights: political and legal rights: the vote, freedom of speech, emigration; economic and social rights: food, shelter, work, education. These rights are respected in the social community. They are essential for the promotion of justice and solidarity and they must be respected by all of society's institutions (*Pacem in Terris*).

d) **The poor a priority:** We must demonstrate a preferential love for the poor; God calls us to pay special attention to their needs and rights. By poor we mean those who lack economic power and as a result suffer from oppression and impotence (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*).

e) **Love and justice are linked:** Love of neighbor is an absolute prerequisite for justice. Charity must reveal itself in actions and structures that protect human rights, respect human dignity and contribute to personal development. We must promote justice and change those structures that are an obstacle to love (*Justice in the World, Synod of Bishops, 1971*).

f) **Promoting the common good:** The common good embraces the whole range of social conditions (economic, political and cultural) that allow citizens to improve themselves fully and

rapidly. Individual rights are always experienced within the framework of promotion of the common good. There is also an international common good (*Mater et Magistra*).

g) **Subsidiarity:** Responsibility and decision making should belong to local communities and institutions – the community or institution closest to the individual project. Local governments and participation through family organizations, small businesses and other such associations should be encouraged. Broader government structures should take over when coordination or control are necessary for the common good (*Quadragesimo Anno*).

h) **Political participation:** Democratic participation in decision making is the best way to respect the dignity and freedom of individuals. The government is an instrument with which people cooperate in achieving the common good. The international common good requires participation in international organizations (*Pius XII, 1944 Christmas Message*).

i) **Economic justice:** The economy is made for man; the resources of the earth should be shared by all. Human labor is the key to contemporary social questions. Labor is more important for production than capital or technology. The right of workers to organize and to receive a just salary must be respected (*Laborem Exercens*).

j) **Protecting the environment:** All property has a social mortgage. People must respect and share the resources of the earth since we are all part of creation. Through our labor we are all co-responsible for the ongoing development of the earth (*Laborem Exercens*).

k) **Global solidarity:** We belong to the single human family and consequently are responsible for promoting the rights and development of all the peoples of the world without consideration of national borders. Rich nations, especially, have a responsibility vis-à-vis poor nations; the structures of the international order must be just (*Populorum Progressio; Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*).

l) **Promoting peace:** Peace is the fruit of justice and depends on a just order between men and countries. The arms race must be stopped; there must be progressive disarmament if we want a secure future. An effective international authority is necessary to promote peace and its conditions (*Pacem in Terris*).

3.2 The Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*

On June 29, 2009, Benedict XVI's encyclical letter *Caritas in Veritate* was published. It treats the total human development in charity and truth.

a) The introduction to the encyclical shows that love (*Caritas*) is an extraordinary force that leads people to engagement in the world of justice and peace.

b) The Pope reminds us that *charity is at the heart of the Church's social doctrine*. Given the *risk of being misinterpreting charity and detaching from ethical living* the Pope warns: *A Christianity of charity without truth would be more or less interchangeable with a pool of good sentiments, helpful for social cohesion, but of little relevance*. Benedict XVI writes further: *Development requires truth. There are two guiding principles for moral action: justice and the common good. Every Christian is called to practice this charity, in a manner corresponding to his vocation and according to the degree of influence he wields in the pólis. Christian faith is concerned with development but does not count on power or influence (...) but only on Christ*. The Pope notes that *the causes of underdevelopment are not primarily material* rather they are the result of deliberation and thought and even more importantly *the lack of brotherhood among individuals and nations*.

c) *Once profit becomes the exclusive goal without the common good as its ultimate end* - Benedict notes - *it risks destroying wealth and creating poverty*. He lists factors that can distort development: *financial speculation, flows of immigrants who were initially invited and then badly managed and the unregulated exploitation of the earth's resources*. The Pope confronts these interconnected problems with a *new humanistic synthesis: development today presents a picture of many overlapping layers. The world's wealth is growing in absolute terms but inequalities are on the increase, new forms of poverty are emerging... On the cultural plane interaction is opening up new possibilities for dialogue but there is a twofold danger*.

First there is a *cultural eclecticism* that assumes uncritically: *cultures simply exist alongside each other and are substantially equivalent and interchangeable*. The opposite danger is *cultural leveling and the homogenization of life-styles*. Benedict refers to the *scandal of famine* and expresses the desire for *forequitable agrarian reform in developing countries*. The Pope emphasizes that *respect for life cannot be separated from development; a society that denies and suppresses life ends up without the motivation or strength to serve man's true good*. Another element linked to development is the right to religious freedom. *Violence blocks genuine development and this is especially true in fundamentalist violence*.

d) *Development... if it is to be authentically human, needs to make room for the principle of gratuitousness as an expression of fraternity*. This is especially true of the market. The working of the market *should be directed to the common good – the political community should see to this*. Quoting from the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* Pope Benedict underlines the *need for a system with three subjects*: the market, the state and civil society. He urges

the *civilization of economy*. Economic forms based on solidarity are needed. *Both the market and politics need individuals who are open to reciprocal gift*. There must be a new evaluation of globalization – this is not just a *social-economic* phenomenon. Globalization needs a *personalist and communitarian cultural orientation, and orientation that is open to the transcendent and that can correct dysfunction*.

d) The encyclical speaks about *the development of nations, rights and duties and the environment*. Governments and international organizations must not lose sight of the *objectivity and inviolability* of rights. The Pope further discusses *problems arising from demographic growth*. He also affirms that *sexuality cannot be reduced to pleasure or entertainment*. States are called to *enact policies promoting the centrality and the integrity of the family...The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly — not any ethics whatsoever, but an ethics which is people-centered*. The very centrality of the person, the Pope states, must be the guiding principle *in all interventions to promote international cooperation*. *International organizations might question the actual effectiveness of their bureaucratic and administrative machinery, which is often excessively costly*.

e) Finally the Pope talks about energy. The fact that some States, power groups and companies *hoard non-renewable energy resources* represents a *grave obstacle to development in poor countries*. *The technologically advanced societies can and must lower their domestic energy consumption, they must find alternate sources of energy*. The Pope insists that *the development of peoples depends above all on the recognition that we are one single family*. The Christian religion can contribute to development *only if God finds a place in the public arena*. The Pope refers to the *principle of subsidiarity* which provides assistance through the *independent, intermediate bodies*. Subsidiarity is the most effective antidote to *paternalistic assistance*; subsidiarity can humanize globalization. Benedict urges rich countries to devote a greater portion of their gross national product to development and to live up to the promises they have made. The Pope hopes to see greater access to education and the *complete formation of the individual*. If we give way to relativism we will become even poorer. One example is the perverse phenomenon of sex tourism. *It is sad to note that this activity often takes place with the support of local governments, with silence from those in the tourists' countries of origin, and with the complicity of many of the tour operators*. He then confronts the enormous problem of migration. *Each migrant is a human person with rights that must be respected by all in every situation*. The Pope speaks about the urgent need to reform the United Nations, economic institutions and international finance. He calls for the creation of a true world political authority that would consistently observe the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity. An authority, he insists, that enjoyed effective power.

g) The Pope warns us of the Promethean presumption that *humanity can re-create itself through the wonders of technology*. Technology cannot be absolutely free. Today *bioethics* is

the primary field of *cultural struggle between the absolutism of technology and man's moral responsibility*. Reason without faith is destined to lose itself in the illusion of omnipotence. The social question has become an *anthropological question*. The Pope laments that *present day culture believes it has lifted the veil of every mystery* and promotes embryo research and cloning. The Pope further bemoans the *systematic eugenic programming of births*.

h) In conclusion the encyclical insists that *development needs Christians with their arms raised towards God in prayer with love and forgiveness, self-denial, acceptance of others, justice and peace*.

3.3 Criteria for applying the Church's Social Teaching

- a) Possess a good and detailed understanding of the social teachings of the Church.
- b) Humility: do not leap from general principles to specific, definitive judgments especially when they are categorical and absolute. We must never exceed the limits of our own understanding and competence.
- c) Realism in assessing the human condition, recognizing sin and leaving space for the action of God's grace. In our commitment to human development we must never lose sight of man's vocation: to be a saint and to enjoy God forever.
- d) Avoid the temptation to use the Church's social teachings as a tool to judge others. We must primarily concentrate on our own life, our personal, social, economic and political responsibility.

PART TWO

4. Servite Commitment in the Area of Peace, Justice and the Integrity of Creation

4.1 A Life Example: Blessed James, Defender of the Poor

Among the saints of the Order, Blessed James from Città della Pieve (James the Almsgiver) is special sort of saint: he was a martyr for the poor. His work was not limited to financial assistance of the poor – he earned the title "Almsgiver." He did much more: he defended poor people in two courts. Moreover he died as a martyr for the oppressed; he died an unfair death. The story is touching. James defended the poor against the local Bishop, a powerful and unscrupulous man. The Bishop wanted to take over a refuge where James assisted the poor – he wanted this property for the sake of profit. Blessed James was not intimidated. He was a lawyer; he sued the Bishop and won the case. The story had a dramatic ending. The

bishop pretended he wanted to reconcile with the saint. He invited James to his residence and while James was on the way he was brutally assassinated by the Bishop's thugs.

The simple facts of this saint's life make quite an impression; they force us to think. The evangelical option for the poor is no joke. It requires a life and death commitment to the outsiders of this world. Outsiders are ever more numerous in our society dominated by neo-liberalism and globalization. Assisting the poor is not enough: they demand justice. Unfortunately it can be dangerous to rise in their defense – even in the Church. Unlike her founder the Church is not always on the side of the poor. The Church frequently sides with the powerful. Saint James, the Apostles, wrote the following strong and surprising words: *Listen, my beloved brothers. Did not God choose those who are poor in the world to be rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom that he promised to those who love him? But you dishonored the poor person. Are not the rich oppressing you? And do they themselves not haul you off to court? (James 2, 5-6).*

Blessed James brings us back to the purest source of our charism. Our Seven Holy Fathers spent the earliest years of their fraternal life caring for the poor and suffering in the *Fonte Viva Hospice*. Fra Raffaello M. Taucci, the renowned historian, did not mince words: *The Order was born in the poorhouse.*

Even St. Philip who was so caught up in the affairs of the Order he was working to consolidate did not neglect the poor. We remember the episode of the leper who was miraculously cured when the Saint gave him his cloak. Nor should we forget the moving story of Philip's encounter with the two prostitutes at the gates of Todi. St. Philip was going to Todi to die but he was so kind and genuine with those two poor women that they changed their lives from that point on.

Nor should we forget our *Curatino* (St. Anthony Pucci). He practiced amazing charity with every sort of destitute individual. He died as a victim of his own generosity. He came across a poor man in the midst of winter. The Saint gave that man his own cloak and then contracted the pneumonia that led to his death.

And what about us? How can we follow these great examples? First of all we must get close to the poor. We must stand alongside them, touch them, embrace them, help them. We must become neighbors to those who have fallen along the wayside on the road to progress. Jesus taught us this with the parable of the Good Samaritan. Like Mary in the Magnificat we must condemn a system that marginalizes so many people – a system like our own neo-liberalism. *He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones but lifted up the lowly. The hungry he has filled with good things; the rich he has sent away empty. (Luke 1, 52-53) (Clodovis M. Boff in COSMO 6, Nov-Dec. 1999).*

4.2 Justice and Peace in the Servite Constitutions

- a) To extend ... fraternity to the people of today who are divided by reason of age, nationality, race, religion, wealth and education (Cf. *Const.* 74).
- b) To seek with every man a positive and evangelical solution to the problems of the environment and society (Cf. *Const.* 116).
- c) To protect the rights of the vulnerable – in Christ they are the Father's favored children (Cf. *Const.* 89).
- d) Make one's life correspond to the Gospel of peace and reconciliation. Support with all one's strength the work of the Spirit so that Jesus' words may come true: *That all may be one*. Work for ecumenism and be open to dialogue with every other religion (Cf. *Const.* 91). Think, feel and act for the long term.
- e) Through study and prayer strive to make the Daughter of Zion a sign of unity for all people (Cf. *Const.* 7; 161).

4.3 Justice and Peace during Formation

Justice and Peace should be guiding principles throughout initial and ongoing formation. *The candidate should have the will and the ability to dedicate himself to justice and peace in the world, and to ecumenism and inter-religious dialogue. (Ratio Institutionis OSM, 32).* Specifically this means:

- a) We must learn more about our own environment (injustice, other religions and Churches). How can we achieve this: through commitment to volunteer work among the disadvantaged (aged, poor ...) in our own environment (at home or at the priory), prayer and engaging in the life of the local Church. (*Ratio Institutionis OSM*, 86, 87 – Reception or Postulancy).
- b) We must be at the service of the human and ecclesial community, open to human needs and ready to offer solidarity in the trials and quests of today's man. We must be aware of what is going on in the world (*au courant*). We must welcome everyone in need; we must be sensitive to the new forms of poverty; we must learn to speak the language of our time; we must learn to share the life of the poor – in our free time we could visit healing centers or missions, new foundations or communities that share the life of the poor (Cf. *Const.* 58). We must commit ourselves to building a culture of peace in the world we inhabit. We must promote ecumenism through our understanding, study and encounters with Christians of other Churches (*Ratio Institutionis OSM*, 108, 109 – Pre-novitiate).

- c) We must be universal little brothers in communion with the whole world. We must extend our brotherhood to every individual (Cf. *Const.* 74). We must welcome with respect and sensitivity all creatures – especially the poor. *Means:* an attitude that is critical (from a Gospel perspective) of the values and non-values of our own culture and society; we must exercise an option for the poor and service (Cf. *Const.* 58; 76d; 89); we must exercise judgment in the use of the communications media (Cf. *Const.* 16b). In our own lives we must continue the mercy of Christ and the Virgin Mary (Cf. *Const.* 52). We must follow the path of beauty emphasizing the eternal and luminous aspect of every human creature. We must engage in ecumenical and inter-religion encounters (Cf. *Const.* 91) (*Ratio Institutionis OSM*, 134 and 135 – Novitiate).
- d) We must be universal little brothers in communion with the whole world and extend our brotherhood to every individual (Cf. *Const.* 74). We must welcome with respect and sensitivity all creatures – especially the vulnerable (the poor, the outcast, etc.). We must work for the total liberation of the individual and society. *Means:* an unambiguous option for the poor, the outcast, peasants, natives, the oppressed, etc. We must engage in works of liberation and social justice. We must be sensitive and interested in the Order's projects throughout the world such as new foundations. We must make a personal commitment (modest life-style, individual and community prayer). We must live and support the social and missionary efforts of the Order and the Church. We must engage in ecumenical and inter-religion encounters (Cf. *Const.* 91) (*Ratio Institutionis OSM*, 157 and 158 – the Professed).
- e) We must strive to meet the real needs of the society in which we work – we must respond to the signs of the time. *Means:* we must pay attention to the urgent needs of our time and our place. We must search for solutions. We must be at home with Christians and non-Christians alike (Cf. *Const.* 91); We must be generous in our assistance to the aged, the sick and the poor. We must engage in ecumenical and inter-religion encounters (Cf. *Const.* 91) (*Ratio Institutionis OSM*, 182 and 183 – Year of Pastoral Service).
- f) We must strive to meet the real needs of the society in which we work – we must respond to the signs of the time. We must be involved in the events of the Church and the world. *Means:* we must pay attention to the urgent needs of our time and our place. We must strive to find specific, realistic solutions. We must be generous in our assistance to

the aged, the sick and the poor. We must engage in ecumenical and inter-religion encounters (Cf. *Const.* 91) (*Ratio Institutionis OSM*, 217 and 218 – Permanent Formation).

4.4 General Chapter Decisions

The 1989 General Chapter set three priorities for the Order's service to the world: special attention to old and newer forms of poverty; promoting greater involvement beginning with the service in which we are currently engaged – making the poor a priority; launching new justice and peace projects (*1989 General Chapter*, no. 225).

The 1995 General Chapter issued a decree on Justice and Peace (*1995 General Chapter*, nos. 101-103). This decree is not just a wish list. It is indispensable that we feel ourselves a living part of the great Justice and Peace movement which is struggling for the defense and liberation of men and women where their rights are violated (no. 101). The decree lists the main situations where justice and peace are in jeopardy (no. 102). The Chapter document notes and lauds those friars who are giving beautiful and heroic witness in this area (no. 103). It makes several working proposals: establishing a General Secretariat for Justice and Peace and calling on the various jurisdictions of the Order to create – when possible – commissions for justice and peace. These commissions should maintain contact and work with similar national and regional commissions and with the local Church (no. 104).

The 2001 General Chapter (no. 58) renewed the above mentioned decree and added certain specifications: it added the tragedy of international terrorism (58a) to the list of serious situations; it supports responsibility for a peace founded on justice and confrontation with old and newer forms of poverty; it calls on us to be aware of the commitments of our communities (58b); it urges us to engage in areas of service inspired by the ministry of compassion; it includes the General Secretariat of Justice and Peace and its work among the other general offices (58c, 1).

The 2007 General Chapter made frequent reference to the worldwide phenomenon of poverty and the mechanisms of injustice that create an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor. We are aware of the sufferings of our brothers and sisters in various parts of the world. We must in some way respond to the cry of these brothers and sisters. Similarly we must react to the violence the earth endures through the savage exploitation of its resources. This exploitation puts the very existence of mankind in jeopardy. Reading the signs of the time in a world that knows God only partially, the Chapter notes the existence of a new

springtime for the Gospel at the beginning of the third millennium. The Chapter asks the General Council to merge the Secretariat for Justice and Peace with the General Secretariat for the Missions into a new entity to be called the *General Secretariat for the Evangelization of People and Justice and Peace* (Cf. no. 45).

4.5 Areas of Servite involvement

The follow are examples of the different areas in which the Servite Family is involved and some of the projects in recent years.

a) Information, consciousness raising, promotion and lobbying in the international arena:

- Campaign with non-governmental organizations to ban land mines.
- Jubilee 2000 Campaign to cancel the enormous foreign debt of the 42 poorest countries in the world. *Operazione Bilanci di Giustizia* is a group that seeks to modify patterns of consumption, improve the quality of life and redirect financial resources into social projects of high value (ethical savings). It hopes to make an impact on the dominant economic structures through experimentation with alternative systems.
- Support for the threatened populations of Cuadrilla Nueva in the State of Guerrero (Mexico) - response to the an Amnesty International Appeal.
- Appeal to the Servite Family to raise funds for combating hunger in Africa.

b) Formation:

- Meeting promoted by the Servite Coalition for Justice and Peace in El Paso, Texas (April 8-12, 1996) on the destitute and marginalized people of El Paso. We examined the effects of NAFTA on immigration; special focus on the political, economic and social consequences for ordinary people.
- Commitment of the Servite Sisters of London Justice and Peace Commission to the ecumenical *Church Action on Poverty* which teaches people about the cause, extent and effect of poverty in the United Kingdom.
- Focus on problems of Justice and Peace in the formation program of the St. Alexis Falconieri Formation Community in Rome.

- Proposal of the Secretary for Justice and Peace on Third World debt: study the problem of international debt; prepare a conscious and coherent Christian response; support the proposals of the World Bank and International Monetary Fund when they are compatible with Christian belief.
- Meeting at Scandici (Florence) with a large group of young people interested in the problem of globalization and in extending greater solidarity to the poorest countries.
- Seminar on Justice and Peace organized by friars engaged in specific projects with people – especially with the destitute and marginalized.
- A meeting on the disappearance of children and organ trafficking in Nampula (Mozambique) was held at the *Ferdinando Maria Baccilieri* Spirituality Center run by the Servite Sisters of Galeazza.

c) Concrete efforts and projects brought to completion

- Meetings and activities in the Benburb Community to promote reconciliation and peace between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland.
- Supporting a successful dialogue with the Jewish Community. In Rochester, New York, the two communities (Catholic and Jewish) formalized their mutual cooperation – it had been going on for some time – with a joint commitment to combat racism, anti-Semitism, anti-Catholicism and to promote mutual respect through communication, teaching and attention to current problems.
- Adopting and assisting orphans in distant countries.
- Opening the *Hogar del Niño* (Children's Hearth) Aysen, Chile, to provide assistance to abandoned children.
- Project Hope to meet the health needs of poor people in Omaha.
- Koinomadelfia (communion and brotherhood are obligatory) and the courageous project to assist children without families.
- Great Hollywood Health program. By involving diverse members of a poor and marginalized social community an innovative form of health assistance was made possible.
- Brazilian Servites are engaged in protecting the environment, preserving the Amazon Rain Forest and assisting its native peoples.
- Two Mexican friars are living in a community with the native people of Nayar, Mexico.
- The Servite Secular Institute has established a network of Servite Houses.
- For many years now Servites have been engaged in humane and spiritual service among prison inmates in Colombia.

- Servites in Albania have been working with Kosovar refugees in Valona; in collaboration with local authorities they help with sanitary services in the large refugee camp.
- The Youth Missionary Group is involved in micro-project work in India and Brazil.
- Our St. Martin Priory in Senigallia has become a house of hospitality for non-Italian workers. This was a recommendation of the 1995 General Chapter in its decree on devoting our unused space to the service of old and newer forms of poverty.
- With great courage the cloistered Servite nuns have denounced the child kidnapping and organ trafficking taking place in Nampula, Mozambique.
- Raising money for victims of the Tsunami in India.
- Investing the Order's money in the Banca Etica.
- Servites in Las Toscas, Argentina, are involved in the sugar workers' struggle to save their cooperative.

4.6 An emerging challenge: preserving the environment

The VII UNIFAS Assembly in Rome (May 14-17, 2009) decided to celebrate the VI International Convention of the Servite Family in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil (July 7 – 14, 2010). The convention will discuss "Servites and Preservation of the Environment." It will study the sacred mystery of creation as an inter-connected totality – all the work of God.

The Convention hopes to raise consciousness in the Servite Family about the need to protect the work of God, the Creator. In line with the Servite charism of compassion, we must work to limit degradation of the environment and its impact on the poorest and most vulnerable. In this way we can re-establish a proper balance in creation. This subject is especially appropriate for a Convention held in Brazil where Servites have been involved for decades in the struggle to preserve the Amazon Rain Forest and to defend the life and livelihood of the native peoples who live in the forest.

The convention will confront these subjects through talks from guest speakers, assembly, roundtable and language group discussions. We will share Servite experiences, liturgical celebrations and possible outings to see local culture.

The concrete experiences of Servites from all over the world will contribute much to these discussions. These experiences will provide an appropriate context for understanding

advances and setbacks in preserving the environment and how to respond to problems through collaboration and working together as the Servite Family.

PART THREE

5. Working guidelines and essential elements for promoting JPIC

5.1 Why is JPIC promotion so important?

- a) The central focus of JPIC is to re-establish a proper balance with God, with ourselves, with others and with creation.
- b) JPIC is concerned with building a more just and harmonious world through a preferential option for the vulnerable members of our society.
- c) Because of the threats to global ecosystems (greenhouse gas and global warming) the integrity of creation is especially important.
- d) JPIC is not just something we do – it is primarily an attitude, a perspective that impacts what we do and how we perform our ministry.
- e) Ronald Roheiser believes that JPIC (social and ecological justice) is one of the non-negotiable aspects of integral Christian spirituality. The other non-negotiable aspects are: personal prayer/morality, tenderness of heart and community. If integral Christian spirituality can be seen as a stool, each of these elements is one of its legs.
- f) JPIC's Promotion involves reminding religious of the importance of living and supporting this dimension of the Gospel. It is like the cock on the roof of the church.
- g) g) Joe Holland and Peter Henriot SJ have devised a graph that can help develop the JPIC dimension of Christian spirituality. Four elements are required for JPIC promotion: experience, social analysis, theological/ Scriptural / Charismatic reflection and action. These elements are like four doors: for beginners it is easier to choose one of these approaches. The challenge is to integrate these four elements into a life-style. Some enter through experience, some through analysis of injustice in the world, some through theological and/or Scriptural reflection and others through prayer.

5.2 JPIC goals and the duties of JPIC promoters

- a) We must remind our religious brothers and sisters that evangelization and mission cannot be authentic if we overlook the JPIC perspective.
- b) We must help people understand that JPIC is not just one topic among many others. Justice, peace and the integrity of creation are pervasive values that must inform our whole being and life.
- c) We must inform and make people aware of the real, human situation both near at hand and afar. We must make people ware of the need to remake our life-style and mission in the light of the Gospel, the Church's social doctrine and our charism so that we can provide liberating answers to the problems of the world.
- d) We must revive and motivate the prophetic dynamism of our religious consecration.
- e) JPIC must play a role in our personal and community projects.
- f) We must appreciate and support all positive steps other congregations are taking to live out the values of JPIC.
- g) We must make these values a reality in the mission we share with the laity.
- h) We must promote prayers of solidarity and the celebration of what we are achieving.

5.3 Areas of concentration for JPIC

JPIC is a concern that must be present in all aspects of the apostolate: missions, parishes, catechetics, youth work, lay training, colleges, human rights, Caritas, work with immigrants, home missions, communications' media, work with the marginalized and outsiders, non-governmental organizations and volunteer work. Above all JPIC must penetrate the fiber of our communities. We are talking about a pervading axis that must be present in every pastoral activity and all our work. All of this must result in *projects and action*.

5.4 Problems of promoting JPIC in religious institutes

- a) After Vatican II the JPIC ministry was not sufficiently provided with a non-violent, evangelical methodology.
- b) Personal and community transformation did not receive equal attention.
- c) JPIC ministry concentrated on changing unjust "outside" structures and ignored the need to change the "inside" mentality of religious life.
- d) Some of the promoters appointed by religious institutes were more given to action than promotion. They tended to concentrate on one particular aspect of the JPIC ministry.

- e) Superiors appointed promoters but did not have a clear idea of what JPIC involved.
- f) The majority of promoters received no training or direction. Lack of continuity and different approaches were common among those appointed JPIC promoters.
- g) The need to work with other ministries in the institute (missions, formation) was not sufficiently appreciated.
- h) In general no JPIC program was drawn up. Such a program could have provided direction to the institute.
- i) Until recently most of the promoters came from the developed world.

5.5 Work method

Earlier we quoted the words of Paul VI to the Pontifical Commission of Justice and Peace: “[*your*] only mission is to keep the Church’s eyes open, her heart sensitive and her hands ready for the charity she is called to perform in the world. “ These words describe the work method involved:

- a) **See:** We must listen, gather information and analyze it. We must analyze the situation around us and the world at large to discover the causes and dimensions of problems.
- b) **Judge:** We must study the real situation in the light of the Gospel and the Church’s social doctrine. We must at the same time be mindful of our charism and identity. We must choose to confront those problems that best fit our own spirituality.
- c) **Act:** We must provide information and offer the results of our analyses (suggestions and reasons to act). We must link up with the JPIC of the Congregation, the Religious Conferences and the Church. We must cultivate relations with communities and individual friars (visit priories, appoint a delegate in each community ...) Begin with projects that all agree upon and avoid those things that would provoke the greatest resistance. Denunciation and proclamation. Concentrate on what is positive. Propose small but specific steps: grassroots strategies. Work closely with the provincial team. Link up with other non-governmental groups, network.

5.6 Team work and local groups

Each friar, sister and secular Servite could create a local group of lay people that would meet regularly and discuss problems of justice and peace and examine situations of development or injustice in its own area or in the country at large. Experts in specific areas could be invited to these meetings and help the group understand precisely what is involved.

a) **Task of the Servants of Mary:** to be engaged in creating and promoting these groups. Later the groups would be able to work on their own. We need patience and simple, reasonable programs.

b) **Members of the group:** Anyone interested in development in his own area or problems of injustice in the country at large can join the group. A member need not have any specific knowledge or training. Discussing things in the group will lead to surprising growth and awareness. Members could be adults or young adults with particular backgrounds. In the beginning or until such time as their hidden potential comes to light and they can explain their ideas, feel secure and make decisions, they must be supported.

c) **Group leader:** This is an area where Servites can provide genuine assistance. We are used to conventual chapters and we know how to listen and interact in group meetings. The Servite group leader (animator) should possess common sense and sensitivity. It would also be useful if he/she had experience in forming and leading groups. What is important is that the leader be able to listen and encourage the participation by all the members. He/she should not take over the meeting or expect that everyone agree with his ideas. The ideas of group members are what count. Eventually the group will be able to take care of itself. At that time the role of the leader will change and he will become an assistant. Ultimately he will play the role of advisor.

d) **Group meetings:** It is essential that group members do not feel they have wasted time in a meeting. Nor should they think it is enough that they – individually – have been heard. To derive the maximum benefit from meetings the group leader must concentrate on the following:

- a. Each member should speak during the meeting. The leader should never let one or two members take over the meeting.
- b. A report on every activity the group undertakes should be written up.
- c. Minutes of the previous meeting must be produced. This is a task to be assigned to the Group Secretary.
- d. The meeting should stick to its agenda; the agenda should clearly indicate items and priorities.

- e. The agenda should be flexible so that other subjects – with group approval – can be discussed during a meeting.
- f. If the group feels it needs more information an outside expert should be invited to share his knowledge with the members.

Links

Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/index.htm

http://www.justpax.it/pcgp/eng/home_eng.html

USG/IUSG Justice and Peace Commission

<http://www.jpic.it/comm-notes.html>

Servite Justice and Peace

www.servidimaria.org

Conclusion

It is our hope that this paper will make individuals and communities aware of the problems of Justice and Peace.

We invite each community to inform the General Secretariats (Permanent Formation, Evangelization of Peoples, Justice and Peace) of projects in the areas of Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation whether they are the work of individuals or groups in the context of their communities. What exactly is being done in the areas of ecology, prayers for peace, support of refugees, development projects, popularization, defense of civil rights, etc.

We hope that knowledge and appreciation of these projects would become more widespread and move other individuals and groups to undertake similar projects. We would see the creation of a unified effort of solidarity among Servites in every part of the world.

Let us make our plea to the Virgin of the Magnificat

*Holy Mary,
Lady humble and poor
Blessed by the Most High
Hail!*

*Virgin of hope,
Prophecy of new times,
Join our voices to your song
And lead us on our journey:
To proclaim the coming of the Kingdom
And the total liberation of mankind;
To bring Christ to our brothers
And to achieve with them
A more intense communion of love;
So we can join you in praising the mercy of the Lord
And singing the glory of life and salvation.*

*Virgin, Arc of the New Covenant,
First fruits of the Church
Receive the prayer of your servants.*