GLOBAL ETHICAL CHALLENGES IN THE LIGHT OF THE ENCYCICAL LAUDATO SI’ AND THE JUBILEE OF MERCY

In the light of both the Jubilee of Mercy (2016) and the Encyclical Laudato Si’, this article analyzes some global ethical challenges, which reflect an unmerciful world, and makes some suggestions for a new lifestyle based on mercy, gratuitousness, fraternity, and the common good. It emphasizes the fact that the human family “is the first and most important school of mercy.”

1 Francis, «Encyclical letter Laudato Si’», 24-05-2015, [=LS], Libreria Editrice Vaticana [=LEV], Vatican City 2015. Original version of this article (in Spanish): Didaskalia 46/1 (2016). In the body of the text, the quotations of the encyclical Laudato Si’ will be indicated with just the numbers in brackets.
2 Francis, «Address to the members of the diplomatic corps accredited to the Holy See», 11-01-2016, in L'Osservatore Romano, [=OR], 156/7 (11/12-01-2016) 4-5, here 4. "Family life is the first and irreplaceable school of social virtues, such as respect for persons, gratuitousness, trust, responsibility, solidarity, cooperation.” Benedict XVI, «Homily, 7th world meeting of families,” 3-06-2012, in Insegnamenti di Benedetto XVI, VIII/1 (2012), LEV, Città del Vaticano 1981, 693-697, here 695.
ciful relationships which we usually experience at home during childhood and that help us to discover the real face of our heavenly Father and the mystery of the Trinitarian “We.” The future of our common home depends on it.

The Earth is our common home and everything is related within it. Its cry goes along with that of all the abandoned who plead for justice. Unfortunately, indifference has become globalized and “human beings and material objects no longer extend a friendly hand to one another.” This has brought about today’s socio-environmental crisis, which is not the result of physical determinism, but of human behavior. To overcome it, we need to restore family relationships that favor being over having and do not appeal to an invisible hand to justify indifference towards human beings and nature.

The Social Doctrine of the Church always speaks of the human person as being “the beginning, the subject, and the goal of all social institutions” (GS 25). Therefore, LS deals with ecology, but it is mainly focussed on the human being and it urges us to heal our hearts and our relationships.

In the light of the encyclical LS, the first part of this paper studies some global ethical challenges, articulating the discourse into four main clusters. The first one deals with the omnipresent technocratic paradigm, which analyzes and dissects, but is unable to produce a comprehensive and inclusive vision. The remaining three sections deal with gratuitousness, fraternity, and the common good, as core dimensions that should be more present in our society. Following the same pattern, the second part points out some courses of action to meet these challenges through a moral approach, giving them their full human meaning and purpose.

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3 Francis, «Address», 11-01-2016, cit.
Content

1. A merciless world, devoid of relational goods
   1.1. The technocratic paradigm
      1.1.1. The consumerist and throwaway culture
      1.1.2. "Rapidification" and hyperconnection
      1.1.3. Absence of an integral and integrating vision of reality
   1.2. Gratuitousness excluded or ignored
      1.2.1. Inability to contemplate beauty
      1.2.2. A dialectic of perpetual conflict
      1.2.3. Institutionalized hatred and revenge
   1.3. Instrumental relationships
      1.3.1. Individualism rather than individuality
      1.3.2. The "non-tuism"
   1.4. Total good instead of common good
      1.4.1. The globalization of indifference
      1.4.2. Economic system without political control

2. Reconciliation and reconstruction of the cosmic family
   2.1. Mercy is God's face
      2.1.1. Mercy as the foundation of true justice
      2.1.2. Conflict resolution
   2.2. Retrieving the logic of gift and gratuitousness
      2.2.1. Prayerful contemplation instead of despotic rule
      2.2.2. The ethics of care and tenderness
   2.3. A cordial and universal family
      2.3.1. Overcoming a fragmented vision
      2.3.2. A direct and friendly communication
   2.4. Building together the common good
      2.4.1. Dialogue as a method
      2.4.2. The politics of mercy

Conclusion