



CENTER FOR CATHOLIC STUDIES

TO: WBC AND MICAH PARTICIPANTS
SUBJECT: PAPAL CORRESPONDENCE: CHARITY IN TRUTH
DATE: TUESDAY, MARCH 23, 2010

AGENDA

- Welcome
- Opening Prayer
- WBC Mission Statement
- Scripture: 2 Corinthians 4: 5-15
- Silent Meditation
- Sharing insights on Scripture
- Reading: **Papal Correspondence: Charity in Truth (Continued)**
- Discussion and Reflection
- Closing Prayer

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the Woodstock Business Conference is to establish and lead a network of business leaders to explore their respective religious traditions in order to ask the individual executives:

- To integrate faith, family, and professional life,
- To develop a corporate culture that is reflective of their religious faith and values,
- To exercise a beneficial influence upon society at large.

The Conference, grounded in Roman Catholic tradition, welcomes believers who are open to and respectful of one another's religious traditions. It is committed to the conviction that ethics and values grow out of one's religious heritage.

Silent Examen

1. *Pause quietly* and become mindful of God's presence in you, and then *thank Him for the many gifts you have been given*: life, intelligence, freedom, and family, friends, and opportunities to share your many gifts with others.
2. *Pray for the light to see where God has been* through the day- in what you experienced, thought, decided, and acted upon...
3. Look back and ask, "What happened? What did I do? To *what was God calling me?*" And then, "*Where was God in all this?*" How can I best *understand* the situation?
4. *Evaluate: how well I have done?* in recognizing God? in resisting evil?
5. *What actions should I take? What decisions must I make?*

Scripture Reading 2 Corinthians 4:5-15

It is not ourselves we preach but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake. For God who said "Let light shine out of darkness," has shone in our hearts, that we might make known the glory of God shining in the face of Christ.

This treasure we possess in earthen vessels...its surpassing power comes from God and not from us. We are afflicted in every way possible, but we are not crushed; full of doubts we never despair; we are persecuted but never abandoned; we are struck down and never destroyed.

We continue to carry about in our bodies the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may be revealed in our mortal flesh. Death is at work in us but life in you.

We have the spirit of faith of which the Scripture says, "Because I believed, I spoke out. We believe and so we speak, knowing that He who raised up the Lord Jesus will raise us up along with Jesus and place us both and you in his presence.

Reflection:

In this reading to the Corinthians, St. Paul refers to us as "servants for Jesus sake," and as "earthen vessels". "Letting his light shine out of the darkness" mirrors in many ways what Pope Benedict writes about and what the authors refer to in the following articles: ***a Christian vision of the human person and the experience of gift.***

There are many themes in these readings: human development, globalization, communion and sharing of goods, the experience and theology of gift.

What are your thoughts and comments?

Papal Correspondence: Charity in Truth

The following two articles are from America Magazine, November 30, 2009, and are the last of the commentaries on Pope Benedict's "Caritas in Veritate."

Part 5: Communion, Not Commodification

By Kristin Heyer

Economic, social and political development, if it is to be authentically human, needs to make room for the principle of gratuitousness as an expression of fraternity (No. 34).

In his first social encyclical, Pope Benedict XVI grounds his analysis of the exploitative consequences of global capitalism in his theology of Christian love. Following his development of love in "Deus Caritas Est," Pope Benedict connects the authentic love embodied by Jesus to the Christian responsibility to humanize economic and political activity. As he addresses contemporary realities from outsourcing to energy consumption, the pope gives sustained attention to theological reflection. He offers two particularly fruitful theological resources that flow from charity: ***a Christian vision of the human person and the experience of gift.***

First, the pope's view of the person grounds his arguments regarding ***human development and globalization.*** In contrast to worldly measures of worth like power, wealth or expertise, the Christian perspective insists upon the unconditional value of every person. This intrinsic dignity is essential to Pope Benedict's holistic vision of human development, whether he is critiquing cultural effects of commercialization, the commodification of migrant workers or population control measures. His underlying anthropology is also relational, reminding Christians that ***to be a human being is to be in relationship, given our creation in God's Trinitarian image.*** Hence in the face of dehumanizing trends, he calls readers to steer global trade and development in ways that reflect this vision of all persons as sisters and brothers through policies marked by ***"communion and the sharing of goods."***

The importance of relationship plays a significant role in Pope Benedict's assessment of the "scandal of glaring inequalities" that persists today. He argues that the absence of adequate institutional relationships—evinced, for example, in the detachment of economic activity from sufficient regulation or distributive mechanisms—has significantly contributed to the present financial and moral crisis we face. The pope's consequent advocacy of wealth redistribution (in seven separate instances) and stronger international governance reflect his conviction that diverse "stakeholders" remain equal members of one human family.

A second theological resource Pope Benedict mines is *the experience and theology of gift*. In contrast to some capitalistic narratives of the self-made person, a Christian understanding of our selves as freely "gifted" can motivate actions that enact gratuity in response. This "astonishing experience of gift" grounds the pope's insights about how love animates, guarantees and exceeds justice. Recent history highlights the fact that contractual justice has proven inadequate for redressing both the privations of underdevelopment and the excesses of "super-development." Hence Pope Benedict's charge surpasses a merit-based or a legal sense of justice to demand practices and institutions marked by reciprocity, friendship, even mercy. He contends that "*without internal forms of solidarity and mutual trust, the market cannot completely fulfill its proper economic function*" (No. 35).

We might envision this effusive *caritas* evident in social enterprises like fair trade cooperatives and microfinance or in conflict transformation initiatives that go beyond mere retribution and focus on restoring broken relationships. *Flowing from the experience of gift, the pope insists that policies and ventures that foster not only justice but communion are essential for genuinely human development.*

Pope Benedict's discussion of the human person and gift are but two of many theological themes he explores in light of economic and ecological challenges. Omitted, however, are references to the option for the poor and social sin, even within discussions of distributive injustices or dangerous ideologies and sinful effects evident in the economy. Missed opportunities to name explicitly and develop these categories may reflect the pope's past encounters with liberation theology.

The theological methodology of “Caritas in Veritate” is to be hailed for further aligning social doctrine with the core of the church’s mission. Pope Benedict’s approach deepens and sharpens more philosophical approaches in light of the riches of the Catholic tradition, even as it raises the question of the role for natural law argumentation in public religious engagement. On the one hand, the pope’s Christocentric understanding of truth set largely against a “logic of power” could deter interreligious engagement. On the other hand, his articulations of truth in terms of genuine human flourishing and development in solidarity with others present fertile opportunities for meaningful dialogue and bold action across communities to meet urgent challenges.

Kristin Heyer is associate professor of religious studies at Santa Clara University, Calif.

Part 6: The Educator’s Mission

By James E. Hug

“The development of peoples depends, above all, on a recognition that the human race is a single family working together in true communion, not simply a group of subjects who happen to live side by side” (No. 53).

Our world is caught at this time in a series of converging global crises of economy and finance, food and hunger, migration, climate change and ecological disaster. Solutions that try to get us back on the track we were on before the crises hit will guarantee only greater upheaval in the future.

Pope Benedict XVI’s encyclical “Caritas in Veritate” addresses this troubled world and offers an insightful and challenging blueprint for a more authentically human, sustainable and secure future. Turning that blueprint into a practical reality implies *a reorientation and refocusing of the whole educational enterprise in this country.*

The stakes are high for educators who have the challenge of making “Caritas in Veritate” understandable while promoting the new direction it introduces. That is no easy task, since its vision conflicts head-on with many American cultural assumptions.

Most would agree that the purpose of education is to guide students to discover and develop their own gifts, finding their vocation to serve the

community. Globalization has revealed an interdependence that calls us to turn economic, social, political and cultural forces toward the creation of a global community of love, a single human family united in solidarity and peace. For Pope Benedict a complete education requires service of the global community. Curricula, from kindergarten through doctoral studies, therefore, need to be suffused with this global vision, shaping people who think of themselves as part of one global human family. Are we ready to instill the vision that the pope outlines of a single human community living in solidarity and peace?

Pope Benedict also calls for a transformation of the market, business and politics. The market must integrate more relational principles into its workings. Trust and a sense of gift or gratuity in the relationships between producers and consumers need to replace cutthroat competition and a philosophy of caveat emptor. Creation of wealth is not businesses' only responsibility. Every business must recognize its responsibilities to all its stakeholders, including workers, clients, suppliers, consumers, local communities and the environment. Pope Benedict's vision of a well-ordered global economy implies a revolution in business education and economics courses. Will our business schools work seriously with these themes? To do so they must introduce students to the schools of alternative economics that are trying to integrate family and community values and environmental concerns into traditional economics programs. They will have to focus their curricula on a renewed economic order in which economic development serves human dignity and ecological sustainability.

The pope offers a vision of global commerce, directed by Catholic social teaching, that promotes rather than repels global solidarity and that serves the common good. In fact, he claims, if globalization is well managed politically it will open the possibility of redistribution of wealth on a global scale. ***Will our economists and political scientists educate new generations in this vision and help develop it as a practical, if challenging, direction that the world needs to embrace?***

Politicians and citizens alike need to recognize that if there ever was some kind of absolute national sovereignty, it no longer exists. But there is still an important role for the nation state as well as for democratically participatory governing institutions at all levels. That role is not to compete ruthlessly to secure the future for its own people. It is to work together with all other political actors to build a workable global governance system that serves the

common good of the whole human family. Can our researchers and educators open up those concepts, counter knee-jerk reactions of fear and suspicion and help to develop systems that serve the common good of the whole human family?

Pope Benedict defines the solidarity we are all created to seek as a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone for everyone. To educate our nation in this vision and instill in it this motivation is truly the “love in truth” that defines authentic human development and our shared vocation.

What does “working in true communion”, “the communion and sharing of goods” imply? Is Pope Benedict advocating a form of socialism, or a more democratic capitalism?

Comment on the practical reality of “refocusing the whole educational enterprise, economic, political and social.”
