

The Shortcomings of Capitalism and Communism  
in Light of John Paul II's "Humanness"

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## **DEDICATION**

To all who have helped me to rediscover the joy of being and to finally discover what it means to be a human person.

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**ABSTRACT**

The Shortcomings of Capitalism and Communism

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This thesis examines how the teachings of John Paul II could have an impact on social justice and economical systems. I demonstrate that the current crisis is more a humanistic than an economic crisis. Through what I have designated as John Paul II's "prism of humanness" fostered on his concept of the human person, I demonstrate that his teaching could have an impact in overcoming the current economic crisis. John Paul II's social justice is uniquely rooted in the relationship he has established about the nature of human person, his dignity, rights, justice, charity, his right to private property and work, forming a base for peace and development. Otherwise, lack of justice and charity first result in inequality and exploitation of humans by humans, and secondly lead to war and sometimes genocide. What happened in Rwanda is given as an example.

March 1, 2013.

## *CHAPTER ONE*

### **1.1 Capitalism, Socialism and John Paul II's 'Humanness'**

Since the demise of the Soviet state of communism, we have been living in a society increasingly dominated by capitalism and characterized by consumerism and globalization. John Paul II criticizes both consumerism and globalization as they had set a tension between capital and work. In his encyclical on human work, he asserts that as long as the principle of the priority of labour over capital is not observed, there will always be a tension between capital and labour, and the sense of the person as an end and not a means would be compromised. Thus, considering human labour solely according to its economic purpose is the error of economism. But it is also the error of materialism as it emphasizes the materiality and superiority of the material over the human person.<sup>1</sup>

From the perspective of Thomas R. Rourke, the actual crisis situation results from a false anthropological assumption of liberalism that lacks a "code of economic ethic", thus we cannot overcome it if we do not get to its very root, or "structure of sin", as John Paul II calls it.<sup>2</sup> Why does John Paul II condemn globalization? According to Rourke, the late pope condemns it for its materialism, economism, and its technological reductionism that is against the principle of subsidiarity and threatens individual freedom.<sup>3</sup> Could we say that by his teaching, John Paul II has offered a code of economic ethics that seems to be missing in the traditional structure of economy? Peter J. Henriot's response seems to be

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<sup>1</sup> *John Paul II, Encyclical Letter Laborem Exercens ( Rome: 1981),13. Why are the footnotes all in italic?*

<sup>2</sup> *Rourke R. Thomas, " Contemporary Globalization: An Ethical and Anthropological Evaluation ", Communio, 27 (Fall 2000), 493. In the footnotes the given name goes first and the family name second.*

<sup>3</sup> *Innovage, Pope John Paul II. A Tribute (Surrey: TAJ Books Ltd, 2005), 61.*

no. He calls it "moral equivalency", meaning the "non position" of John Paul after the collapse of the Soviet communism.<sup>4</sup> The pope has upset some people by condemning capitalism. Nonetheless, there are some scholars who interpret John Paul II's position as a range between socialism and capitalism and see him on the side of Liberation Theology as he firmly defends the poor as the liberation theologians do. John Paul II says:

A consistent theme of Catholic social teaching is the option or love of preference for the poor. Today, this preference has to be expressed in worldwide dimensions, embracing the immense numbers of the hungry, the needy, the homeless, those without medical care, and those without hope.<sup>5</sup>

However, John Paul II condemns this theology as a political movement, and, Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger criticized it as a "Christianized Marxism". I argue that by condemning Communism as it takes away the innate rights of the human person by making them a "cog" (as he calls it) in the state machine,<sup>6</sup> John Paul II defines where the church stands during the post-communist period. He says that the church's social teaching is not the third option between capitalism and communism. It is not an ideology. It aims to invite the world to reconsider the Christian vision of the human person and its "capacity for transcendence" and it asks for a commitment to justice."<sup>7</sup> In my study, I will show the originality of John Paul II's thoughts regarding social justice. A thoroughly painted canvass shows that John Paul II's teachings on social justice are based on the close relationship he establishes between justice and charity on one side and the nature of the

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<sup>4</sup> Henriot Peter J., "Economics as if People Mattered" in *Catholic Theological Ethics. Past, Present, and Future*, edited by James F. Keenan (New York: Orbis books, 2011), 250.

<sup>5</sup> John Paul II, Encyclical Letter "Sollicitudo Rei Socialis" (Roma: December 30, 1981), 42.

<sup>6</sup> John Paul II, Encyclical Letter "Centesimus Annus" (Roma: May 1, 1991), 15.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.



human person and his/her absolute rights on the other. He states that charity without justice becomes random or uncertain, precarious and sentimental. On the other hand, justice without charity risks becoming partial and legalistic. Thus, there is no secular and profane domain of justice just as there is no religious and Christian domain of charity. The relationship between charity and justice is qualified as a co-present, mutual complement. For “charity is the source, the summit and the crown of justice just as justice originates totally from love and blossoms in love. Justice is founded on love, comes from it and tends towards it.”<sup>8</sup> Along with this closeness that he establishes between the human person who, on the individual level, is created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26), but on the global level, John Paul II sees all of humanity as one single human person in its inner unity so that each individual is a member of this worldwide body. Henceforth, based on the principle of solidarity, peace would be a consequence of the close relationship among charity, justice and development, on the individual, national, continental and global levels. For, “there is no peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness.” He insisted that “Peace is for all or for none.”<sup>9</sup> John Paul II proposed a concept of “economic personalism” as Gronbacher called it<sup>10</sup>. Gronbacher said that John Paul’s economic personalism is based on the close relationship between faith and economic activity for human beings and is characterized by the principles of subsidiarity, solidarity, that the goods of the world are originally meant for all, and on the

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<sup>8</sup> *John Paul II, Dives in Misericordia (Roma: November 30, 1980) no. 7.*

<sup>9</sup> *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, 26.*

<sup>10</sup> *Gronbacher Gregory M.A., “The Need for Economic Personalism”, Journal of Markets and Morality (March 1998): 1-34.*

right to private property, but that all private property is under a "social mortgage"<sup>11</sup>. Can John Paul II's thoughts be considered as "distributism"? My answer is no because distributism is foremost an economic theory. Moreover, it criticizes the holding of a large concentration of money, wealth or property. Distributism's view is different from John Paul II's view on wealth and property as he asserts that what is in question is not just the multiplying of things, but the advancement of persons. According to him, a purely materialistic civilization is the antagonist of the civilization of love in which there should be people who have a surplus of goods on one hand and suffers on the other hand.<sup>12</sup> He stresses that it is not so much an issue of having more, but of being more<sup>13</sup>. The pope condemns the misuses of goods by the rich as the moral disorder in the world.<sup>14</sup> The danger is that while making advances in its dominion over things, humanity is subjected to the world, becoming the slave of things, of the economic system and of production. A purely materialistic civilization condemns humanity to such slavery, even though it might not have been the intention. It is also for the same reason that I argue that John Paul II does not promote "communitarianism" as it is, in the words of Kenneth L. Grasso, flawed and destructive of both community and freedom<sup>15</sup> and as such, it doesn't contribute to the sake of human person. In the vocabulary of John Paul II's, he makes a clear distinction between a human being and human person. He refers to this later only when he considers

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<sup>11</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 42.

<sup>12</sup> John Paul II, "Redemptor Hominis" (Roma: March 4, 1979), 16.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup> Kenneth L. Grasso, Gerard V. Bradley, and Robert P. Hunt, editors, *Catholicism, Liberalism, and Communitarianism* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1995), 8

him as a subject of dignity, freedom, rights and responsibilities. John Paul II gets to this vision thanks to the inputs of his personalistic view and social sciences.

It is clear that John Paul II's thoughts on social justice embrace many domains other than the economic domain. Hence, I use the analogy of a prism to show that through his social justice thoughts, socialism, capitalism and distributism should find what they are lacking in fully serve the human person. I suggest rather the analogy of a "prism" through which refracts the significance of Christian thoughts on social-economic justice.

I liken the fundamentals of John Paul II's thoughts on social justice to a triangular prism. There are two bases. The first would be, of course, the human person and his or her inalienable rights. The second base of the prism would be his views on justice and charity. Peace and development, peace and human freedom and development and private propriety would form the three faces of the prism. Lastly, the three lateral edges which join the faces and connect to the bases are the principle of subsidiarity, the principle of solidarity and human work.

## **1.2 Capitalism, Max Weber and John Paul II**

What does the pope have to do with capitalism, an economic-political system? Does the pope have the right to involve himself in politics? John Paul II responds to this question by saying, "the church has no models to offer. Models develop out of concrete

situations. Instead, the church offers its social teaching as an indispensable and ideal orientation"<sup>16</sup>

One of the main characteristics of capitalism is an accumulation of capital and a competitive market, whereby the ownership of businesses, factories and transportation, is private, rather than state owned. Modern capitalism developed in 19<sup>th</sup> century Western societies after the industrial revolution. From the point of view of a socialist such as Karl Marx, however, capitalism might be condemned as dependent on the exploitation of workers (or proletariat) who own nothing but their labour which they must sell in a market controlled and owned by the capitalist class (or bourgeoisie). From a non-Marxist point of view, capitalism might be defined as a system in which property is privately owned and goods are sold freely in a competitive market, but without reference to exploitation. Although a highly productive economic system, capitalism can give rise to environmental and social problems (unemployment, for example). For his reference to religion in his teaching on capitalism, we will consider the German sociologist and economist, Max Weber.

Weber argues that the success of capitalism results from the Calvinist ethic whose doctrine of predestination ensures salvation to those who accumulate wealth through hard, careful and disciplined work. He exposes his thoughts in his best known work *Die Protestantische Ethik und der Geist des Kapitalismus* (1904, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*), which had a major influence on sociological theory.<sup>17</sup> Weber

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<sup>16</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 43.

<sup>17</sup> *The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia*, edited by David Crystal, 2nd edition (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 981.

observes that capitalism flourished in 17<sup>th</sup> century Holland, France, England and the Americas, countries dominated by Calvinism, whereas it was stagnating in the predominantly Catholic countries such as Spain and Portugal. He asserts, then, that Calvinism, particularly its doctrine of predestination, may have played a role in the success of capitalism. According to this doctrine, man is predestined to either damnation or salvation, and it is God who has decided that for all eternity. Therefore, according to one is already whether saved or damned, this would be manifested in how one worked for the glory for God. And to succeed in one's profession, one must not only work hard, but also avoid attachments to pleasure.

This avoidance of addiction to pleasure, coupled with a strong work ethic, which Weber calls 'worldly asceticism', are key to the accumulation of wealth, which, for the Calvinist, is the tangible evidence of salvation. So, worldly asceticism favors capitalist accumulation, because the Calvinist and Puritan work hard for it. From one's hard work, one makes a profit, which is not consumed without restraint, but is invested, which further builds the profit he accumulates. Contrarily, sudden wealth, gained through immoral means such as piracy, theft or gaming, is fragile and tends to be quickly squandered on purchases which raise one's prestige in society and thus, does not provide evidence of salvation. It is in this ethic of Protestantism, and its worldly asceticism, therefore, that Capitalism has had its growth and momentum.

While Protestantism, especially Puritan Calvinism, was behind the rise of capitalism in Protestant countries, Weber notes that Catholicism, with its salvation that is extra-worldly, and a view that one's occupation or vocation in life has no positive value in the search for salvation, could not, at that time, inspire growth in a capitalist society.

This, he feels, was demonstrated in the stagnation of capitalism in Catholic dominated countries. The “spirit of capitalism” to which Weber refers was not present here since it is more about an economic morality. Though, for Protestantism the work is not an end in itself, however, it manifests the glory of God. But for John Paul II this glorification of God is manifested by the human person through his work since the work itself has no meaning by itself, instead it is always the human being who counts, even the work done is the most monotonous or alienating. In other words, human person and not what they do determine the dignity of work as well as the work expresses and increases the worker's dignity.<sup>18</sup>

At the end of the 20th century, the church was facing a new world, a new type of ownership had appeared and a new form of labor according to the law of supply and demand. Society was divided into two classes, separated by a deep gap between labor and capital. It was a society of injustice, with opulence on the one hand, and poverty on the other; with people who work hard for an insignificant wage. Pope Leo XIII, wanting peace, condemned class struggle and its inequality. However, wishing that this peace be built on justice, he set out some of its conditions. He published his encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, the first one on social matters in the history of papacy.

Pope Leo XIII writes on the dignity of work, and of the rights and dignity of workers and asks that the wage be not only proportioned to the services done, but also that it allow the family to live and have something to set aside to help them in due time. He says this because everyone has the right to things that are necessary. The public

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<sup>18</sup>Laborem Exercens, 6; 9.

authority has to guarantee these rights. The state must not favor the rich while neglecting the poor. Leo XIII reflects on the principle of solidarity which may be applied locally, nationally and internationally, and the principle of subsidiarity by which the state must not interfere in the matters that ought to be handled by the smallest, lowest or least centralized competent authority. Cardinal Donald Wuerl argues that

[t]he two principles should govern social life. The principle of solidarity recognizes that each person, as a member of society, is interconnected with the destiny of society itself and, from the perspective of the gospel, is also bound up with the salvation of all women and men. Subsidiarity complements the principle of solidarity. By this principle, the individual person, local communities, and intermediary bodies of governance are protected from the danger of losing their rightful autonomy and freedom. The authentic development of socioeconomic, political, and cultural life, ending in just and peaceful coexistence, is only possible with the just and responsible participation of all members and sectors of society. The goods of the earth are given by God to all people in order that they might satisfy their right to a form of life in keeping with their human dignity. While the right to private property is valid and necessary, it is nevertheless restricted within the limit of its social function.<sup>19</sup>

A century later, John Paul II sees that the lack of solidarity leads to a radical alienation in materialism as it subordinates the spiritual and truly personal aspects of the human person to the material and results in two camps one of rich with surplus, another one composed by people in needs. Also, Leo XIII insists that government should undertake only those initiatives which exceed the capacity of individuals or private groups acting independently. In "*Centesimus Annus*", Pope John Paul II states that Leo XIII uses the term of "friendship" to describe the principle of solidarity, Pius XI, calls it "social charity" while Paul VI speaks of a "civilization of love"<sup>20</sup>.

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<sup>19</sup> Wuerl Cardinal Donald, *The Gift of Blessed John Paul II. A celebration of his Enduring Legacy (Frederick: The Word Among Us, 2011)*, 161-62.

<sup>20</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 10.

According to John Paul II, what is wrong in consumerism is that it seeks improvement in what one has and not what one is. He proposes that the new material and instinctive needs should remain subordinate to humanity's interior and spiritual needs, for appealing to instinct only may create a lifestyle and consumer attitudes that are damaging to spiritual and physical health. As a consequence of consumerism and the malfunction of society, John Paul II gives the use of drugs and pornography as examples.<sup>21</sup> Because of consumerism, argues the pope, humanity is consuming the resources of the earth and life in an excessive and disordered way, forgetting the earth's own needs and God-given purpose, provoking rebellion on the part of nature, and overlooking our duties and obligations toward future generations.<sup>22</sup> In a direct way John Paul II advises against a radically capitalist system in which economic, religious, and ethical freedoms are denied.<sup>23</sup> As a proposal to this capitalist system, John Paul II recalls that the rights of workers are to be respected and be involved in the life of industrial enterprises. According to him, doing so would promote a greater productivity and efficiency.<sup>24</sup> While addressing factory workers at Transfield Limited in Sydney, Australia (November 26, 1986), the pope admires the positive sides of technology that clearly demonstrate the ingenuity of the human person. However, the pope regrets that the size and complexity of the machines used can make the worker seem merely a part of the machine, just another cog in the whole process of production. He insists that human work is a key, probably the essential key, to the whole social question, if we really try to see the question from the

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<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 36.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 42.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.



point of human good. He claims that the goods of the world belong to the whole human family and a person would need to work in order to have a necessary share of these good things. He ends by stating that it is always the human person who is the purpose of work; it is the responsibility of all individuals and all groups to be concerned with the problems and involved in finding solutions; finally, the rights of the human person are the key element in the whole of the social moral order.<sup>25</sup>

In summary, then, the heart of John Paul II's view of capitalism rests on the claim that there is a difference between business economy and the culture of consumerism. Business economy is an instrument for effectively utilizing resources and responding to needs. It places a prominent role on disciplined and creative work, initiative, and entrepreneurial ability, operating in the economic sphere in a manner that accords with human dignity.

In contrast, the culture of consumerism involves a life-orienting belief that is purely materialistic. Why do we live? Only to produce and consume? How does one find happiness? The culture of consumerism seduces us with appeals to our material desires but offers us instead a hollow and unsatisfying answer to life's deepest questions. The pope makes this distinction explicit when he states that these criticisms are directed not so much against an economic system as against an ethical and cultural system. So the pope favors the market economy but is critical of the culture of consumerism.

Capitalism has its rival social economic system, communism, which is a political ideology rooted in communal ownership of all propriety, and propose the abolition of

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<sup>25</sup> *Address of John Paul II to the workers in the factory "Transfield Limited", Sydney (Australia), November 26, 1986 in Novage, 38.*

private property. For Karl Marx, communism would be the final stage in a historical stage process where they would not be classes distinction and the exploitation of the masses in the capitalist system.<sup>26</sup> We have examined the beginnings of and influences on capitalism; let us now consider the economic system called Socialism, an economical and social system that aims to make in action the ideology of communism. That is why the socialism we will be referring to is Socialism Marxist. This form of socialism was founded by Karl Heinrich Marx (1818-83). Karl Marx was a Jew born in Trier, in Germany. His thought on religion is in the global context of some Germany's criticism of religion of that period. For them, the main premise is that "man makes religion; religion does not make man"<sup>27</sup>. This vision states that "man, who looked for a superman in the fantastic reality of heaven and found nothing there but the reflection of himself, will no longer be disposed to find but the semblance of himself, the non-human [unmensch] where he seeks and must seek his true reality"<sup>28</sup>. Hegel, for example, states that ideas or thought must be shaped in matter, because only matter exists, and only what is matter is real. For our ideas or thoughts depend on materiality, the truth would result from what Hegel called "a dialectic method": affirming something (thesis), denying it (antithesis), and combining the two half-truths in a synthesis which contains a greater portion of truth in its complexity.<sup>29</sup> For example, it is from this point of view that Feuerbach asserts, in

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<sup>26</sup> Hitchens Christopher, *The Portable Atheist. Essential Reading for the Nonbeliever* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2007), 64.

<sup>27</sup> Christopher Hitchens, *The Portable Atheist. Essential Reading for the Nonbeliever* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2007), 64.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> "Hegel", in *The Cambridge Biographical Encyclopedia*, 434.

his famous work "*Das Wesen des Christentums*" (The Essence of Christianity, 1841)<sup>30</sup> that religion is the projection of human qualities onto an imaginary supreme being which results in one's alienation from oneself, and the projection of ideal human qualities onto a "fictitious supreme other". And according to Feuerbach's negative view, God does not exist because God is a production of human imagination, and the qualities that human beings project on God, are nothing other than our own human qualities that they could never achieve. It is this projection that Feuerbach calls "human alienation", because humankind empties himself of the qualities that belong to him to project them onto a divine being. Religion, in Feuerbach's opinion, should be replaced by humanism.

From both Hegel and Feuerbach, Karl Marx builds his philosophical-social economic system known as "Materialism Marxism". However, Marx's principal concern, unlike Hegel, is not the philosophical method, nor the criticism of religion, like Feuerbach did. For Marx, criticism of religion is the basis of all criticism. Marx's aim is, above all, the unearthing of the economic laws of modern society, and showing that these laws assure the ultimate triumph of the proletariat.<sup>31</sup> Marx's presumption was that if one suppresses the "real misery" of humankind in the capitalist society, economic misery with its inequality of the classes, religion, an "*opium*", would disappear by itself. This misery was embodied in the existence of the classes like "workers" (or "*proletariat*") which produce more wealth ("value") than it actually enjoys, and the "bourgeoisie" (or the "capitalists") which seizes the remainder ("surplus value") because it possesses the means of production (machinery, natural resources, transports and financial credit). By so doing,

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<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 325.

<sup>31</sup> Marx Karl, *Das Kapital. A Critique of Political Economy* (Washington.D.C.: Gateway Editions, 2009), xii.

the capitalist oppresses the proletariat, resulting in the increasing inequality between these two classes. Marx argues that the capitalist who owns the means of production also appropriates the product, while the worker who produces it is given a fixed wage. This wage does not correspond to the value created by the worker; hence there is what Marx designates "social injustice"<sup>32</sup>.

However, it seems that it was by adapting Hegel's philosophy that Marx replaced its idealistic metaphysic with a materialistic view in which religion is criticized as an alienation of people. Christopher Hitchens, commenting on the thoughts of Karl Marx on religion, asserts that for Marx, "religion is the general theory of that world [of social injustice], its encyclopedic compendium, its logic in a popular form, its moral sanction, its moral solemn completion, its universal ground for consolation and justification."<sup>33</sup>

According to Marx, religion is the balm or narcotic that people take to endure the wounds and pain received from this oppressive, heartless, spiritless world whose people only think they are happy. In order for human beings to discover true happiness, then, they must remove this false poultice, this delusion offered by religion. Mankind must find truth and reality in himself. Once we have rid ourselves of the illusory world of religion, the truth is found in history. The role of philosophy, then, is to serve history by unveiling self-alienation in all its forms. Thus logically, the criticism of heaven turns into criticism

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<sup>32</sup> *Hitchens, 64-65.*

<sup>33</sup> *Hitchens, 64.*

of earth, the criticism of religion into the criticism of right and the criticism of theology into the criticism of politics<sup>34</sup>.

Talking about the founder of socialism, James Garvey and Jeremy Strangroomstate that there are not many philosophers who can claim they were at least partly responsible for the way the history of an entire century unfolded, except Marx in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.<sup>35</sup> He inspired the revolution that took place in that century in Russia, and China, and of course, the Cold War where western capitalist countries came head to head with societies who identified themselves as being socialist or communist. In the Communist Manifesto, written with his friend Friedrich Engels, Marx gave the following call to arms:

The Communists disdain to conceal their views and aims. They openly declare that their ends can be attained only by the forcible overthrow of all existing social conditions. Let the ruling classes tremble at a communist revolution. The proletariats have nothing to lose but their chains. They have a world to win. Workers of all countries, unite!<sup>36</sup>

In his Communist Manifesto, Marx claims that in this economic system, ideally, everyone would share the benefits of industrialization. Socialism was not a political system, but a way of distributing goods. All would produce exactly what was needed for exactly who needed it. In practice, both work sometimes in microeconomic conditions but fail miserably when applied to national and international economies.<sup>37</sup> And they fail for the

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<sup>34</sup> Marx, 64-5.

<sup>35</sup> Garvey James and Strangroom, Jeremy, *The History of Philosophy. A History of Western Thought (United Kingdom: Quercus, 2012)*, 246-55.

<sup>36</sup> Garvey, 246.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibid.*

same reason: human perversity. Too many people do not like to play fair, and both systems only work when everyone follows the same rules.

Garvey asserts that the best entry point into Marx's idea is probably his view on the nature of human beings. The first thing to say is that Marxist scholars deny he has a true theory of human nature, arguing instead that he views the human person as a sort of blank slate with the human mind being formed by one's experiences within a certain social and material context. Although Marx does not think of human nature in the same terms as, say, a contemporary evolutionary psychologist,<sup>38</sup> he does have certain ideas about the nature of human beings that inform his wider political analysis. For example, Marx claims that it is the nature of human beings to cooperate with each other in a process of freely chosen labour. He believes that the relationships between human beings are necessarily antagonistic. Moreover, Marx goes on by saying that the earliest hunter-gatherer societies were relatively free of conflict, largely because the absence of any surplus production meant there was no private property to create a division between the haves and have-nots<sup>39</sup>. According to Marx, we realize our humanity through our labour, and we can come to full self-realization in the process of transforming the world in our own image. In addition, it is his concept of alienation that provides the moral force to criticize capitalism.<sup>40</sup> Marx's idea of alienation is linked to his belief that we become fully human through our labour. Simply stated, people are alienated when they are separated from the products of their labour and from the labour process itself, which occurs when

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<sup>38</sup> *Ibid.* 247.

<sup>39</sup> *Garvey*, 247.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 247-53.

they have no control over their productive situation. Thus, it is in capitalist society that alienation is most pronounced, as capitalism is characterized by a fundamental conflict between two inevitably opposed classes, the bourgeoisie, the owners of factories, machinery and so on, and the proletariat, the workers, who only own their labour. The proletariat is alienated because they have almost no control over the labour process, and because their productive energies are exhausted in the service of a class that exploits them.

However, the labourers have a way out of this situation. Capitalism is an unstable system because it is filled with contradictions. In order to bring down capitalism the proletariat must take advantage of the inevitable crises that arise in capitalist societies. In Marx's opinion, it is the destiny of the proletariat, to abolish all class distinction, instituting a new form of society, communism, based on collective ownership. In doing so, they will end the alienation of people from the products of their labour, from the labour process itself, and from their essential.<sup>41</sup>

The 18<sup>th</sup> century saw the birth of a new form of capitalism in England. What was this new liberal capitalism and how did it stand up to Marxist socialism? Liberal capitalism is a socio-legal system whose basic structure is the private ownership of the goods of production. (How does this compare to the previous form of capitalism?) That is to say, the capitalist's (or boss') private appropriation of the means of production is at the expense of workers who only benefit minimally. In this system, the right to private ownership is seen as a natural right, but at the same time, it eliminates the social function

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<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 253.

(which is a key aspect), which should be, ideally, the common use of what is owned.

John Paul II says: We obviously must not prevent others from having their own part of God's gift.<sup>42</sup> The problem with liberal capitalism is that it still exalts individual freedom and the accumulation of wealth or goods at the risk of crushing or selling the common people.

However, we can recognize the positive effects of capitalism system in general that improves living standards and the development of the industrial sector. Unfortunately, there are intolerable negative effects in liberal capitalism that seems to divide the society into two opposing classes: rich and poor, workers and capital. Fortunately, liberal capitalism has given way to "neo-capitalism" which places more attention on the human being, by denying the pure logic of total freedom of private initiative, competition, productivity and market.<sup>43</sup> As for the Marxist socialist system, it is a rather humanist socio-economic trend born in reaction against capitalism that, according to its founder, continued to generate social injustices. This system defends the working social class delivered up to liberal capitalism and crushed by the bourgeois class. Thus, it is necessary to have a revolution in which private ownership, the State, the middle classes and social classes will be abolished, and true power will be only in the hands of the proletariat. So Marxist socialism appeared before the eyes of the proletariat as a symbol of human justice and a better world characterized by what was called the "Marxist utopia", this earthly paradise that embodied the socialist society. The good thing about this system is that it focuses on human being whom he accuses capitalism of

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<sup>42</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 31.

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.



having exploited. Now, according to Marxist thought, humans are masters of their history. But, there are negative aspects to this system as well - such as the suppression of fundamental human rights - private ownership and freedom, since a human being, the individual, is erased at the expense of the community or the state.

Moreover, John Paul II not only calls for a dialogue and condemns socialism, but he also centered his social teaching on the understanding of the true nature and value of the human person. I argue that by so doing John Paul II reaffirms the continuity of the social doctrine as well as its constant renewal. What is specific in John Paul II's thought is his call for the creation of a new international economic order capable of protecting both individuals and the common good.

In this new vision, John Paul II, like his predecessors, condemns socialism, but not only for those reason laid out in *Rerum Novarum*. John Paul II says that it puts people in crisis due to the weakness of the economic system (Marxism). It is not just the system's economic inefficiency which the Pope designates as its only flaw, but that it violates the human right to private initiative, to ownership of property, and to freedom in the economic sector. As well, Marxism leaves an emptiness in the human heart when it denies the need for God, and the heart cannot be left empty in this way. John Paul II criticizes socialism as a political system that confuses itself with the kingdom of God. The Pope says that the church reaffirms integral human liberation.<sup>44</sup>

Also, from the Catholic point of view, preventing people from having their own private property, is to prevent them from the source of something that would be a means

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<sup>44</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 26.

to their sanctification (Matthew 25: 14-30). Here, property is what has been given to some people in order to multiply it as good and entrusted to us by God. Everyone would be judged on how he has been a good steward of what he has been given and on how he has shared it with the poor (Matthew 25: 31-46). In addition, a moderate private property would encourage people to take initiative and feel responsibility in economic matters, and from that they would produce enough to share with the poor. But this needs, from the point of view of John Paul II, an ethic of solidarity on the international economic scene for a right distribution of goods for the whole of humanity. Therefore, both the principle of subsidiarity and the right of nations must be strictly observed for an international cooperation, as it is called for by the Charter of the United Nations, for "solving international problems of an economic."<sup>45</sup> It is this pope's new invitation on an international economy based on the nature and value of the human person that I aim to explore in this paper.

However, studying the teachings of John Paul II on social justice is a hazardous project because he had written so much during his papacy. I would not pretend to have fully explored the richness of his wisdom and humanness.

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<sup>45</sup>*Innovage*, 62.

## ***CHAPTER TWO***

### ***JOHN PAUL II'S PRISM OF HUMANNESS***

#### ***2.1 Prism of Humanness***

When considering John Paul II's vast amount of writing to promote the dignity of the human person, particularly in the areas of social justice and economy, I analogically compare his thinking to a triangular prism through which other social economic theories should be examined in order to fully understand their affects on the human person. The thoughts of John Paul II on the subject of the human person are discussed and organized in this chapter according to the structure of the prism: the bases, the sides and the lateral edges. First, however, let us consider his ideas from the perspective of the purposes of a prism. Just as a prism is an instrument that can be used to better understand light and its spectrum of colours, so too can we use John Paul II's ideas and thoughts on social justice and economy as an instrument through which we might view our current economic and ethical crisis, and thus understand the shortcomings of our different systems of economy and social justice, particularly in regards to the human person whom they are supposed to serve.

One such social and economic system is consumerism, the highest goal of which, as Andrew V. Abela notes, is material accumulation and consumption. This current way of living constitutes a serious threat to liberty, as it weakens the virtue necessary for a

people to govern itself.<sup>46</sup> This would be reason enough for Pope John Paul II, and after him Pope Benedict XVI, to oppose consumerism, as they claim it turns people into "slaves of possession and of immediate gratification."<sup>47</sup> It is an excessive desire for material consumption that does not count human value. Using the prism of John Paul II's thoughts on economy, which are rooted in the value of the human person and the value of life, to reflect light onto and through consumerism, one might see the negative aspects or refractions of a system that neglects the great value of the human person by minimizing human value down to one's ability to produce and consume. However, what John Paul II condemns is not the desire for material prosperity itself, but rather the desire for having more in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end itself. It is just at this point that the Pope sees consumerism and its culture as a serious harm to liberty and human fulfillment,<sup>48</sup> for "man should not live on bread alone, but on every Word that proceeds out of the mouth of God" (Matthew 4:4).<sup>49</sup>

According to Thomas Rourke, John Paul II not only condemns consumerism, but he also condemns the economic globalization for it doesn't observe the principle of subsidiarity within nations.<sup>50</sup> Also, it does not in itself guarantee a fair distribution of goods among the citizens of different countries, but rather, it occasions that the wealth

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<sup>46</sup> Abela Andrew V., "The Price of Freedom: Consumerism and Liberty in Secular Research and Catholic Teaching", *Journal of Markets and Morality*, Vol. 10, no. 1 (Spring 2007): 7.

<sup>47</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

<sup>48</sup> *Ibid.*, 19.

<sup>49</sup> In this paper I will be using *The New Oxford Annotated Bible*, Edited by Bruce M. Metzger and Roland E. Murphy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991).

<sup>50</sup> Rourke, 510.

produced is concentrated in the hands of a small group of persons. In this context, globalization which would offers the numerous advantages of bringing peoples and cultures closer together in the name of solidarity<sup>51</sup>, but it is also by lack of solidarity that economic globalization works to the detriment of the poor, and pushes poorer nations to the margin of international economic and political relations as long as it is rooted in materialism and in economism, which are both against the principle of subsidiarity.<sup>52</sup> Here, the pope's 'prism' reflects light onto materialism, revealing the actual meaning of the word economy. In fact, economy, etymologically and principally, means "which belongs to the house" (economy is an English word originated from "*oikos*" a Greek word for house). John Paul II's 'Prism of humanness' could refract, and thus reveal, what consumerism has hidden under the concept of economy.

In his address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization in New York on October 5, 1995, Pope John Paul II condemns consumerism and utilitarianism, "the doctrine which defines morality, not in terms of what is good but of what is advantageous and threatens the freedom of individuals, nations and obstructs the building of a true culture of freedom"<sup>53</sup>, and calls for "rights of nations" that he defines as "nothing but 'human rights' fostered at the specific level of community life, a nation, that must exist in its sovereignty, its culture and peace."<sup>54</sup> In this address, the pope shows the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity that should shine

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<sup>51</sup> centesimus Annus, 34.

<sup>52</sup> *Rourke*, 510.

<sup>53</sup> *Innovage*, 61.

<sup>54</sup> *Ibid.*

like a light in the new "civilization of love", an expression that he borrowed from Paul VI.

By so doing, John Paul II's aim is to remind the whole of humanity what is central and important: the dignity of every human person, his rights and his freedom. The pope is the spiritual leader of the Catholic Church which is an "expert in humanity," as Paul VI pointed out while addressing the United Nations Assembly on October 4, 1965. John Paul II invites all humanity to move from the "culture of death" - to which consumerism, globalization and utilitarianism lead - to the "Christian culture of life,"<sup>55</sup> in accordance to what Jesus has stressed as his earthly mission through the gospel according to John (John 10:10). It is only in this way that humanity would be able to build a "civilization of love" where everyone may have life and live life to the fullest. For this purpose, John Paul II, while presenting his letter encyclical *The Gospel of Life*, asserts:

...there is a multitude of weak and defenseless people, unborn children in particular, whose right to life is trampled upon. The church cannot remain silent today when the social justices of the past are being compounded in many regions of the world with even more serious forms of injustice and oppression, though these developments are being presented as elements of progress in view of a new world order. This encyclical appeals in the name of God to everyone to repent and to protect, love, and serve every human life. Together with all my brothers and sisters in the faith, I wish to meditate once more and proclaim the Gospel of life. I pray that a general commitment to support the family will reappear, as the family will always remain the "sanctuary of life." Let us together offer this world new signs of hope, affirming a new culture of life and building a civilization of truth and love.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter, "Evangelium Vitae" (Roma: March 25, 1995)*,3.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

In the same letter, John Paul II, commenting on the first act of violence that humanity had committed through the murder of Abel by Cain (Genesis 4:8), affirms that at the root of every act of violence is a concession to the thinking of the evil one, who was a murderer from the beginning (John 8:44). Cain, in his response to God by denying that he was his brother's keeper, tried to cover up his crime with a lie. On this point, the pope argues that Cain did the same as many ideologies that try to justify and disguise the most atrocious crimes against human beings have done, in refusing to accept responsibility for their brothers and sisters. Then, John Paul II declares:

Symptoms of violence include the lack of solidarity towards society's weakest members, such the elderly, immigrants, and children, and the indifference often found in the relations between the world's peoples even when basic values as survival, freedom, and peace are involved. God cannot leave crime unpunished. Among the 'sins that cry for justice the church has included willful murder as the first. Life, especially human life, belongs to God; whoever attacks human life attacks God's very self.<sup>57</sup>

It is now clear that, in John Paul's mind, humanity, being one and a single body, should protect its members' lives since every human body's members contributes in defending each member's wound or illness. Thus, aiming to be faithful to John Paul II's thought on social justice, this second chapter is (or will be) an examination of these thoughts. These are articulated on the principle that the human person is created in the image and likeness of God; the life of a human person has value and must be protected by himself/herself and everyone else.

In the following pages, I want to look at the closeness between John Paul II's understanding of human person, social and justice system as well as peace and development. I will show that for John Paul II, solidarity and subsidiarity and human

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<sup>57</sup> *Evangelium Vitae*, 8-9.

work are the jointing points to human dignity, the justice and charity, but also are the conditions for peace and development as well as they are the keys of economic crisis, according to John Paul II's address to the Transfield Limited factory workers in Sydney, Australia.<sup>58</sup>

## **2.2 The Two Bases of the Prism: John Paul II and his Humanness**

### **2.2.1 The Concept of Humanness**

By 'humanness' I refer to how John Paul II's thought on economic social justice is grounded in his conception of the human person. I have come to understand that the way by which John Paul II treats the human person is globally "humanocentric". Although one would argue that John Paul II's social justice economy is humanism, as it is "human-centered", I personally reject such idea by asserting that his humanism extends beyond that of other traditional humanists. Therefore, from my point of view, John Paul II's "human-centeredness" brings a light to the so- known as traditional humanists, for example, Ludwig Feuerbach's, "*homo homine Deus est*", to Karl Marx's dialectical materialism, to Friedrich Nietzsche's "existential situation", to Jean- Paul Sartre's existentialism and to many other secular humanist movements.

I designate John Paul II's humanism as "humanness" for it is a synthesis that combines theological, anthropological and personalistic views of human nature according to the personalists like Thomas Aquinas, Kant, John of the Cross and Max Scheler. In other words, he uses a theological- anthropological- personalistic method for

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<sup>58</sup> *Innovage*, 38.



his synthesis whose material object is the "human person" with his value, dignity and rights, and whose formal object is his relationship with God and other human beings, as he has mentioned it himself in his book *Ma Vocation. Don et Mystere* (My Vocation. Gift and Mystery).<sup>59</sup> In fact, talking about his vocation to priesthood on the occasion of his 50th anniversary, John Paul II, indicates the origin of his theological thought. The pope reveals that he has been influenced by John of the Cross on whom he wrote his doctoral thesis and Max Scheler from whom he took the phenomenological view of a human person<sup>60</sup>. The pope affirms that the book *Personne et acte* has influenced him in his philosophical personalistic thought, as have John of the Cross, Max Scheler, and Thomas Aquinas influenced his humanocentric thought which is personalistic, anthropocentric and theocentric. But, one could ask 'What do I mean by John Paul II's personalistic view of human person?' How does it differ from other humanistic views like Vico's, Feuerbach's, Karl Marx's, Friederick Nietzsche's, Jean Paul Sartre's, Karl Barth's, Jacques Maritain's, or Martin Heidegger's views of human nature? John Paul's view of human being nature is foremost personalistic, then anthropological and theological and ethical.

### **2.3 John Paul II: Humanocentric as Personalistic**

According to Thomas D. Williams, the term "personalism" was coined by Renouvier in 1903 to describe his philosophy. But, the scholars are divided about when the concept of personalism came into use. Some, like Fernando Moreno Valencia state

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<sup>59</sup> For his Golden Sacerdotal Jubilee, the pope wrote this book in which he gives his testimony on his vocation to priesthood. The book is entitled: *Jean-Paul II, Ma Vocation. Don et Mystere* (Saint-Cenere: Bayard Editions, 1996).

<sup>60</sup> *Jean- Paul II, Ma Vocation. Don et Mystere* (Saint-Cenere: Bayard Editions, 1996), 106-8.

that in the Pontifical Council for the Family<sup>61</sup>, the notion of "person" is inherited from the ancient Greeks - especially from Aristotle - and since then, has evolved, whereas some others think that the philosophical concept of personalism was present in the "Middle Ages"<sup>62</sup> under the concept of "Christian personalism" at the time of St. Thomas Aquinas.

Having noticed the influence of Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas on John Paul II's personalistic view of the human person, I can conclude that a personalistic concept existed even before the Middle Ages. John Paul II himself reveals that in writing his doctorate thesis on the impact that Scheler's phenomenological type of ethical system would have on the development of moral theology, he was influenced by Aristotle, Thomas Aquinas and John of the Cross, but also a phenomenological influence in his view of the human person.<sup>63</sup> Hence defining a human person in relationship to his unique value and free will according to what he states in his encyclical *Laborem Excercens*.<sup>64</sup> Humanness is what makes John Paul II's personalistic view so unique.

Furthermore, John Paul II's personalistic perspective, based on the fact that the human person is a being with absolute value, implies that his rights are inviolable. The pope asserts that human person is a being of moral worth, the subject of inviolable rights that are to be recognized and respected by others. By thus considering the human person,

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<sup>61</sup> Valencia M. Fernando, "Family and Personalism", Pontifical Council for the Family. *Lexicon* (Virginia: Human Life International, 2006), 269.

<sup>62</sup> Williams D. Thomas, *Who is My Neighbor? Personalism and the Foundation of Human Rights* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 112 (note 10).

<sup>63</sup> John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery* (Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa, 1996), 108.

<sup>64</sup> John Paul II, Encyclical Letter, "*Laborem Excercens*" (Roma: 1981), no.6.

the pope is historically different from other scholars who have treated human beings as objects who are known, rather than the "subjects" who know. Then, the pope avers that man and everything that concerns him must consider him as a subject and not as an object or a thing. In what he calls "Theology of the Body", the pope claims that it is the human body that reveals and expresses the person as it tells us something about the nature of the personhood.<sup>65</sup> The pope says that the human person's "'rational soul' is *per se et essentialiter*" the form of his body " and is completely entrusted to himself, and it is in the unity of body and soul that the person is the subject of his own moral acts."<sup>66</sup>

In summary, John Paul II attempts to construct a humanism from his "own sense of philosophical personalism and Catholic orthodoxy, as a new and serious synthesis of classical thought."<sup>67</sup> Moreover, for John Paul II, the human person to whom he refers is both body and soul together as Christian anthropology, following Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas, and many Catholic Councils profess. But, one should ask what is specific in John Paul II's anthropologic view? What is, therefore, John Paul II's anthropological thought on the nature of human being?

#### **2.4 John Paul II: Humanocentric as Anthropologic**

From an anthropocentric perspective, John Paul II reiterates Aristotelian and Thomistic anthropology by stating that human nature is both spiritual and physical. John Paul II argues that through the profound union of body and soul in each of us, our bodies

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<sup>65</sup> Bransfield, 88.

<sup>66</sup> John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter "Veritatis Splendor"*, ( Roma: August 6, 1993), no. 48.

<sup>67</sup> The New Dictionary of Catholic Theology, 499.

reveal or "make visible" the invisible reality of our spirits. But the body does even more because, since created in the image of God, our bodies also make visible something of God's invisible mystery. It is from this perspective that John Paul II considers the human body a sign of divine mystery. Hence he extends understanding of the human body beyond the traditional anthropological view to the spiritual sphere as he states that the whole human body - physical body and soul- is spiritual as one cannot be separated from the other.

By this new consideration on the body, John Paul II defends against the dualistic view of the human person. According to him, to separate the body from the soul or considering them as two distinct parts of human person has resulted in the "culture of death. In addition, the pope argues through his encyclical letter "*Evangelium Vitae*" that the culture of death results from the mentality which tends to equate personal dignity with the capacity for verbal and explicit, at least perceptible, communication.<sup>68</sup> John Paul II declares that a human person is not composed of a body and soul separately, but, he is body and soul. Therefore, and according to this oneness between physical body and soul at the first moment of existence which is, according to the pope the earliest moment of conception, every human life has value, and thus, must be protected.

Thus, the pope is against abortion, eugenism and euthanasia because, as John Paul II reminds us, the human person is not to be only defined in terms of "having" or "not having" but rather of "being" as the union of body and soul is a substantial one and not accidental. For this reason, John Paul II condemns the current tendency to deny the right

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<sup>68</sup> *Evangelium Vitae*, 19.

of life to the defenseless people such the unborn, pretending that they don't have soul.<sup>69</sup> John Paul II reminds us that the soul is the form of the body as the body is the material of the soul, and both together form a living human being. Therefore, human life is the concrete reality of a being that lives, that acts, that grows and develops; human life is the concrete reality of a being that is capable of love and of service to humanity. The dignity of the human person's is a consequence of the value of his life. But before talking about how John Paul II thinks about human dignity, I wish consider his theology as it is also on its base that he builds his conception of human dignity.

## **2.5 John Paul II: Humanocentric as Theological**

From his understanding and interpretation of the Holy Scriptures and theology mostly dominated by Thomistic theology, John Paul has elaborated his theocentric thought of the human person. He is, once again, concerned about human persons, their relationship with God and how God considers them "*ab origine*" (from the time he decided to create him). In this theological view, the pope establishes three different instances in the relationship between God and the human person. The first is at the beginning of creation when God creates the human being in his image and likeness. The second instance is when a human being decides to disobey God by sin, and loses his friendship with God. But, according to the pope, God did not abandon the human being as He sent his only begotten Son to redeem him and to restore that friendship. The third instance is the state of the human being after the redemption of Jesus Christ. In these three defining moments of the human being, his value as well as the value of human life

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<sup>69</sup> Evangelium Vitae, 19.

does not change. Human dignity is originated on the choice and trust that God himself has placed in human beings.

For this reason, John Paul II asserts that the value of the human person lies in the fact that this being is willed by God, in whose image and likeness he or she is created. To emphasize this reality, the pope uses the expression "*Imago Dei*", the same used by Saint Jerome in his Vulgate Bible to say "Image of God". However, this expression has come to denote the classical notion of human identity that sets human persons apart from the rest of the visible world, and thus to serve as the basis of their particular dignity. The *imago Dei* is the basis of the personal, inherent, and inviolable dignity of every human person. John Paul teaches that "unconditional respect" is due to "the insistent demands of the personal dignity of every man."<sup>70</sup> The pope affirms that the rights of each person are derived from a transcendent source, God, who, by absolute love, and fully free, creates each human person in His own image and likeness. In other words, every human person is willed by God, loved by him, known by him and has value in the sight of God, as Jesus has revealed by saying that even each hair of each human person is known by God. (Matthew 10:30)

It was during his weekly catechesis that the pope expressed most of his ideas about the value of the human person, and how to understand the value of the human body. He expands the understanding of human body by daring to call it the "sacrament" of the soul analogically on the fact that Jesus is the sacrament of his Father. The pope

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<sup>70</sup> *Veritatis Splendor*, 90.

professes that it was through the body that Jesus made visible God the Father who was invisible to us. John Paul II states:

the body, in fact, and it alone, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world, the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus to be a sign of it. In other words, somehow the body enables us to see spiritual reality, even the eternal mystery hidden in God.<sup>71</sup>

According to the pope, the nature of human body is to be communion as the relationship that exists among God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit is communion. John Paul II asserts:

God is an eternal Communion of Persons, a "common union" - communion of persons is established to the degree that two or more persons mutually give themselves to one another in love and service. In fact, says the pope, we can discern from revelation that Father eternally begets the Son by giving himself to the Son. In turn, the Son - the beloved of the Father and eternally gives himself back to the Father. The love they share is the Holy Spirit who, as we say in the Nicene Creed, "proceeds eternally from the Father and the Son".<sup>72</sup>

John Paul II consistently refers to this communion to talk about the communion that exists between human persons, especially those who self share their bodies as husband and wife. He calls that "*communio personarum*".<sup>73</sup> What is first and primordial in the marriage is the love. But, by its nature, love desires to expand its own communion. It is through our sexual exchange that this communion is expressed. As the pope says, God imprinted in our sexuality the call to participate in a "created version" of his eternal

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<sup>71</sup> West Christopher, *Theology of the Body for Beginners. A Basic Introduction to Pope John Paul II's Sexual Revolution* (West Chester: Ascension Press, 2004), 5-6. (is the author's name in the correct order?)

<sup>72</sup> West Christopher, *Revised Edition of Theology of the Body Explained. A Commentary on John Paul II's Man and Woman He Created Them* ( Boston: Paulines Books and media, 2007),7-8.

<sup>73</sup> West, 61.

exchange of love. God created us male and female so that we could image his love by becoming a sincere gift to each other. This sincere giving establishes a "communion of persons" not only between the sexes but also - in the normal course of events - with a "third" who proceeds from both. In this way, the sexual love becomes an icon or earthly image in some sense of the inner life of the Trinity. The pope adds that not only does sexual love reflect the Trinity, but it is also meant to reflect the union of God with humanity. This is because Christ's redeeming self-donation is a new outpouring of the Trinity's love on all creation. God endowed our bodies as male and female with the sacramental ability to convey this exchange between Christ and the Church. God created us male and female right from the beginning to live in a "holy communion" that foreshadows the Holy Communion of Christ and the Church. In turn, comments John Paul II, the gift of Christ's body to his Bride celebrated in the Eucharist sheds definitive light on the meaning of man and woman's communion.<sup>74</sup>

One could ask, what does John Paul II understand by the creation of human person as male and female? In his book, *The Human Person according to John Paul II*, J. Brian Bransfield argues that the pope refers constantly to the beginning of the creation of the human being, the beginning that the pope asserts to be the moment of human creation.<sup>75</sup> The pope affirms that God created human beings, "male-female" he created them on the state that the pope calls "*status naturae integratae*", or state of integral nature, or also, a state of original innocence or the "*prelapsarian state*", or man's

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<sup>74</sup> West, 9-10.

<sup>75</sup> Bransfield J. Brian, *The Human Person according to John Paul II* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2010), 75.



theological "pre-history"<sup>76</sup> when human nature was not affected by sin. This period, which the pope, after Hans Urs Von Balthasar, designs as a prehistoric,<sup>77</sup> refers to the time of the "origin synthesis of love" that must guide all human love of the *status naturae lapsae*, meaning human nature affected by the effect of sin.<sup>78</sup> John Paul II argues that the fact that human being was created "*ish-ishah*" to mean "man-woman" and this human was created in the midst of the visible world, his/her identity cannot be reduced to the visible world.<sup>79</sup>

Therefore, as John Corbon and Hans Urs Von Balthazar have pointed out, a human person is a unique, disconcerting, polymorphous whole which cannot be reduced to any one of its component parts, as he has a vocational dimension inscribed into his being which is intrinsically tied to the nature of God<sup>80</sup> since God has deliberated, as the pope points out, by asserting: "the Creator seems to halt before calling him into existence, as if he entered back into himself to make a decision, 'Let us make man in our image, in our likeness'" (Genesis 1:27).<sup>81</sup> So by the fact that man "was created different from the other beings and was placed in a particular 'relation' to God, just as he is, as a whole, living 'body-soul being'",<sup>82</sup> that defines his dignity and value: "The dignity of the human

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<sup>76</sup> John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them*, 143.

<sup>77</sup> Bransfield, 77.

<sup>78</sup> *Ibid.*, 76-77.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*, 80.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 78.

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*, 81.

person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude."<sup>83</sup>

More importantly, John Paul's view on the creation of man and woman has its foundation on the fact that God is agape and as such he was lacking nothing when he decided to create the human being. Simply stated, as Agape, God could not create the human being, as the nature of true love (agape is the highest love) is to generate another love. As God is agape, says the pope, meaning the gratuitous and total gift of self through creation, this last implies twofold movements: a continuous *exitus* (*catabasis*) and at the same time a *reditus* (*anabasis*). So, God creates through a pouring forth of love through the Word. Then, according to the pope, as love is always in motion, God's agape brings forth twofold movements that pope designates as "descending movement" through which God comes to man, "*exitus*", and the movement of man towards God, "*reditus*". John Paul II reminds us that the human person was created by God and for God. Thus, the human being is set between God as origin and God as goal. Therefore, God is both transcendent and immanent to his creation. However, talking about creation in terms of *exitus-reditus*, John Paul II precisely notes that the immanence of God in his creation is not an emanationism or pantheism as his relationship with us (or his creatures) does not absorb him, or make God a part of creation; nor is the transcendence of God determinism as his transcendence does not prevent him from being in relationship with each of us. The invisible and infinite God lacks nothing, but yet he creates out of his generosity a visible, finite world out of himself and ex nihilo, in such a way that he can be recognized in his work. But, God who creates by love, by love continues to sustain continuously that

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<sup>83</sup> *Catechism of Catholic Church, no. 1700.*

which is created, "*creatio continua*" or "continued creation", and his presence is eternal and is both the origin and destination of all creation. Even sustained by God, the human person is free, and freedom is his absolute rights. Moreover, the concept of human dignity and human rights originated from John Paul II's personalistic, anthropological and theological understanding view of the human person. But, it is important to understand first how the pope defines human dignity in order to get the full understanding of human rights and freedom.

## **2.6 The First Base of the Prism: Human Dignity, Human Rights and Freedom**

### **2.6.1 Human Dignity**

A human person's dignity is the consequence of the value of his life and his true nature of the only being with God's image and likeness. By virtue of that very fact, John Paul II stresses that every human being is intrinsically valuable, surpassing in dignity the entire material universe. He is a being to be revealed and respected from the very beginning of its existence even for the baby, born or preborn. Of course in nowadays society there are people who challenge the pope on this view of human dignity as John Paul II is strictly opposed to abortion, euthanasia and any other kind of action that would diminish the value and dignity of humankind. That is why it is very important that we explore the traditional Christian understanding of human dignity. William E. May<sup>84</sup> argues that there have been, throughout Christian history, two perspectives on human dignity and its understanding. One is that it is intrinsic and an endowment or gift from God, while the other, being also intrinsic, is an achievement or acquisition from human

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<sup>84</sup> William E. May, *An Introduction to Moral Theology* (Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 1994),23.

intelligence and effort. May asserts that this second kind of dignity results from our own free choice enlightened by our will and responsibility to do only good. The consequence of this second kind of dignity is that one behaves in such way that he willingly respects oneself and others. May continues by saying that the nature of this dignity is deeply developed by John Paul II in his encyclical letter "*Veritatis Splendor*".<sup>85</sup>

In the same way the article, "*Jean-Paul II, 'Evangelium Vitae'*"<sup>86</sup> presenting the relationship between *Veritatis Splendor* and *Evangelium Vitae*, states that in this latter encyclical, the pope recalls once again the value of human life upon which human dignity is built. The authors of the *Cahiers* present John Paul's thought on two axes: life mystery and its admiration and dignity, and the obligation of every human being to defend human life.<sup>87</sup>

John Paul II extends his invitation to every human being of good will to consider the human person as a being that exceeds beyond all materiality since he or she is endowed with freedom and reflection as well as being able to build a relationship with God, others and creatures. In sum, he/she is a being whose vocation is to respect him/herself and others.<sup>88</sup>

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<sup>85</sup> May, 24.

<sup>86</sup>"Jean-Paul II, "Evangelium Vitae" in *Cahiers pour Croire aujourd'hui, présenté et annoté par les Jesuites*, no. 28 F. 161 (Paris: Assa Editions, 1995): 4-7.

<sup>87</sup> Cahiers, 4.

<sup>88</sup> Cahiers, 5.

In his book, Karol Wojtyla, who later would become pope John Paul II, had repeated several times that the human person is to be treated as who he really is, a subject with rights, and not an object to be exploited; for because of his dignity, "a human being is a good toward which the only adequate response is love."<sup>89</sup> However, even though his view on the human person and dignity is closer to the Second Vatican Council's view of dignity, I argue that the pope has realized his own synthesis from a personalistic, anthropological and theological view combined with the results of social sciences' consideration of the human being on which he grounds his thought on human dignity<sup>90</sup>. His genuine conviction on human dignity is the result of the oneness that the pope has set between body and soul, as one and whole body soma-spiritual. The pope does not hesitate to affirm the very fact that as every human person is unique in the world, hence lovable; unique must also be the way to consider him, as it is in such a way that his Creator considers him, he who has implemented his image and likeness on every human person. Moreover, the pope emphasizes the nature of God and the mission of human person by saying:

God, by sending his only Son and the Spirit of Love in the fullness of time has revealed his innermost secret: God himself is an eternal exchange of Love, Father, Son, and the Holy Spirit, and he has destined us to share in that exchange. God has revealed himself in Jesus Christ and through the Holy Spirit as an eternal exchange of Love.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>89</sup> Wojtyla Karol, *Love and Responsibility*, trans. H. Willetts (New York: Farrar, Strauss, and Giroux, 1981), 41.

<sup>90</sup> Jean Paul II, *Ma vocation. Don et Mystère*, 106.

<sup>91</sup> West, 18.

It is very clear that for the pope as the nature of God is Love, the nature of the human person is also love as every human being is a gift of love and from love to his or her parents who are in creation co-creators with God. Thus, the pope asserts that every human being is called into life "*in communione personarum*"<sup>92</sup> which means that he or she lives in communion of love. This is made evident, especially through the encyclical letter "*Evangelium Vitae*", in which John Paul II unwaveringly reminds us of the inviolability of life because life is priceless precisely because it is a gift of love from God through the love of parents as he claims:

The present encyclical, the fruit of cooperation of the episcopate of every country of the world, is therefore meant to be a precise and vigorous reaffirmation of the value of human life and its inviolability, and at the same time a pressing appeal addressed to each and every person, in the name of God: respect, protect, love and serve life, every human life! Only in this direction will you find justice, development, true freedom, peace and happiness.<sup>93</sup>

The pope asserts that love is "*terminus a quo*" of life and at the same time it is "*terminus ad quem*" of every human being as it will be on love that we will be judged by God.<sup>94</sup>

Because of his conviction, the pope invites every human being to oppose the "culture of death" by "civilization of love".<sup>95</sup> John Paul II then reminds us that human person should never be reduced to materiality as he is body and soul capable of communion and

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<sup>92</sup> Jean Paul II, Resurrection, Marriage et Celibat. L'Evangile de la redemption du corps ( Quebec: Cerf/ Bellarmin, 1985), 42.

<sup>93</sup> *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 5.

<sup>94</sup> Jean- Paul II, *Entrez dans l'Esperance* ( Paris: Plon- Mame, 1994), 199.

<sup>95</sup> "Address of his holiness Pope John Paul II to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization", *Innovage*, 59.

relationship, called to the truth that must be measured to the respect of self and others. Human life transcends material dimension for it is a participation in the life of God.

At the same time, John Paul II invites all human beings, especially those who are Christians, to come back to the conscience that acknowledges all life as a gift so that they might engage themselves to defend life everywhere that life is threatened.<sup>96</sup> The value of a human person is founded on this reality, and John Paul II emphasizes that the value of human life “springs from what is spiritual in man,” and that the body receives from the spiritual principle a supreme dignity. The body united to the soul, is that of a person, a being which is open to superior values; a being of fulfillment in the knowledge and love of God.<sup>97</sup>

Consequently, John Paul II says that human dignity is intimately connected to the value of human life and vice versa as it is stated in *Evangelium Vitae*:

man [human being] is called to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of his earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the very life of God. The loftiness of his supernatural vocation reveals the greatness and the inestimable value of human life even in its temporal phase. Life in time, in fact, is the fundamental condition, the initial stage and an integral part of the entire unified process of human existence... After all, life on earth is not an "ultimate" but a "penultimate" reality; even so, it remains a sacred reality entrusted to us, to be preserved with a sense of responsibility and brought to perfection in love and in the gift of ourselves to God and to our brothers and sisters.<sup>98</sup>

Finally, as the pope stresses in *Evangelium Vitae*, the value of life based on the oneness of body and soul of the human person and on the true nature of human person: love, on

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<sup>96</sup> *Cahiers pour croire aujourd'hui*, 4.

<sup>97</sup> Second Vatican Council, Councilar Document, "*Gaudium et Spes*", no. 15.

<sup>98</sup> "*Evangelium Vitae*", 2.

which human dignity is grounded, would not be complete if it did not include human rights and freedom. Even though John Paul II's concept of human rights depends largely on the teaching of his predecessor popes, from my point of view, I would argue that his concept of human rights goes far beyond theirs as he bases his conception on the closeness of the relationship between his concept of the human person, his dignity and life value, as well as on his freedom enlightened by the truth. In other words, the first right of the human being, at both an individual and universal level, is to respect the value and the dignity of each human. For John Paul II, human rights are individual, universal (rooted in the nature of the person and reflect the objective and inviolable demands of a universal moral law) but also - and for the first time in the history – national, in what he calls "the rights of the Nations"<sup>99</sup>, implying that each nation must respect the sovereignty and the culture of others nations in the world.

### **2.6.2 Human Rights**

John Paul reminds us that "unconditional respect is due to 'insistent demands of the personal dignity of every man [and woman]'"<sup>100</sup>. In addition to the value of human life and his/her dignity, John Paul II stresses that the rights of each person are derived from a transcendent source, God, who, by absolute love, creates each person, not as he did for other creatures, "ex nihilo" or "dabar" (from nothing) [only by ordering them to come into being] but he models him according to "Him", to God's image and likeness. The creation of human beings is a free decision and deliberation, and beforehand,

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<sup>99</sup>"Address of his holiness Pope John Paul II to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization", *Innovage*, 59.

<sup>100</sup> "Veritatis Splendor", 60.



predetermined what human beings would look like. Moreover, deciding to create them, God aimed to have a special relationship with them, and God commissioned them to manifest God's rule on earth:

Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the earth, and over the cattle, and over all wild animals of the earth, and over creeping thing that creeps upon the earth. So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created him.<sup>101</sup>

Humankind dignity and rights root on this God's decision to create him, as the Psalm 8 describes him, "a little lower than God ... yet crowned with glory and honor."<sup>102</sup> If God has given human beings a share in his dignity, it is more obvious that he has also given them a share in his freedom. Then, among the primordial rights of the human person is his freedom, and his rights that must be recognized by all at every step of human life.

In his address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations Organization, John Paul II emphasizes the understanding of human rights. He first categorizes them as individual rights, family rights, rights of the nations and universal rights.<sup>103</sup> But, he stresses that the heart of all human rights at these different levels is the universal moral law written on the human heart as a kind of 'grammar' to guide every nation in respecting human rights. In the encyclical letter "*Veritatis Splendor*", John Paul II tirelessly repeats that even though the "moral law has its origin in God and always finds its source in him" but at the same time and, of course by virtue of natural reason, it

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<sup>101</sup> *Genesis, 1:26-27.*

<sup>102</sup> *Psalm 8: 5-8.*

<sup>103</sup> *Innovage, 59.*

derives also from human wisdom which is a properly human law.<sup>104</sup> It is only from this understanding that the Law of God does not only command us to love our neighbour as ourselves but more precisely, invites us to love them as God loves them.

In the world of the pope, human rights are grounded in a particular way, including individual, family and national rights, but also in universal way, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. What does John Paul II understand by "the Rights of Nations"? Again, it is during his speech on the occasion of the Fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations that he explains what he understands by the "rights of Nations". He says that while humanity was expecting to have peace and freedom guaranteed to everyone including their nations, it is unfortunately regrettable that fifty years after the end of the Second World War that the rights of nations continue to be violated, and other odious crimes are still being committed in the name of poisonous doctrines which teach the "inferiority" of some nations and cultures.<sup>105</sup> The pope once again regrets the fact that since 1948, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, though they spoke eloquently of the rights of persons, there is no similar effort to address the rights of nations.<sup>106</sup>

John Paul II argues that the "Rights of Nations" are nothing but 'human rights' fostered at the specific level of community life". He goes on by stating that the presupposition of a nation - which comes from Latin word "*nasci*" ( to be born) - is its right to exist. He states:

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<sup>104</sup> "*Veritatis Splendor*", 40.

<sup>105</sup> *Innovage*, 59.

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*

[...] therefore no one - neither a State nor another nation, nor an international organization is ever justified in asserting that an individual nation is not worthy of existence. This fundamental right to existence does not necessarily call for sovereignty as state, since various forms of juridical aggregation between different nations are possible, as for example occurs in Federal States, in Confederations or in States characterized by broad regional autonomies... Its right to exist naturally implies that every nation also enjoys the right to its own language and culture, through which a people expresses and promotes that which I would call its fundamental spiritual "sovereignty"... every nation has the right to shape its life according to its own traditions, excluding, of course, every abuse of basic human rights and in particular the oppression of minorities... But while the "rights of nations" express the vital requirements of "particularity", it is no less important to emphasize the requirements of universality, expressed through a clear awareness of duties which nations have vis-a-vis other nations and humanity as a whole. Foremost among the duties is certainly that of living in a spirit of peace, respect and solidarity with other nations. Thus the exercise of the rights of nations, advanced by the acknowledgement and the practice of duties, promotes a fruitful "exchange of gifts," which strengthens the unity of all mankind.<sup>107</sup>

As Avery Dulles notes regarding John Paul II's splendor of faith, the pope's understanding of human dignity and rights is grounded in his 'personalist principle'.<sup>108</sup> For the human person, according to the pope, is a being of moral worth, the subject of inviolable rights that must be recognized by all. In the word of Dulles, John Paul II's system is "simultaneously theocentric and anthropocentric" and, Dulles observes that "nowhere is this more evident than in the pope's writings on social morality and the economy."<sup>109</sup> And from John Paul II's consideration on human rights, it is clear that one of the fundamental human rights is his liberty and freedom. Arguably, one would ask what is John Paul II's conception of freedom? What is specific and unique in his thoughts on freedom?

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<sup>107</sup> *Innovage*, 61.

<sup>108</sup> Dulles Avery, SJ., " The splendor of faith: The Theological vision of pope John Paul II" *Journal of Markets and Morality*, Volume 3, 1 (Spring 1999):147.

<sup>109</sup> *Dulles*, 134.

### 2.6.3 Freedom

Freedom is a mode of being of the human person. It involves the will, self-determination, autonomy in its actions and responsibility since, according to John Paul II, "the true freedom is connected to the truth. Only the freedom that submits to truth leads human persons to their true good."<sup>110</sup> There exists the fundamental freedom, the one that founds and underpins all other freedoms like freedom of action (external freedom or freedom to do, subdivided into physical freedom, civil and political freedom, moral freedom or freedom of free will), free will (or inner freedom which is in fact a freedom of decision and choice). The latter is the *sine qua non* condition for talking about free and voluntary action. It is divided into freedom and liberty of specification (that is to say, have the choice to do this rather than that, to do such an act rather than another).

However, contrary to many scholars such as those who define human freedom in terms of determinism or in the terms of absolute faculty that allows one's choice regardless of ethical implications, John Paul II's thought focuses on the relationship between freedom and truth. Therefore, like Aristotle who viewed the human person as a subject and agent, John Paul II recalls that his acts according to his special rational nature must be guided by his reason, conscience and freedom as he is a "nucleus" of freedom.<sup>111</sup>

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<sup>110</sup> *Veritatis Splendor*, 84.

<sup>111</sup> *Valencia*, 270.

Moreover, for the pope, freedom is the measure of man's dignity and greatness. In his speech to the United Nations, John Paul II states that living the freedom sought by individuals and peoples is a great challenge to man's spiritual growth and to the moral vitality of nations. Thus, for him, there is not only a freedom for every individual person, but, there is also a freedom for every state and every nation. <sup>112</sup>

Before John Paul II, Valencia argues that Saint Thomas Aquinas had established the relationship between freedom and the nature of a human by saying that the root of freedom is in human reason as the world of freedom presupposes the world of nature. Thomas Aquinas was taking into account what Aristotle demonstrated in *Niccomachean Ethics*, that the whole root of freedom is in the reason; and being free is being the cause of oneself (*causa sui*), being owner of one's judgment, the "*free arbiter*" of one's own determination (*liberi arbitrii*).<sup>113</sup> But, Valencia sees a judicial influence on John Paul II from Thomas Aquinas' personalistic and anthropologic view that the body is always united to the soul. In addition, observes Thomas Aquinas, it is "the soul united to the body that resembles God more than if it were separated from it."<sup>114</sup> Then, "if man is a person it is not only because of the soul, but because of his soul and body, since he subsists because of them both", says Thomas Aquinas in the Comments to the Book III of the Sentences of Pedro Lombardo.<sup>115</sup>

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<sup>112</sup> *Innovage*, 61.

<sup>113</sup> *Valencia*, 270.

<sup>114</sup> *Valencia*, 271.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*

This idea is more emphasized by John Paul II who not only relies on the uniqueness and oneness of human person as body and soul, but also demonstrates that there is no freedom but when it is enlightened by the truth. Thus, for him, freedom is one's faculty to choose only that which is good and to reject all that is evil. It implies responsibility, conscience and intelligence. Hence, every human person who doesn't suffer any mental disability that could prevent him or her from being responsible is the subject of his own moral acts.<sup>116</sup> Precisely because of his spiritual dimension, the human person is free in his acts, thoughts and will. But, it is more important to first make this observation about the difference between his acts. We designate "human act" (*actus humanus*) that act in which a human person is free, responsible, and uses his reason, will and intention. On the contrary, every act in which a human person is not using his spiritual faculties such as freedom or liberty, intelligence, will and responsibility is called "human actions" (*actus hominis*).<sup>117</sup> Consequently, according to John Paul II, as human person should not be reduced to what he/she has or is capable of producing, nor should his/her freedom should not be defined in terms of utilitarianism. As he observed, utilitarianism, the doctrine which defines morality not in terms of what is good but of what is advantageous, threatens the freedom of individuals and nations and obstructs the building of a true culture of freedom.<sup>118</sup>

It was from love and free will that God made creation. God created everything visible and invisible in sovereignty. From that freedom in which God created the human

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<sup>116</sup> "Gaudium et Spes", no. 48.

<sup>117</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II,9.1,a.3.

<sup>118</sup> *Innovage*, 61.

being, humankind is itself free and must enjoy his freedom in all his action and thought. However, after the first human fall, this freedom was altered; hence, we have an ambiguous concept of freedom. That is what John Macquarie observes in the Dictionary of Christian Ethics by asserting that freedom has to do with sin.<sup>119</sup> For him, freedom, in the context of Christian theology, is a category of neither social nor political ethics but of the ultimate relationship between the Christian and Christ and doing or not doing the will of God. In the same way, John Paul II's view of freedom is in this context; he tied freedom to the truth according to the word of Jesus Christ in the Gospel: "and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Accordingly, in "*Redemptor Hominis*", John Paul II asserts that there is no authentic freedom if it is not based on the truth. The Pope then advises people to avoid what he calls an "illusory freedom" that ties people to their self-interest or collective self-interest motivations as he states in his address to the young people at the Kiel Center in St. Louis, on January 26, 1999 saying:

Do not be taken in by false values and deceptive slogans, especially about your freedom. True freedom is a wonderful gift from God, and it has been a cherished part of your country's history. But when freedom is separated from truth, individuals lose their moral direction and the very fabric of society begins to unravel. Freedom is not the ability to do anything we want, whenever we want. Rather, freedom is the ability to live responsibly the truth of our relationship with God and with one another. Remember what Jesus said: "You will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8:32). Let no one mislead you or prevent you from seeing what really matters. Turn to Jesus, listen to him, and discover the true meaning and direction of your lives.<sup>120</sup>

By orienting freedom to the truth, John Paul II puts the concept of freedom in its genuine place. One cannot separate freedom from the truth without harm to the truth. For

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<sup>119</sup> *A Dictionary of Christian Ethics*, edited by John Macquarie (London: SCM Press Ltd, 1967), 133.

<sup>120</sup> *Innovage*, 107.

him true freedom always goes with one's responsibility, one's conscience and one's will to do only what is good according to the will of God. Through "*Veritatis Splendor*" in which he relies almost entirely on *Gaudium et Spes*, the pope affirms that true freedom leads to the level of making choices that perfect the drive of the human spirit toward the divine, following motives that seek its free adherence.<sup>121</sup>

## **2.7 The Second Base of the Prism: Charity and Justice**

### **2.7.1 Justice as Cardinal Virtue and Charity as Theological Virtue**

The practice of virtues derives from our freedom, even for those virtues called infused. Let us begin by exploring the traditional meaning of virtue. Then we will consider them how they relate to our daily moral life. Lastly, we will examine how John Paul II has established the bond between justice and charity, two different kinds of virtues (cardinal and theological), yet necessarily linked to one another for the sake of the human person, as the pope asserts.

Etymologically and classically, virtue means the power of anything to accomplish its specific function; a property capable of producing certain effects strength, force and potency. Also, the word virtue implies a mysterious energetic power.<sup>122</sup> Or, as Mitch Finley notes, virtue means "manliness" or "virility" as it derives from Latin word "*virtus*"

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<sup>121</sup> "*Veritatis Splendor*", no. 38.

<sup>122</sup> Kreeft Peter, *Back to Virtue* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 9.



itself derived from "*vir*" (man in opposition of woman)<sup>123</sup>. Referring to Saint Gregory of Nyssa, the Catechism of Catholic Church states:

a virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. Thus, the virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions. 'The goal of virtuous life is to become like God'.<sup>124</sup>

In the same context, Kreeft, like the Roman Catholic Church, states that "presently, virtue also signifies moral goodness; the practice of moral duties and conformity of one's life to the moral law; uprightness; rectitude."<sup>125</sup> They are two kinds of virtues: Cardinal virtues, because all other virtues hinge on these following four: temperance (or self-control or prudence), wisdom, justice and fortitude (or courage). In the words of Kreeft<sup>126</sup>, these include lesser virtues, which are corollary to them, but also greater virtues - theological virtues (faith, hope and charity), which are - in the words of Harrington, - the "flowers" of these cardinal virtues. In order to clarify this understanding, Harrington<sup>127</sup> adds an important element that completes not only the meaning of virtue but also the core: moral action. He states that cardinal virtues are like a skeleton of what a human person should basically aim to be. In other words, all the issues of virtue hang on the skeletal structures of both rightly integrated dispositions and right moral action.

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<sup>123</sup> Finley Mitch, *The Catholic Virtues, Seven Pillars of a Good Life* (Missouri: Ligouri Publications, 1999),xi.

<sup>124</sup> *Catechism of the Catholic Church, no. 1803.*

<sup>125</sup> *Kreeft, 9-10.*

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid., 59.*

<sup>127</sup> *Harrington, 125.*

It is then understood that virtue is opposed to what Catholic Theology calls vices which are pride, lust, covetousness, anger, gluttony, envy and sloth - traditionally known as the deadly sins. Nonetheless, to cultivate these vices is to cultivate self-destruction, while to cultivate virtues leads to Christ-likeness.<sup>128</sup> But the usage of the word has evolved from what is exclusively the character of man to finally refer to moral strength regardless of gender. In other words, as Finley notes, virtue has to do with inner character, the capacity to live what you say you believe.<sup>129</sup> Consequently, we could say that in today's world virtuous people are strong, not necessarily in a physical sense but in the sense that they are able to act in a virtuous manner in the face of determined opposition, persecution, or - even more difficult - living in a culture frequently characterized by a radical moral relativism, even indifference to right or wrong, good or evil.<sup>130</sup> Similarly, Pope Benedict XVI asserts that moral virtues are the fruit and seed of moral good acts; they dispose all the powers of the human being for communion with divine love.<sup>131</sup> Josef Pieper would say (following Thomas Aquinas) that "the intrinsic goodness of man- and that is the same as saying his true humanness- consists in this, that 'reason perfected in the cognition of truth' shall inwardly shape and imprint his volition and action"<sup>132</sup>. It would be, in the words of Finley, that virtue is the way of behaving that makes people and their actions good.<sup>133</sup> Hence, John Paul II who ties the goodness of

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<sup>128</sup> Finley, *xiii*.

<sup>129</sup> *ibid.*, *xi*.

<sup>130</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *The Virtues* (Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, Inc., 2010), 78.

<sup>132</sup> Pieper Josef, *The Four Cardinal Virtues* (Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 2011), 8.

<sup>133</sup> Finley, *xiii*.

human person to God's law for the sake of human dignity, concludes in what he designates as "theonomy":

God's law proceeds only from benevolence towards creatures whom God loves. The moral law is intended to safeguard human dignity. Human freedom and divine law conspire to the same end. ...In obeying God's law I incline myself before his divine majesty and at the same time follow my deepest vocation as creature...Consequently, one must acknowledge in the freedom of human person the image and nearness of God, who is present in all.<sup>134</sup>

Finley concludes that Catholic virtues are ways to live a life of moral excellence and goodness according to standards set by the Gospel of Jesus and the living tradition of the Catholic Church.<sup>135</sup> Thomas Merton says that to be virtuous is to cultivate and nourish our true self, our deepest self that is destined for eternal union with God, now and in the life to come.

### **2.7.2 Justice and Charity according to John Paul II**

For Thomas Merton, to cultivate the theological and cardinal virtues is to choose both our true selves and union with God.<sup>136</sup> It is in this last concept of virtue that John Paul II's thought on virtue is located. According to John Paul, though justice is one of the four cardinal virtues (along with prudence, fortitude and temperance), and charity is one of the three theological virtues (beside faith and hope) that are poured into the human soul directly by God, they work hand in hand. As a consequence, says John Paul II, there is not a secular and profane domain for justice and a religious and Christian domain for charity as they are intimately close. For the pope, justice is the first requirement of love:

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<sup>134</sup> "Veritatis Splendor", no. 41.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> Merton Thomas, *New Seeds of Contemplation* (New York: New Directions, 1972), 35-36.

"charity is not enough if it remains purely theoretical, verbal and emotional (cf. Mt 7, 21); justice is the minimum of charity confirms John Paul II, after Pope Paul VI. Then, charity without justice becomes uncertain, precarious and sentimental. One, without the other, risks devaluation, ethical minimalism, anonymity, partiality and legalism. In the same vein, John Paul II stresses that both of them work in synergy. Therefore, no relationship with charity is indeed possible neither is any of its forms credible, where the demands of justice are ignored and rejected, for this relationship, ontologically, is a relationship of co-presence and mutual complement.

John Paul II concludes that charity is the source, summit, and crown of justice as this latter is born entirely from love. It flourishes entirely in charity. Justice is based on charity and comes from it; it moves towards it.<sup>137</sup> Also, in the light of *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (AA), John Paul II reminds people who work as Non-Governmental Agencies (NGOs) or industrial Nations that help the developing nations that justice is offered not as a gift of charity, which would imply that what is given was due in justice but as motivated by that charity, the highest commandment (Matthew 22:37-40), and which implies that what you have done you have done it because of Christ and his Kingdom.<sup>138</sup> In other words, in *Dives in Misericordia*, John Paul II affirms that justice alone is insufficient. He then reminds humanity to tie justice to charity:

In every sphere of interpersonal relationship, justice must, so to speak, be 'corrected' to a considerable extent by that love which, as Saint Paul proclaims, 'is

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<sup>137</sup> *Dives in Misericordia*, 7.

<sup>138</sup> *Council Vatican II, Apostolicam Actuositatem*, 8.

patient and kind' or, in other words, possesses the characteristics of that merciful love which is so much of the essence of the Gospel and Christianity.<sup>139</sup>

Through this encyclical letter, John Paul II makes clear the link between justice and charity that is rooted in the fact that God's justice is expressed in God's measure, which means that it springs from love (*caritas* or charity) and it is accomplished in the same love.<sup>140</sup> Similarly, human love would be modeled to that of God, and so, justice must be guided by love, and love must be accomplished in justice.

Consequently, charity is the expression of justice; it enables it to become more creative, authentic and pure. From this relationship between justice and charity, the pope asserts that what is considered as 'right' to one, must be called 'duty' by another. Because, he says, not only can charity not ignore justice, but charity begins with justice, that is to say, the recognition and respect for the other as other - as subject of law ("*ius*", right), which creates "eo ipso" in me the corresponding duty ("*dubium*"). John Paul II concludes that justice is the first means, the structural mediation of charity as this is love of what must be done (or is owing). In fact, love finds in justice the structural and structuring demand of the law. Charity is and must always be somehow recognized, proclaimed, institutionalized. This is why charity-justice demands the law and does everything for it. From it, love-justice gets its character of obligation and allows itself to structure/build an effective and transforming socio-political adjustment. It is clear that whoever loves is "beyond" justice – rights and laws - but not because it is "outside" of it, but because it goes further (it enhances it). Therefore, seen in the light of charity, justice takes on meaning, interiority and amplitude; hence, the biblical equivalence of justice and

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<sup>139</sup> *Dives in Misericordia*, 14.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 7

rectitude, justice and moral integrity, justice and liberation from sin.

John Paul II reminds Christians that purely legal and formal justice does not exist. The "*iustitia fidei*" (Rom 4:11-13) or "ex fide" (Rom 9:30, 10:6, Phil 3:9) is always justice "quae per caritatem operatur" (which acts through love). Thus, the justice of "*cuique suum*" in the strict sense is the minimum level which must be considered, but inevitably incomplete and insufficient, of the biblical and Christian virtue of justice. It does not reduce but amplifies and clarifies the commitment and the dimensions of duty and rights as well as service and well-being of every person (Ephesians 4: 23-24). John Paul II states that interior justice (righteousness or justice of the heart) is next to charity which is greater or higher than justice. Since Jesus Christ has made the twofold commandment of love into single commandment, as two faces of a single and unique coin, justice cannot be separated from charity. The pope stresses that justice is the expression and actualization of charity. Roughly speaking, the realization of justice remains a permanent condition of charity. This gives it a vital interiority; it personalizes relationships and purifies its egoistic tendency. So justice should never be isolated from charity. The first is the expression of the last, its place of verification and authentication and its sign of credibility.

In summation, this new vision of the pope is rooted in the closeness that he sees between justice and charity. For him, even though justice and charity are apparently different in reality, they are bound together. Justice must be the first requirement of charity otherwise the former is not sufficient if it stays only on a theoretical, sentimental and verbal level. Charity needs justice to be concrete. Without it charity becomes random (uncertain), precarious and sentimental. On the other hand, justice without charity risks

becoming partial and legalistic. Therefore, there is no secular and profane domain of justice, just as there is no religious and Christian domain of charity. The relationship between charity and justice is qualified as a co-present, mutual complement. For “charity is the source, the summit and the crown of justice just as justice originates totally from love and blossoms in love.” Justice is founded on love, comes from it and tends towards it<sup>141</sup>. Communism that denies human person right to owner property, is at the same time against his dignity and freedom, as a consequence, it is against charity and justice. Capitalism fairs no better than socialism by encouraging savage competitiveness, occasions a greater gap between the poor and the rich. Not protecting the weakest is against justice and charity too. *Centesimus Annus* provides some advice regarding Capitalism.

John Paul II’s concept of the nature of the human person in which are rooted human dignity, freedom and rights, would not be complete if separated from these two keys principles: subsidiarity and solidarity. However, these two principles are commonly used by his predecessors but from what I have observed in the thoughts of John Paul II, I infer that he has a genuine way of leading these principles to his vision of the human person. Civil society, as the "sum" of relationships between individuals and intermediate social groupings, asserts John Paul II, should work together for the sake of everyone, the family, the church and the society. J. Brian Benestad<sup>142</sup> comments that according to the principle of subsidiarity all societies of a superior order must adopt attitudes of those of a lower social and economic level with respect, charity and justice. However, those of this

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<sup>141</sup> *Dives in Misericordia*, 7.

<sup>142</sup> Benestad Brian J., *The Church, State, And Society. An Introduction to Catholic Social Doctrine* (Washington D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 279-280.

lower level in the society must also contribute to the larger social groups, the society as a whole, according to their talents, capacity and ability. It is only in this way that we could build a society in which it is pleasing to everyone to live as no one would be an outcast, and each one would be a brother or sister to the other one. John Paul II argues that this kind of participation of every member in the life of the society is not just a "*democratic desideratum*", but a logical implication of human dignity. Men and woman realize their dignity by contributing to the common good of their society, and this is one of the major guarantees of the permanence of democratic system.<sup>143</sup>

The principle of solidarity is based on the inner relationship that exists among all human beings. We are all created in the image and likeness of God. Moreover, the goods of the earth were given to be shared among all. According to John Paul II, the gap that increasingly separates nations and divides them into the opulent and the poor should no longer exist. John Paul II reminds us of the responsibility of all human beings, as we form one family, the human family, and we all are members of one body, humanity. John Paul II, like Josef Pieper<sup>144</sup>, invites the current society to overcome individualism and a modern tendency to conceive the common good as the sum of society's material production. The common good must be assimilated as a true good for each member of society; if not, it will cease to be a common good. In other words, as Keys M. Mary<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>143</sup> Benestad, 280.

<sup>144</sup> Pieper Josef, "The 'Common Good' and What It means," in Josef Pieper: *An Anthology*, Transl. Lothar Krauth (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 66.

<sup>145</sup> Mary M. Keys, "Personal dignity and \common Good: A Twentieth-Century Thomistic Dialogue", in *Catholicism, Liberalism, and Communitarianism: The Catholic Intellectual Tradition and the Moral Foundations of Democracy*, ed. Kenneth L. Grasso, Gerard V. Bradley, and Robert p. Hunt ( Lanham, Md.: Rowman & littlefield, 1995), 179.



states, the good sought by any being is necessarily its proper good (*bonum proprium*) for those who share in it; it is its own good (*bonum suum*), whether it be a particular good or the common good, for which it has even greater natural love. Personal good necessarily comprises the common good, just as there can be no common good without the personal goods that make it up. Hence, the principle of subsidiarity meets with the principle of solidarity and together they contribute to the pairing made by justice and charity to contribute to the development which is, according to Paul VI, the true name of peace.

## ***CHAPTER THREE***

### ***PRIVATE PROPERTY, PEACE AND DEVELOPMENT:***

#### ***THE THREE FACES OF THE PRISM***

### **3.1 For and Against Wealth, Property and Material Goods**

Are wealth, property, and material goods evil? Does Christianity condemn wealth or material goods?, The answers to these two questions are yes and no. It seems like Christianity condemns wealth, property and material goods. Some passages from the Gospel seem to confirm this position. For example, Jesus in the gospel according to Marks warns us: "Children, how hard it is to enter the kingdom of God. It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God."<sup>146</sup> From this perspective, the answer is yes. Also, Jesus goes far beyond this by asserting that one cannot serve wealth and God,<sup>147</sup> and he and his disciples give example by adopting the lifestyle of a radical itinerant in which they depend on the kindness of people they serve. Jesus summons up his disciples with these instructions:

You received without payment; give without payment. Take no gold, or silver, or copper in your belts, no bag for your journey, or two tunics, or sandals, or a staff; for laborers deserve their food. Whatever town or village you enter, find out who in it is worthy, and stay there until you leave. As you enter the house, greet it. If the house is worthy, let your peace come upon it; but if it is not worthy, let your peace return to you. If anyone will not welcome or listen to your words, shake off the dust from your feet as you leave that house or town. Truly I tell you, it will be

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<sup>146</sup> *Mark 10:24. Biblical references should be in the text.*

<sup>147</sup> *Luke 16:13*

more tolerable for the land of Sodom and Gomorrah on the day of judgment than for that town.<sup>148</sup>

Saint James is not tolerant of the rich who had laid up treasure without sharing with the poor of the community. He warns them that their riches had rotted, and their clothes were moth-eaten and their gold and silver had rusted and that their rust would be evidence against these rich people as their flesh would be eaten by this rust like a fire. The apostle goes on to also condemn the way by which they had gotten their riches. What the leader of the Palestinian community condemns most is the injustice of these rich people who did not pay a good wage to their workers.<sup>149</sup>

It is in this last consideration that Daniel Harrington and James Keenan note that the frequent criticism of the prophets towards the rich was that they had forgotten that their rights and privileges were subordinate to the needs of the weaker of the society.<sup>150</sup> According to Harrington and Keenan, the Old Testament emphasizes God's special care for the poor. The idea is that the poor are in a position of unique openness to God and that their prayers are heard. In other words, these authors say, God has a preferential ear for the poor as they live in total dependence on God.<sup>151</sup>

In the words of Harrington and Keenan it is manifestly stated that in the Old Testament the right to possess property is taken for granted and it is assumed that God is the owner of the land [other property] and people are tenants on his property. This is why,

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<sup>148</sup> *Matthew 10:8-15.*

<sup>149</sup> *James 5:1-6.*

<sup>150</sup> Harrington Daniel, S.J., James Keenan, S.J., *Jesus and Virtue Ethics. Building Bridge New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Illinois:Sheed and Ward, 2002), 130.

<sup>151</sup> Harrington, 131.

whoever has property, owes it to God and has to help those who have nothing.<sup>152</sup> The same idea is expressed in the synoptic gospels, as these authors demonstrate through the comments on the story of Lazarus and rich man. They argue that this story illustrates the same idea that economic poverty is an evil to be combated in the present time by the rich sharing their goods with the needy poor.

On the other hand, however, a closer look at Holy Scripture, the traditions of the Church and the Magisterium (the official teaching authority of the Roman Catholic Church), reveals that they do not condemn wealth, property, and material goods, but they invite those who have to share these material goods with the poor. However, this consideration of the poor is not what is taught by the liberation theologians for whom "the poor are not necessarily better or worse than others, but they are the ones preferred by God". Therefore, we have to go where God is found - in the memory and experience of the poor.<sup>153</sup> But, from Harrington and Keenan's view, this appreciation of perspective is not primarily an anthropocentric (human-centered) move, but a theocentric move.<sup>154</sup> Moreover, this theology privileges community over the individual.<sup>155</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> *Harrington, 130.*

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid., 111.*

### 3.2 Private Property as Base of Social Economy

It is in this context, and following his predecessor popes, that John Paul II affirms that private property is the right of every human person. But his approach is not a capitalist, liberal or socialist approach, nor a "distributism" or "Third way", rather, it is an "economic personalism" approach, as coined by Daniel Rush Finn (quoted by Gregory M.A. Gronbacher).<sup>156</sup> It is indeed true that John Paul II's thought on social justice economy goes beyond what many secular economists taught. Gronbacher describes economic personalism which is derived from "human economy" as a kind of economic system that is based on charity, justice, free exchange, productivity, solidarity, and participation, the principles that transcend partisan politics, ideology, and sectarian political and social theory.<sup>157</sup> Elsewhere, Gronbacher argues that this new vision on social justice economy is not to be considered as the "third way" between capitalism and socialism<sup>158</sup> since for him there is no "third way" as capitalism is the only serious economic model capable of raising the well-being of humans. It is an economic system which, while far from perfect, as it needs to be humanized, is most in accord with human nature.<sup>159</sup> In the following pages, my intention is to show how John Paul II's thought

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<sup>156</sup> Gronbacher Gregory M.A, "The Humane Economy: Neither Right Nor Left. A Response to Daniel Rush Finn", in *Journal of Markets and Morality*, vol. 2, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 247-270.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 248.

<sup>158</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>159</sup> *Ibid.*

outlines this idea on personalistic economy in the sense of giving it its full meaning (material, spiritual and teleological) by offering it a moral and methodological insight.<sup>160</sup> Gronbacher, following Daniel Rush Finn, argues that John Paul II 's thought shifts away from socialist ideas [that he experienced under a socialist regime in Poland] and turns toward free-market economists as the preferred economical models:

John Paul II's favorable view of free-markets should in no way be construed as wholesale endorsement of Western culture or free-market economics. Rather, he approaches economic issues from the perspective of attempting to discern which economic system accords best with human dignity and the nature of the human person.<sup>161</sup>

John Paul II would use his personalistic, anthropocentric and theological view of the human being which sees the person as "subject" and not "an object" as socialism aims to treat him. In his encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus* John Paul II puts the basis of the fall of Marxism on its rejection of God: The main cause of this collapse was the reaction of the younger generations to the spiritual void brought by atheism. Youth did not find any sense of direction until they rediscovered the roots of their national culture and the person of Jesus Christ. Marxism promised to uproot the need for God from the human heart; it actually showed that the heart cannot be left empty in this way.<sup>162</sup> This atheistic system prevents people from their freedom and society replaces individual rights and private property. John Paul II's criticizes socialism on its promise to uproot the need for God from the human heart. He says that it is not possible for the heart to be left empty in this

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<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*, 251.

<sup>161</sup> *Gronbacher*, 253.

<sup>162</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 24.

way, as God has made the human heart for himself; therefore the heart is restless until it rests in God.<sup>163</sup> John Paul II adds:

“Real socialism” [Marxism] considers the human person as a mere element or molecule in a social organism to which he or she is completely subordinated...one depends totally on the social machine and on those who control it. This is a situation in which it is difficult to realize one’s personal dignity and to build a human community...*Rerum Novarum* is against any form of state control that makes the citizen a mere “cog” in the state machine... The state has to determine the legal framework to conduct economic affairs, so that the interests of one group do not overrule another. Society and state need to afford protection against the nightmare of unemployment through economic policies that ensure balanced growth and full employment or through unemployment insurance and retraining programs. Wages must be sufficient to maintain a worker’s family and allow a certain amount for some saving...The state must contribute to all this according to the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity, defending the weakest and ensuring the necessary minimum support for the unemployed.<sup>164</sup>

Not only does socialism treat the human person as an object, but also it steals from him/her what constitutes his true nature, his humanness, by considering him/ her as a " mere element or molecule in a social organism to which he or she is completely subordinated ... no free choice, no personal dignity,...nothing of one's own..."<sup>165</sup>, and against it, John Paul II affirms the right to property<sup>166</sup> as well as the inner right to freedom and human dignity.<sup>167</sup> John Paul criticizes Marxism that blamed capitalist society because it alienated the human being, but, according to John Paul II, its idea of alienation was mistaken.<sup>168</sup>

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<sup>163</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 24.

<sup>164</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 13.

<sup>165</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 13.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*,13.

<sup>168</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

At the same time he also condemns the capitalist for his purely materialistic orientation and uncontrolled consumer attitude that undermines the foundations of human freedom and the dignity of the person. Capitalism, by submitting man to tension - due to his increasing consummation, does nothing less than to make the human person a continuous victim of misery accompanied by anguish, frustration and bitterness.<sup>169</sup>

### **3.3 The Principles of Solidarity and Human Work as Base of Peace**

As we have tried to show, John Paul II's social thought has something very new to add to what his predecessor popes have taught in how they consider capitalism. John Paul II attacks capitalism under the angle of social economy based on his exploitation of the human person as an object able to produce and to consume. He invites humanity to the principle of private property, subsidiarity and human work. The latter valorizes the person as well as provides him with what he and his family need to live. He invites the socialism to consider the fact:

The right to private ownership of goods, including productive goods, has permanent validity. It is a part of the natural order, which teaches that the individual is prior to society and society must be ordered to the good of the individual. Moreover, it would be quite useless to insist on free and personal initiative in the economic field, while at the same time withdrawing man's right to dispose freely of the means indispensable to the achievement of such initiative. Further, history and experience testify that in those political regimes which do not recognize the rights of private ownership of goods, the exercise of freedom in almost every other direction is suppressed or stifled. This suggests, surely, that exercise of freedom finds an incentive in the right of ownership.<sup>170</sup>

John XXIII bases this assertions on the principle according to which the earthly goods belongs to everyone and the right to ownership is rooted in the human nature. Following

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<sup>169</sup> *Redemptoris*, 16.

<sup>170</sup> John XIII, *Encyclical Letter, Mater et Magistra*(Roma, May 15, 1961), no. 109.



John XXIII, Paul VI, his successor and former secretary, would, however, make a change in the way to consider private property. Based on what he had himself experienced in regard of poverty and misery while traveling in Asia, Africa and South America, he rather criticized private property and called on a social dimension based on the principle of the universal destination of the goods of creation.<sup>171</sup> An ultimate shift in the sense of continuity and innovation would be made by John Paul II as he bases the inner right of private property not to the individual - a concept that would imply that human person continue to be used as an object - but to a person, a concept that implies that human person is rather a subject of value and rights.

About this big change, Gronbacher argues that John Paul II develops the understanding of private property and the principle of the universal destination of material goods by framing them in an anthropological and personalistic data.<sup>172</sup> Maciej comments on John Paul II's encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus* as a genuine document by which the pope calls us to "new things" as he does with the Catholic Church's social teaching that he focuses on the human person.<sup>173</sup> By introducing the concept of the human person into social economical thought, John Paul II demonstrates that theology needs also the other human sciences. Of course, this collaboration of theology and economy would result in a good understanding of economy, and consequently, of development, as the respect of human freedom is a necessary component of any economy.

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<sup>171</sup> Zieba, 162.

<sup>172</sup> Gronbacher, 264.

<sup>173</sup> Zieba, 163.

### 3.4 Social Sciences to the Rescue of Theology for Human Dignity

John Paul II is aware of what social sciences would contribute to theology. Thus, he linked social economy to theology, anthropology and phenomenology. He also puts in action what he invites to the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences in 1994 by asserting that there must be a dialogue among the Social Sciences. Mary Ann Grendon observes that John Paul II has turned to social sciences and charged the academicians with double missions of promoting the progress of these sciences and to provide the Church with the elements that would be useful in her dialogue with these sciences.<sup>174</sup>

As the pope put more emphasis on the nature of the human person, he would build on from Paul VI's new social vision focusing on the link between development and peace<sup>175</sup> His way of considering the human person and how society and the whole of humanity would consider this leads him to define justice in regards to charity. John Paul II says, for example, that justice urges us to treat all people with impartiality; then fidelity (calling us to uphold specific, existing relationships) calls us to partiality and makes distinctively different claims. In a similar way, Pope John Paul II talks about the dangers that would hurt individuals because of the oppression of the community or nations. These dangers can be manifest in military technological progress or materialistic society as things seem to prevail over the human person. On the base of this moral defection or moral uneasiness, there is a defective machinery and a materialistic civilization. In this

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<sup>174</sup> Glendon Mary Ann, "John Paul II's Challenges to the Social Sciences. Initial Responses of the Pontifical Academy of social sciences", *Journal of Markets and Morality*, vol. 10, number 2(Fall 2007): 264.

<sup>175</sup> Paul VI, *Encyclical Letter Populorum Progressio* (March 26,1976), 76-80.

situation, the human family is living in such a radically unjust situation.<sup>176</sup> In order to overcome this fundamental problem of all human existence, we need to practice justice whose essence is to establish equality and harmony. This justice, to be effective, needs to be coupled with love that would shape it.<sup>177</sup> It is only by this practice that one would overcome in our modern time of "desacralization" that turns into "dehumanization" of the individual and society.<sup>178</sup> What, then, must be done to rescue this situation?

As justice is linked to charity, subsidiarity to solidarity, property to economy, peace and development are also tied together. Manfred Spieker states that "for the Christian understanding of development, no other anthropological premise assumes greater weight than the notion that human person is squarely the subject of all development."<sup>179</sup> Focused on peace, Pope John XXIII condemned the obstacles against this peace: socialism and colonialism. He invited people to a new concept of "universal common good" in the sense of integral development of the human person (*Pacem in Terris*, no. 53). After him, Pope Paul VI, addressing the United Nations in a legendary speech, condemned any kind of war and asked all nations to condemn it by saying that humanity must put an end to war, if not, the war would put an end to humanity.<sup>180</sup> Two

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<sup>176</sup> *Dives in Misericordia*, 11.

<sup>177</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>178</sup> *Dives in Misericordia*, 12.

<sup>179</sup> Spieker Manfred, "Development of the Whole Man and of the All Men", *Journal of Markets and Morality*, Volume 13, Number 2 (Fall 2010): 266.

<sup>180</sup> Paul VI, *Speech addressed to the United Nations Assembly on October 5, 1965*.

years later he realized that a concept of development must be understood as the new name for peace<sup>181</sup>. This development is for the whole man and for all men.<sup>182</sup>

Along this theme, John Paul II would follow in his footsteps, and his concept of social economics was enlightened by his concept of the human being, his rights, his peace and how society helps him in his total achievement. According to John Paul II, peace would be a consequence of the closeness between charity, justice and economics as he pointed out their relationship in the message he addressed to the world, on January 1<sup>st</sup> 2002: “There is no peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness.” He insisted that “peace is for all or for none.”<sup>183</sup> He repeated the words of Paul VI by saying that “all the goods in this world were created and meant for everybody,” so therefore accrue to all justly and fairly, quoting *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 69. So, “the more developed nations should help the developing countries.”<sup>184</sup> John Paul II stresses that this consideration on economy and development, based on the rights and human dignity, should be done in the name of our universal interdependence. Thus, Spieker notes that the development of the whole human being requires not only the overcoming of poverty but also a social and cultural development, as well as an opening to the transcendent dimension of human

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<sup>181</sup> *Populorum Progressio*, 76.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>183</sup> *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 26.

<sup>184</sup> *Ibid.*

life.<sup>185</sup> However, no economy, no development nor peace would be possible if it is not founded on the family as it is "the basic living cell of the society."<sup>186</sup>

From the recommendations of the Plenary Assembly on the Pontifical council for the Family invested by John Paul II, the family is a key to a healthy society and its economy. If it flourishes, the society will flourish too. Reciprocally, the family cannot survive without a good economy. John Paul II's recommendation is that the economy serves the family (and not the opposite) as the family is fundamental to economic organization of society.<sup>187</sup>

In the conviction of John Paul II, as the family is the basic cell of the Church ("*ecclesia domestica*"), it also the base of the economy since the family transmits values and virtues in order to create "human capital" in the true sense which men and women willing to give of themselves, to make commitments, to trust others and cooperate with them. The pope argues that without this ethical social basis, a strong economy cannot develop or be sustained.<sup>188</sup>

In conclusion, I would state that after examining and considering John Paul II's thought on humanness through the structure of the prism; I assert that the pope offers an answer to our current economic crisis which is characterized by consumerism and

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<sup>185</sup> *Spieker, 263.*

<sup>186</sup> Pontifical Council for the Family, *Enchiridion on the Family. A Compendium of Church Teaching on Family and Life Issues From Vatican II to the Present* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2004), nos. 2725-2726..

<sup>187</sup> *Enchiridion on the Family, no. 2727-2728.*

<sup>188</sup> *Enchiridion on the Family, no. 2727.*

humanism. His ideas would serve as a prism through which socialism, capitalism and liberalism, and even liberation theology would find their complement. According to Mary Ann Glendon, in order to fully serve the human person, John Paul II invites us to cooperation among the various human sciences.<sup>189</sup> However, Glendon asserts that by the time of his intervention through *Centesimus Annus*, the time was already overdue for Catholic social thought to take account of the turbulent changes that were transforming economic life and family relations everywhere in the late twentieth century.<sup>190</sup> Commenting Leo XIII's Encyclical "*Rerum Novarum*", John Paul II affirms:

The main point made in Leo XIII's encyclical and in the church's social doctrine is a correct view of the human person. Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the person they are.<sup>191</sup>

As such, a human being would not be a means and object to be exploited, as this evil doing would deny them their dignity and basic of human rights.<sup>192</sup>

Not without reason, Richard H. Hogan argues that it is no wonder that one of the hall marks of John Paul II's pontificate was his repeated and insistent teaching on the dignity and value of each and every human person.<sup>193</sup> Because of this personalistic, anthropological and theological view of the human person, John Paul II invites us to an economy that would be defined in terms of communion and relationship whose beginning

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<sup>189</sup> Glendon, 264.

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*, 268.

<sup>191</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 177.

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*, 265.

<sup>193</sup> Hogan H. Richard, *The Theology of the Body in John Paul II. What It Means, Why It Matters* (Maryland: The Word Among Us Press, 2006), 25.

and end is a human person and his happiness. According to him, in order to overcome the current economic crisis - which is first a moral crisis before being an economic one - the economy should be considered in terms of communion.

Under a moral existential approach rather than economic human-exploitation approach, John Paul II is inviting all of the social sciences to do the same.<sup>194</sup> John Paul II states that there are three kinds of communion or relationships that need to be considered in regard to the human person and economy. From the existential approach that considers human person as a subject with rights, freedom, value and responsibility, who is the master of his actions and is able to respond to God, for whom he is but a tenant of his earthly possessions, to others with whom he shares his human nature, and to the other creatures for which he has been established as a safeguard. Thus, in considering economy founded on human nature, dignity, freedom, need and responsibility, there are three communions that ontologically go with economy: Vertical communion (human person with God), horizontal communion (human person with his fellow human beings) and his relationship with other creatures (in ecological relationship).

In the first relationship, economy must be aware of the principle that all the goods on the earth belong to God. He is the first owner. However, out of his love and kindness, and by virtue of his love (charity) he has established human persons as the tenants of his own goods. Therefore, the human person, in his mission as God's tenant, must use wisely and responsibly, the goods that God has given him. In other words, even he has ownership over property, God asks him to use them freely but responsibly and to make it

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<sup>194</sup> *Glendon, 264.*

bear fruit, according to the principle of subsidiarity. At the same time, God reminds us to keep in mind the true nature of the human person: love. In this quality, and in order to “enter into the covenant with God in eternal relationship,”<sup>195</sup> he must also share his goods with his brothers and sisters.

Through the horizontal relationship or communion, economy must be defined in terms of communion between all human persons as unique and one family, humanity. Human persons, should wisely take care of the others who are less fortunate in accordance with principle of solidarity. But, foremost, he must remember that his true nature is love as God is love. Jesus Christ, the Son God sent to show us his love and mercy is the mirror through which all of our moral acts find foundation and meaning.

Not only must human beings wisely use what God has given them, but also they must multiply them by his work. In the parable of the talents (Matthew 25:14-18) Jesus states that one must multiply his received talents. Thus, the one who has received five talents would try to get five more; the one who has received two, two more. However, Jesus in the same parable calls to our attention what will happen to those would refuse to work and multiply what they have received from God: he will take from them even what little they have. John Paul II, in his encyclical on the dignity of human work, echoes this noble mission from the Creator, emphasizing that work helps human beings to maintain and bear fruit with what God has given him. For John Paul II, work is a good thing as it

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<sup>195</sup> West, 99.



increases the worker's dignity and we ourselves are transformed by it, just as we transform the world, and by our work we become "more a human being".<sup>196</sup>

Moreover, human person, created in the image and likeness of God, fulfills God's will by his work according to the first mission God assigned him asking him to be fruitful and multiply:

It is work that distinguishes human beings from other creatures. They are the only ones capable of work. Work is something particularly human done in a community of persons, a characteristic that marks and, in a sense, constitutes the very nature of work."<sup>197</sup>

About work and its dignity, John Paul II reminds us that it is a task of the Church to "call attention to the dignity and rights of those who work, to condemn their violation and to guide these changes to ensure the true authentic progress of the individual and society"<sup>198</sup>. However, John Paul criticizes the current economy by arguing:

This Christian 'gospel of work' had to oppose the materialistic and economist thought of the modern age. Work was understood as a 'merchandise' sold by the workers to their employers, the owner who owned everything necessary for production. These nineteenth-century ideas have given way to a more human thinking about work, but the danger of treating work as 'merchandise' – or as an impersonal 'work force' - remains as long as economics is understood in a materialistic way. It is a one-sided approach that concentrates on work as the prime thing, as the subject of work, as its maker and creator<sup>199</sup>.

It is clear, comments John J. Mitchell, Jr., that in the mind of John Paul II, that through work, men and women participate in the unfolding of God's plan for all humanity. Human work is primarily designed to serve in his own full development,

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<sup>196</sup> John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter "Laborem Exercens"* (Roma, Septemebr 14, 1981), 9.

<sup>197</sup> *Laborem Exercens*, preface.

<sup>198</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

personalization and sanctification as well as to contribute to the well-being and dignity of the worker<sup>200</sup>. Understood in such a way, a human person's work must also maintain him as the guardian of the earth, relationship upon which economy is built: ecology. Human beings must protect the universe and its elements and inhabitants.

There is a reciprocal relationship that must exist between human beings and the eco-system. John Paul II reminds humanity about their sole mission to be the safeguard of all of creation: flora and fauna. According to him, there is an inner order and harmony that the creator has established between his creatures, but that sin and human egocentrism continue to disorganize. But, as Glendon notes, John Paul II, more than any among his predecessors, reminds humanity to take care of the universe, and in so doing he makes an enormous shift:

It was an important move, therefore, when Centisimus Annus linked the principle of subsidiarity to the idea of human ecology, a concept that suggests a way of thinking about society as composed of complex moving systems and that mandates alertness to the ways in which these systems interact. Noting that the first fundamental structure for 'human ecology' is the family, in which man receives his first formative ideas about the truth and goodness, and learns what it actually means to be a person", the pope commented that the destruction of human environments is 'by no means receiving the attention it deserves', and that 'too little effort is [being] made to safeguard the moral conditions for an authentic 'human ecology'. With those words, it seems clear that he was outlining a Herculean task that is peculiarly within the domain of the social sciences.<sup>201</sup>

As one could assume from the above comments, Pope John Paul II would assert that priority needs to be given to human ecology and its interactive systems (the family) than to the environment, as is the focus of our world today. The family, the nucleus

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<sup>200</sup> John J. Mitchell, JR., "Embracing a Socialist Vision: The Evolution of Catholic Thought, Leo XIII to John Paul II", *Journal of Church and State*, 27 (Autumn, 1985): 474.

<sup>201</sup> Glendon, 268.

family and the universal family - humanity-, must be the basis of our human ecology. If not, they are destroying themselves, as it is from the synergy that must necessarily exist between human beings and the rest of eco-system that a human can get what he needs for his health.

In conclusion, I could summarize the thought of John Paul II by saying that for him, human life cannot be seen as an object to do with as we pleased. It is the most sacred and inviolable earthly reality. There can be no peace and development if it is not based on it. From his insistence, John Paul II's social justice and economy's thought is different from the other economic social theories. As he states it in his Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, his teachings claim to be no "Third way" between liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism, nor a possible alternative to other solutions radically opposed to one another<sup>202</sup>. Although it proposes no concrete economic model, it at least reminds us to build any social justice economic system upon the human person, his dignity, rights and freedom. As John Verstraeten points out,<sup>203</sup> John Paul II's teachings criticize capitalism for it leads to competition, speculation and other practices causing a neglect or violation of the rights and subjectivity of work as well as for its consumerist philosophy and its lack of concern for the environment. In sum, human persons value what they are able to produce. However, John Paul II recognizes the positive points of capitalism for its defense for private property, a cautious endorsement of the free market, valuing profit and its rejection of the struggle model, as it leads to a concentration of

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<sup>202</sup> *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, no. 41.

<sup>203</sup> Verstraeten Johan, "Re-thinking the Economy, a Matter of Love or Justice? The case of the Compendium of the social doctrine of the church and the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*", *Concilium, The Economical and Religion*, ed. Luiz Carlos Susin and Erik Borgman, 5 ( London: SCM Press, 2011): 93-5.

economic power, unbridled with a defense of private property, a cautious endorsement of the free market, valuing profit and the rejection of the class struggle model.

John Paul II' teaching opposes socialism as it considers the human person as a mere element or molecule in a social organism to which he or she is completely subordinated. There is no free choice, nothing of one's own or done one's initiative. This is the situation in which it is impossible to realize one's personal dignity.<sup>204</sup>

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<sup>204</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, 10.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### ***JOHN PAUL II AND RECONCILIATION IN RWANDA***

We could say with John Paul II that the bridge between social justice, economy, peace and development is the human person, his/her dignity, and value. Without this focus on the intrinsic value of every human person every economical and political system ends in collapse. What occurs in nations where there is no regard for human dignity and rights, no social justice? The history of the twentieth century has taught us that under such conditions peace is not possible, and development is not real as there is no development where there is no peace, as peace is the new name for development. Also, economic and social instability occur when the goods of a nation are shared only among a few people who are in power.

Such was the case in Rwanda where there had always been a small group of people (called "*Akazu*"- small house) who benefit alone from the goods of the whole nation. In the pre-colonial period, this *Akazu* was formed by the king and few people around him; in colonial period it was the king and his entourage, in addition to the Europeans (colonists and missionaries); in the era of the first Republic, the president and his entourage, in the second Republic, the president and his entourage (a few people from the north-west) and nowadays, president Kagame and his men on power. The injustice of

the situation generates wars or social revolt or, as the worst of the worst, genocide, a crime by which people, or a group of people or the government or some authorities decide to destroy, totally or partially another group of its population based on ethnicity, race or religion. In the case of Rwanda, the Hutu ethnic group decided in 1994 to eliminate all the members of the Tutsi ethnic group (about 14% of the entire population) as extremist Hutus and leaders wanted to exclude Tutsi from the governance of the country.

Genocide has been defined as a crime against humanity by the United Nations after the Second World War. In the following pages, I demonstrate that genocide against the Tutsis in Rwanda was a direct consequence of the political and social system that was lacking in humanity. One hundred days following the assassination of Juvenal Habyarimana, a Hutu, and president of Rwanda, around one million (one of seven) of the Rwandan population were killed by Hutu extremists who had decided to finish off the Tutsis. Before their deaths, they were not even considered human beings, as the killers called them *inyenzi* (cockroaches), small and insignificant insects. This ideology is one of the keys to understanding how quickly the killing occurred.

When the entire world was reluctant to call the pig by its name, the voice of Pope John Paul II was heard naming what was happening in Rwanda as genocide. Not to mention that John Paul II was in the Hospital when he delivered the following message on May 15, 1994:

It is a question of a true and authentic genocide, for which, unfortunately, Catholics are also responsible. I am close to these people in their suffering and I would like to address again the conscience of all those who planned this massacre and carried it out. They are carrying this country towards the abyss! All of them

must answer to history and to God for their crimes. Enough blood! God expects of all the people of Rwanda, together with their neighboring countries, a moral reawakening: the courage of pardon and brotherhood<sup>205</sup>.

John Paul II's interpellation was received as redemptive by many. They hoped that the whole of humanity, as one family, would come to our rescue. Since it is stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations that genocide is a crime against humanity and the whole of humanity, as a single human being, should be concerned and intervene to stop it. Nevertheless, it was not until eight months later that the UN Security Council would use this term and about one million people had been killed. By that time, there was nothing left to save.

However, even though the genocide was not based on religion, the Roman Catholic Church was accused of having prepared and committed the genocide. The first to be blamed was John Paul II as the spiritual leader of the Catholics. In the following pages, I want to clarify the reasons for that accusation. However, I do not presume to give an exhaustive explanation as the genocide against the Tutsis is still largely not understood by many people including Rwandans themselves. Accordingly, I assume that a reminder of the role of the Roman Catholic Church played in Rwanda's history would be one of the hypotheses of that accusation. What is the nature of the involvement of the Roman Catholic Church? What do people mean when they affirm that the Roman Catholic Church has committed genocide? It is not easy to understand the role of Roman Catholic Church in the history of Rwanda if we separate it from colonization which holds the true power in 1900s to 1960s when Rwanda shifted from a monarchic to a democratic regime.

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<sup>205</sup> Accattoli Luigi, *When A Pope asks forgiveness . The Mea Culpa of John Paul II*, Transl. by Jordan Aumann, Op.( Boston: Pauline Books &Media, 1998), 213-14.

Before this period, the kingdom of Rwanda was lead by kings always from the ethnic group of the Tutsi.

In this monarchic era, the Hutu-Tutsi ethnic groups and ideologies were already present in the country's vital tradition despite the current government tendency to accuse the Europeans - among them the Roman Catholic Church – of having established these ideologies among Rwandans. The indications of this ideology can be found in the language, myths, proverbs, jokes, riddles, and political system in use before the colonization and the setting up of the Church in the kingdom of Rwanda. This is attested to by a letter that one of the first missionaries in Rwanda, Reverend Barthelemy wrote Reverend J. Froberger, on February 7, 1900, only one week after the African Missionaries (White Fathers) had arrived in Rwanda.<sup>206</sup> Eight days later, Reverend Brard wrote another letter in which he describes with such rare precision how there existed in Rwanda two different ethnic groups, Hutus and Tutsis. He describes how they are quite different from their ways of living and how the Tutsis considered themselves superior to the Hutus. He said that the Tutsis were very intelligent and polite, and that their manners and mannerisms were quite similar to those of Europeans. A Tutsi could not marry a Hutu woman, if this happened it would be by mistake. The Hutus were far inferior to the Tutsis who treated them as their servants as they worked on their farms (see La lettre du Pere A. Brard du 15 Fevrier 1900 a Mgr Livinhac).<sup>207</sup>

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<sup>206</sup> Minnaert Stefaan, M. Afr. , *Premier Voyage de MGR Hirth Au Rwanda. De Novembre 1899 A Fevrier 1900. Contribution à l'étude de la fondation de l'église catholique au Rwanda* (Kigali: Les Editions Rwandaises, 2006), 531.

<sup>207</sup> *Ibid.*, 545-9.



Notwithstanding, this same traditional so offered evidence of living common values expressed in the traditional elements, the customs, the same concept of Imana (God), the same language. This point is an enigma for those who want to understand why genocide occurred in Rwanda. It was in this context of favoritism that the Roman Catholic Church began its evangelization in Rwanda, a country considered by those Missionaries as African Switzerland<sup>208</sup>.

Arguably, there is no evidence yet that would give reason to accuse the Church of genocide. However, the following period would be characterized by the bipolarization of the Rwandan population. The organization of the missions and the country were based on the superiority of the Tutsis who were somehow thought to be quite similar to Europeans. In this context, the White Fathers established schools only for the Tutsis. From the point view of some historians, the missionaries would change their strategy a couple years later, when Hutus were also admitted into high school and the Major Seminary, the only post-secondary school existing in Rwanda during that period. Some of those Hutus would leave the Major Seminary for politics. They were among the first to form political parties and to lead the country from the monarchic to a democratic regime after its independence in 1962. The first president of the independent Republic, Gregory Kayibanda was a former major seminarian. The accusation against the Church would be the fact that she had also allowed Hutus to be instructed, and moreover, having the best instruction in the country: from the major seminary. Among the hierarchy of the Church in Rwanda there were both Tutsis and Hutus; the first Rwandan bishop was a Tutsi.

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<sup>208</sup> *ibid.*, 539.

The period after independence would be characterized by the exclusion of the Tutsis from power, and the killing of numerous of Tutsis by Hutus in power which could possibly be seen as a precursor to the genocide. In fact, Tutsis within Rwanda were killed each time Tutsis living outside the country (those who had left the Rwanda with the king and had formed a rebellion army) attacked the Hutu-dominated government army. These Tutsis would vigorously attack the government in 1990, a war that culminated in genocide when the extremist Hutus in the government decided to exterminate the Tutsis who supported the rebellion army logistically by sending their sons and daughters to fight for RPA (Rwandan Patriotic Army). Thus, the Tutsis contrived to move into stadiums or churches. For example, churches were, at least in thought, a place of refuge for whoever sought it.

In the years of the persecution of the Tutsis that began around 1960, the Tutsis who had taken refuge in churches were saved. This was not the case this time however, since Hutu extremists had decided to put an end to the Tutsis once and for all. This is another reason for the accusation against the Roman Catholic Church, as the churches served as Golgotha to the killers who did not care about the sacredness of those places. Also, some Roman Catholic clergymen are accused of having participated in these killings. One would hear the killers singing that they are destroying the churches in order to rebuild them in only three days. Shamefully, there are those pastors who did not protect their flocks from being murdered. It can be arguably ask if the priests had any power to protect them in a period when there was no morality. Maybe the response would be found in the testimonies of the priests who protected the people who had sought refuge in their churches but were the first to be killed before those whom they protected. There

is, for example, a priest named Nkezabera who was asked by the executioners to let them kill Tutsis who were in the church. He opposed them by dryly answering them that as long as he remained alive he would not allow them to kill Tutsi refugees in his church. They killed him and stormed the Tutsis. There are many who have shown their cold-bloodedness, but also those who fought to the death to defend the Tutsis. The only priests left were Hutu, as the priests who were Tutsi were killed without negotiation or hesitation.

What I can reproach to the Roman Catholic Church for, especially the Missionaries who evangelized us, is the fact that Christianity was only superficial and did not have roots in the culture of Rwandans, contrary to what they believed. So, at a time of trial, such as genocide, it was not rare to find Christian members of the church who were killing other Christians of the same church. But this should not surprise anyone since sometimes a husband would kill his own wife and children because they were Tutsi. Also, I would reproach the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church for their indifferent way of dealing with ethnicism in Rwanda as it is believed that the nomination of the bishops was based on ethnicity. During the genocide, three Hutu bishops were killed by the rebels, and the hierarchy of the Roman Catholic Church has still not asked the current government to let them be honored by a public funeral as the government had done for the other victims. What is the reason for that? They were killed by the RPA soldiers of this government while they were rebels, and they put them in the same tomb.

Finally I want mention that this global accusation of the Church as executioner is a misunderstanding of its nature. The church is not only its hierarchy but also all baptized people. Seeing the Church as being on the side of killers is not just since the Church, too,

lost many of its members of the hierarchy. Hundreds of priests ("one out of four priests was murdered"<sup>209</sup>), religious and catechists were counted among the dead. The majority of Tutsis killed were members of the Roman Catholic Church, 45% of the entire population of Rwanda being Catholic. Moreover, it ignores the efforts of John Paul II who, as the first authority figure, publically calls on all the nations to declare what he, for the first time, designated as genocide. Without any hesitation, John Paul II describes the massacres in Rwanda in 1994 as genocide to remind all humanity to react in order to protect the innocent from being murdered. If only his voice had been heard, maybe there would not be such a great number of victims! Even before 1994 in the 1980s, John Paul II continually called Rwandans to unity and for national reconciliation among all Rwandans. His call was followed by three pastoral letters from Rwandan bishops who were used to awaken the spirit of the Rwandan people with proposals for a renewed evangelization. The visit of the Holy Father, from 7 to 9 September 1990, illuminated us for a time in the political morass of the moment.

During this pastoral visit just a few weeks before the outbreak of war in Rwanda, John Paul II advised the Rwandan authorities to look after all Rwandans as the sons and daughters of one and same country *Rwanda*. He advises Rwandan Bishops to work tirelessly for a heart conversion and purification among Christians, and to help them fully understand that the neighbour whom Jesus invites us to love is not only a man or woman of one's own ethnic group, but everyone.<sup>210</sup> During the war known as "The October War"

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<sup>209</sup> Accattoli, 215.

<sup>210</sup> Secretariat General de la Conference Episcopale du Rwanda, *Discours du Pape aux Eveques Rwandais*, Kigali, Septembre 1990.

that displaced millions and millions of people from the north from their properties and killed tens of thousands of them, John Paul II sent his messenger, Cardinal Roger Etchegray several times with the sole mission of inviting the government and the rebellion into dialogue for peace.

Also, John Paul II himself ordered the Roman Catholic hierarchy in Rwanda to play the role of non-alignment and to facilitate the negotiations between the two sides in conflicts; and to invite the Christians to unity, mutual pardon and reconciliation.<sup>211</sup> Moreover, John Paul II asked them to organize the manifestations for peace, and under his invitation, the prayer for peace was inserted into the normal liturgy of the mass in the entire country. The result was the creation of the Contact Committee, an ecumenical committee whose aim was to play the role of mediator between the RPA and the Rwandan Forces Army. But their efforts did not succeed in curbing the passion of selfish politicians with their genocidal ideology which poisoned the socio-political climate in Rwanda and which would eventually produce the crime of genocide.

However, one of the spectacular fruits of this committee was the fact that the population from inside accepted to call the rebellion army, *abavandimwe* (brothers and sisters!) Also, lead by the bishop of Kabgayi diocese, who was the president of the Catholic Episcopal Conference, the youth from his diocese went to play a soccer game with the youth of the rebellion army in the area once occupied by this same army as a cue of reconciliation and acceptance. Alas, despite this effort by the religious leaders, the politicians (whose hidden agenda was to gain the power in Rwanda) planned to continue

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<sup>211</sup> Jean Paul II, "Discours aux Eveques Rwandais en visite ad Limina, Rome 16 Mai 1992" in *Archidiocese de Kigali, Croisee des Chemins*, no. 76 ( Kigali,1992): 3 ss.

fighting even though they had signed an armistice and peace agreement on August 4th, 1993. This culminated in the genocide of 1994, and in the mass killings of the Hutus by the Tutsis (the new lords of power after the genocide) within Rwanda and in the Congo where hundreds of thousands of Hutus were killed, not to mention the millions of Congolese people killed by the Rwandan Tutsis in power in Rwanda.

The role of John Paul II was emphasized in his multiple invitations to stop the war and to engage in dialogue. The pope has clearly denounced genocide and regretted that some Christians were involved. This regret will be manifested in his public apology made in the name of the Church for its historical mistakes. John Paul II in the letter to Bishop Thaddeus Ntihinyurwa, the President of the Conference of Bishops of Rwanda, March 14, 1996, made his position clear by saying:

I once again reverence the memory of all the victims of this tragedy, especially the bishops, the pastors and the other faithful of the Church, and I ask the Lord to show them mercy. At the same time when your country is seeking ways of reconciliation and peace, I fervently encourage all its children to discover new hope in Christ. The infinite mercy of God, who forgives everyone in every circumstance, is fully manifested in him. ... The State must face a great and demanding challenge: it has the essential duty to give justice to all. And I would like to say again that justice and truth must go hand in hand when it is question of bringing to light the responsibilities for the tragedy experienced by your country. The Church as such cannot be held responsible for the faults of her members who acted against the law of the Gospel; they will be called to account for their acts. All the members of the Church who sinned during genocide must have the courage to bear the consequences of the deeds they committed against God and against their neighbour...I invite you all, bishops, priests, religious, lay people, of different ethnic origins, to turn to God with a sincere heart, to forgive and be reconciled<sup>212</sup>.

Following the pope's advice, the Roman Catholic Church in Rwanda initiated the process of pardon and reconciliation after genocide of 1994. And since then, it has been

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<sup>212</sup> Accattoli, 216.

committed to promoting the process of reconciliatory justice and the moral and material reconstruction to sustainable peace in Rwanda.

#### **4.1 Rebuilding Social Justice under John Paul II'S Invitation**

##### **4.1.1 John Paul's Address to the Bishops in an Ad Limina Visit**

An ad limina Visit is a visit that each Episcopal Bishops' conference does when they visit the pope as the Bishop of the Universal Church. In 1998, the bishops of Rwanda visited John Paul II to give him a report about the situation of their dioceses in Rwanda. The Church in Rwanda was struggling about how to help the post-genocide Rwandan society to overcome the problem of reconciliation and unity between the victims of the genocide and the executioners. Without reconciliation, the celebration of the Great Jubilee of two thousand years of Christianity, and the one hundredth anniversary of Christianity in Rwanda would be impossible.

John Paul II advised the bishops to remind the people that through baptism all baptized Christians become brothers and sisters. Therefore, ethnicity could not divide them. He said that in order to achieve effective communion between all the Church's members, it is essential that a climate of mutual trust be created which will spread throughout society. Wherever conflict threatens peace and understanding between groups the Church is called to work energetically to reduce divisions, especially by encouraging and practicing dialogue herself, which will lead to reconciliation. Acceptance of one's brothers and sisters, with their differences so as to find in them the riches offered by God, is required of every disciple of Christ. Concerning the members of the Church who would

have played any role in genocide against the Tutsis, John Paul II asked them to have the courage to take responsibility for their actions. He states:

The tragedy experienced by your people in recent years has destroyed many structures which you must rebuild to enable the Church to continue her activities of service to her members and to the people as a whole. But these misfortunes have especially afflicted hearts. To help the faithful find healing for their deep wounds, they must be imbued with a true longing for holiness, taking the path of conversion and personal and community renewal in a spirit of prayer, charity and interior poverty. May the Christian communities boldly and tenaciously exhibit a prophetic attitude of mutual reconciliation and resolutely walk the path of harmony in renewed brotherhood and trust! ...The celebration of the Great Jubilee of the Year 2000 is now at hand. For the Church in Rwanda, it will coincide with the first centenary of evangelization...The preparatory period for the Jubilee celebrations is the right time for an honest look at the past. Do not be afraid to face historical reality as it is! During this first century of evangelization, there have been some admirable acts of heroism, but also infidelities to the Gospel which demand an examination of conscience on the way the Good News has been lived over the past 100 years. Belonging to Christ has not always taken precedence over belonging to human communities. A "spiritual awakening" is essential on the threshold of this stage in the Church's journey among men. An in-depth, "new evangelization" is urgently needed if the Gospel message is to be proclaimed, accepted and truly lived by the people of our time...A society cannot be firmly established in mutual understanding without a culture of truth, justice and forgiveness. The genocide your people have experienced has caused unspeakable suffering, which can only be overcome in solidarity and unity of heart, and by the commitment of all to creating conditions of greater justice. Peace is inseparable from justice! It will only be achieved by defending life, all human life, which in God's eyes has a unique and inestimable value. In effect, "the acknowledgement of the personal dignity of every human being demands the respect, the defense and the promotion of the rights of the human person. It is a question of inherent, universal and inviolable rights. No one...can change — let alone eliminate — them because such rights find their source in God himself"<sup>213</sup>

Following this advice the Catholic Church in Rwanda called all Christians to the preparation of the double jubilees. For jubilee and anniversary imply joy and peace, it was therefore necessary to find a way by which all Rwandans, victims and killers, Hutus, Tutsis and Twa, could celebrate together. This way was called the "Synod".

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<sup>213</sup> *Address of John Paul II to the Bishops of Rwanda in Visite Ad Limina in 1998.*



Etymologically, "synod" is a word derived from the Greek (*Syn- nodos*) meaning to walk altogether. It was a special synod with only one goal: to fight the virus of ethnicity in Rwandans.<sup>214</sup> The procedure was that each diocese would organize the synod at its level and according to a methodology adapted to its proper needs and demands. In the following pages I am to illustrate how this process was implemented in my own Archdiocese of Kigali, in which I was an active participant.

#### **4.1.2 Synod as the Way to Prepare for the Double Jubilee:**

##### **Case of the Archdiocese of Kigali**

Responding to John Paul II's invitation of November 20, 1994 to prepare for the Great Jubilee of 2000, as well as his special invitation for a special synod in Rwanda, the bishops in Rwanda called for a special synod in the Church in Rwanda whose people had experienced a series of tragic events, having lost many lives, leaving the survivors in situation of extreme fragility and vulnerability in many ways. This synod was centered on the ancient yet daily ethnic problem of the country, but no one had dared to talk openly about it. Through this special synod, the bishops hoped that this would be an opportunity given by the preparation of the double jubilees of Christianity - two millennium of Christianity and a centenary of evangelization in Rwanda - to open that Pandora's box that had undermined relations among Rwandans and ravaged the country historically, economically, socially and humanly.

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<sup>214</sup> Archdiocese de Kigali, *"Celebrons Le Synode", Charité- Reconciliation- Fraternité, Je n'oublierai plus jamais que tu es mon frère*( Kigali: 2002), 1.

Presumably, in a country like Rwanda where the society and its culture had been disorganized and destroyed, there was no other way to rebuild peace and reconciliation if not through a synod- walking together towards the same goals. The synod was to be organized locally based on the very first structure of the church, called *Umuryango-remezo* (the Basic Ecclesial Community- BEC).

It was on February 20, 1999, that the Archdiocese of Kigali began the process of synod for two years, as it was closed on December 29, 2001. The main theme for the Archdiocesan synod was "*I will never again forget that you are my brother [and sister]*"<sup>215</sup>. The synod began with a solid preparation of the trainers who would lead the Christians in their BEC. The synod process was also conducted in the prisons where those accused of genocide were kept. It was in this context as a candidate priest that I too was trained in order to train the others. Consequently, what I am going to share in these pages is what I have learned among the very first persons trained.

## 1. THE FIRST PROCESS: ISANAMUTIMA - REBUILDING OF HUMANNESS

The process was divided into two periods, and the first consisted in *isanamutima*-re-building of humanness - which consisted of rebuilding the dignity, confidence and the true image of the human person as willed by God. In this process people were taught and convinced that no matter what evil a human person might commit he is still a human being and God does not turn his back against him. Combined with the tendency for the survivor of such incredible violations of human rights and the experiences of indignities

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<sup>215</sup> *This theme is on the cover of the book:*

*Archidiocese de Kigali " Celebrons le synode" 29.12.2001. Charite- Reconciliation- Fraternite. Je n'oublierai plus jamais que tu es mon frere ( Kigali: Imprimerie de Kigali, 2002)*

of war particularly one focused on genocide is to feel like they are no longer a human being. They may feel the need to take their own life without any trust in themselves, in their neighbor or in God.

The aim of this step was to rebuild the unity of the human person within himself, in order to recover from fear, suspicion, hatred and vengeance. In order to succeed in this job, through the synod, participants were invited to freely open their hearts and minds, and let flow out everything that wants out. But, this was only done in small teams called *itsinda ry'ubuzima*- life teams, where anything said there would remain secret among the members of the same group, until the one who gives the testimony would make the decision to share it in the larger team. Of course before letting anyone tell his story of what had happened to him and how it he was traumatized and harmed by it, there was a session of the truth according to the gospel: to tell only the truth and the "true truth" (*ukuri kuzima*, the whole truth without hiding anything). This step helped people to overcome their emotions (*amarangamutima*) and during the testimony of anyone, each teammate was allowed to express the feelings that come from what was said.

## 2. THE SECOND PROCESS: PARDON AND RECONCILIATION

The second process was pardon and reconciliation. It was not possible for anyone to skip the first process into the second since in order to ask or give pardon, one must be convinced of the necessity of doing it: to liberate oneself and liberate anyone who may have caused you any harm. The liberation of oneself consisted in giving up everything- including hatred, vengeance or the feeling that no one could forgive you because of your evildoings, as well as being ready to ask forgiveness or pardon even though the one you

offended might not forgive you. Also, by so revealing the truth of what you have done, you were ready to accept whatever the consequences of what you have revealed. These consequences would be seeking revenge on you, asking you to make reparation for what you have done or even being sent to jail. It was not easy to make such a decision, which is why the first process was the most important as it prepared people to hate their evildoing and to decide not to do them anymore.

For the people who were victims or survivors, it was not easy to accept to forgive those who have murdered your family members or attempted to take your life. Following the guidance of R. Scott Hurd<sup>216</sup>, we were encouraged to see (suggestion) Christian forgiveness is unconditional and unlimited. The Christians in the Archdiocese of Kigali responded to the synod who had prepared for the pardon as the releasing gift that a victim could offer to his offender (being in prison or not). In the words of Hurd, "our forgiveness needs to be like God's, generous, without conditions, without limits, without waiting, and above all, free<sup>217</sup>.

But, thanks to the first process they were many who were ready to forgive anyone who would confess what he had done; or, to take the first step and offer forgiveness to those they knew had harmed them regardless whether he had asked to be forgiven or not. The height of this process was the reconciliation of one with oneself, as everything that kept him slave of himself had been given away. Also, this contributed to the reconciliation between victims and their former executioner or torturer, or those who killed their relatives, when the offended decided of his own accord to forgive those who

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<sup>216</sup> Hurd Scott R., *Forgiveness. A Catholic Approach* ( Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2011), 33.

<sup>217</sup> Hurd, 34.

had done something against him. From the side of the killers or abusers, this process brought them joy and peace of heart because of the forgiveness they have received or because they have accepted to tell the truth of what was done and were ready to accept the punishment.

Of course, this also brought reconciliation with God, as the process of forgiveness is not a human effort but a gift from God, and the one who forgives is happy to do what God asks every Christian to do in order to resemble Jesus Christ who forgave their executioners on the cross. So to be Christian, asserts Hurd quoting C.S. Lewis, "means to forgive the inexcusable in you".<sup>218</sup> To sum up this process and the peace and joy it brought to people who followed the synod, let us take a look at some testimonies made public during the closure of the synod. These are divided into three categories: the victims who freely forgave their offenders; the executioners who asked to be forgiven and accepted to pay whatever they would be charged with (including death or jail); those who had accused their neighbours and public justice had sent them to jail.

#### THE TESTIMONIES OF PEOPLE WHO FOLLOWED THE SYNOD

I have tried to translate word for word their testimonies in order to keep their emotions and feelings alive through their testimonies.

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<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

## A. Pardoning those who have killed the members of your own family

### A.1. Testimony of Xaverine Kanyambo

*My name is Xaverine Kanyambo from the parish of Musha in the archdiocese of Kigali. In April 1994, during the war, I thought only about death, I thought I was in the last days. At the end of the war, everyone who saw me ran away from me without my saying a word to them. They said to me: “You are going to deliver us to the killers of the RPA<sup>219</sup>.” I was grieving and I was traumatized.*

*I also thought about God and I found that he, too, had abandoned me, that he had abandoned the Tutsis because they were always being killed by the Hutu. For this reason, I turned away from him. I also became bad. I was jealous of those who still had their families (children, husbands and other advantages of the family). Desperate, I thought that I could do nothing and didn't know how to live alone.*

*I had no one to share my problems with. I wished everyone dead. And the anger I felt towards everyone pushed me towards vengeance, made me rejoice in the deaths of others and wish their extermination. Denouncing the Interahamwe and helping to torture them would have brought me much pleasure. I followed those who had killed the members of my family, some were killed, others fled, some imprisoned, others committed suicide. I was so vengeful that what I did far exceeded what they had done to me. In short, I was no longer human, just like the Interahamwe.*

*But afterwards, I reflected and I noticed that I, too, had sinned. I found no other alternative and I understood that each survivor had to find peace again. I was filled with ideas. I would then find that I first had to give peace, because those who were lacking it, at that time, it was because I scared them. I chose to work for peace. The first thing that I noticed was that I had to chase far from me all jealousy which brought me such great despair. I wondered how I was going to live without family, all alone. I wanted to approach God so that he could help me but I was ashamed and afraid. Reading the Bible encouraged me. I began to stop doing all the things that kept me from moving forward such as trying to imprisoning and accusing others.*

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<sup>219</sup> Rwandan Patriotic Army was an Army (RPA) formed by the Tutsi who were refugees in Uganda. They had been attacking the Rwandan government from the 1960s without any success. In 1990, they lead an attack that they called Rurangiza, the Last One, that would lead them to power in Rwanda after overthrowing the Rwandan government which was mainly composed of Hutu. This war ended with the genocide of Tutsi where the Hutu extremists decided to bring the final solution (apocalypse) of the problem caused by the Tutsi. During the genocide, the RPA won the war and overthrew the government. In this period, the Tutsi survivors of genocide would bring to the RPA's soldiers, falsely or truthfully, any person they believed had participated in the killings.

*During Lent of 1996, I began to pray, to go to Mass, to do a novena and I could recite the rosary by myself. After the novena, I still had not changed. But I did not lose courage; instead, I waited. I continued to plead to the Holy Virgin Mary, so I could sit in church without crying and I had the courage to pray for others without treating them like enemies. I still hesitated to ask for God's forgiveness, instead I begged the Holy Virgin Mary to ask forgiveness on my behalf.*

*In September of 1996, while I was reciting the Angelus, I heard a voice say to me "receive peace". I understood that this voice was calling me to give this peace to others, but I wondered how I could give peace while I did not have it. Of course, this peace could only come from forgiveness. Each person knows how difficult it is to forgive someone who has not asked for forgiveness. But I decided for myself to do it. It was a miracle that God did for me. I began by approaching. I continued to fight against my resisting nature. Thanks to prayer, I conquered it. It was during Lent of 1997 (the third Sunday) that I had decided to pardon everyone who had outraged me but I did not express it out loud. Some I met in the celebration of the Word of God, others I joined at their homes because they feared me. They didn't believe it, they still doubted me, thinking that I wanted to get close to them to investigate them, etc.*

*However, I did not lose courage; I continued to proclaim to those in prison that I forgave them. I did it by bringing them food; some sent me messages of joy. It had been so difficult for me to forgive someone without him asking for it; but I hoped and little by little I achieved it. I hid it because I found that the survivors with whom we shared the same conditions would not welcome it, while me, I was convinced that staying in that situation was to condemn oneself to death. To declare it explicitly at that time was no longer easy. A man returned from exile and others accused him of having killed my nephew. I told them to stop these accusations because I had definitely forgiven him. I approached him and calmed him, and he assured me that he was innocent of this murder.*

*After a few months, I did an examination of conscience and found that I was more stable in my new life. I made small advances thanks to the Eternal who came to my aide. I was no longer afraid, nor grieving. I went to confession to be reconciled with God. Finally, I renewed my promises and my commitment to the Legion of Mary. At present, I am happy and at ease.*

## A.2. Testimony of Concilia

*My name is Concilia from Nyamata Parish<sup>220</sup> in the Archdiocese of Kigali. During the war of 1994, my husband and my 11 children were massacred. I am a*

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<sup>220</sup> Nyamata Parish is the only parish in the archdiocese of Kigali where they killed all the people who sought refuge in the church. Nowadays, the bodies of those killed are still in the same church that has become one of the memorial site of the genocide. They killed many people in the area of Nyamata

*survivor. I first lived in a camp in Nyamata for people displaced by the war. After returning to my home, I had no longer had the hope to live because I was alone with neither material nor moral support. Because of this suffering, I could no longer sleep; I could only drink beer to drown the sorrow and to find a bit of sleep. I was furious and I was full of hatred for the Hutu. I cursed everyone who crossed my path, swearing and spitting at them; I didn't even want my eyes to look upon anyone of this ethnicity. I made a lot of people pay for the goods I lost in the war of 1994 and some of them were innocent; the others I accused before the tribunals without any discernment.*

*While following the lessons preparing for the jubilee and the synod at the parish with great interest, I was moved. I discerned the voice of the Lord who was calling me to conversion. I got some beer and invited everyone whom I had made pay, some of them came with fear, I told them that I did not have money to pay them back but that I was asking their pardon; those who had not yet paid, I acquitted them of these obligations. As for me, I admitted that the deep reason for my behavior resided in the fact that I had not yet met God. As for the people I had charged at the Parquet, I went to tell the IPJ that I had forgiven them because of God's forgiveness. The members of my family began to treat me like I was an imbecile and a crazy person and persecuted me. I thank God for having freed me because after, I discovered interior peace and sleep. I am no longer alone since those whom I forgave became friends. They are the first to help me.*

B. Testimony concerning forgiveness accorded by Hutu to Tutsi who imprisoned others unjustly<sup>221</sup>

B.1. Testimony of Béatrice Ndinkabandi

*My name is Béatrice Ndinkabandi from the parish of Ruhuha in the archdiocese of Kigali. After the genocide we went in exile in Congo like many other Rwandans who followed the defeated government and Army.<sup>222</sup> She says: "My husband Théoneste Ruguayampunzi and I became refugees in 1994, just after the end of the genocide near the month of June.*

*We were repatriated in December of that same year. A few days after, one Vincent Mbonyumukunzi says to my husband: "Give me 2000 Frw." He continues saying: "either*

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because the Government had displaced the Tutsi from the north of the country and made them live in that region which was at that time a large forest.

<sup>221</sup> All Hutus who were in Rwanda during 1994, according to RPA's soldiers, RPF politicians and many survivors, had committed genocide. There are many among the Hutu who were killed or put in jail because simply they were Hutus.

<sup>222</sup> When the government was overthrown by the RPA's soldiers, who were ancient Tutsi refugees in Uganda, they took with them the population (mostly Hutu as the Tutsi were supposed dead) to former Zaire, today known as Democratic Republic of Congo where they lived in refugee camps. Beatrice and her family were among those who fled to the Congo.



*you give me this amount, or you give me back my houses. Théoneste Rukemampunzi (my husband) refused to give this sum, preferring to denounce those who had destroyed these houses. These people confessed it publicly. After that they affirmed that neither Rukemampunzi nor any of his family had participated in the destruction of these houses. Seeing that this was not falling on Rukemampunzi, Mbonyumukunzi invented other accusations. He says that Rukemampunzi killed a boy by the name of Damascène during the genocide. He gets him put in prison. Béatrice Ndinkabandi continues: “after my husband’s detention I learned that this Damascène was hiding at Jean Ngwije’s house. Since then, I have been angry with Mbonyumukunzi because he had my husband imprisoned by false accusations.*

*The synod helped me in its instruction on reconciliation. After a long examination of conscience, I realized that I had to reconcile with Mbonyumukunzi. He had wrongly imprisoned my husband and for that he was remorseful. However, I was afraid that he would put me in prison too, like he had done to my husband. In light of the instruction of the synod and thanks to the Holy Spirit I went to see Mbonyumukunzi so that we could talk together about what really happened. It is only after that we could ask each other pardon and reconcile. In fact, Mbonyumukunzi listened to me and recognized that he had unjustly imprisoned my husband. Then we presented ourselves before the legal authorities of Nyamata, accompanied by Jean Ngwije who had hidden the child in question. Mbonyumukunzi admitted before the courts that he had wrongly accused Rugayampunzi. At present, even though my husband has not yet been freed, Mbonyumukunzi and I are living as reconciled brothers that to the synod journey.*

### C. Testimony of Hutu who risked their lives to save others during the genocide<sup>223</sup>

#### C.1. Testimony of Emmanuel Sebhiga

*My name is Emmanuel Sebhiga of Ndera Parish in the archdiocese of Kigali. I had more than 50 people who had been refugees at my house (women and children).*

*Because of their rather large number it did not take long to realize that these people were there. I had the courage to face attacks from people who wanted to kill these innocent people. Seeing that the situation was worsening, I made them cross Lake Muhazi and I brought them to the other side of the lake. There it was still calm, there was still safety.*

*Three hours later, I was attacked. They broke down the doors and busted into the house. Finding no one there, they began to hit me hard. I tried to ask forgiveness but in vain. They asked me for money, searched everywhere but did not find a single penny. I told them that I kept my money not on me but at the BEC of Gicanga but it was a lie.*

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<sup>223</sup> During genocide if the killers (Hutus) found anyone who had hidden a Tutsi, they normally killed that Hutu or asked him (her) to pay a certain amount, or he (she) was asked to kill those Tutsis and bury them himself (herself) without any other help. It was very dangerous to be caught harboring a Tutsi if you were a Hutu.

*I thought that if they took me there, I would gain some time and could be freed by other people. That's just what happened, for arriving at the little trading centre, the people prevented them from harming me. But they continued to direct attacks on my home because of a woman who stayed there as a result of illness. It is the Lord alone who freed me. This woman stayed at my house until a soldier kept her children called her near him, guaranteeing her protection along with all her belongings.*

*However, the situation took another turn: after her return to the house, the uncles of her husband killed her along with her children. Long afterwards the war ended and the refugees returned home. I welcomed them and helped as much as I could. I spoke with children who lost their parents; they wanted to gift me with a cow that I had given their parents but I gave it back to them to support them. This gesture was done in front of the assembly in the church. As one of the repatriates had lost all his cows, on his return, I pitied him and I gave him a cow so that he could start breeding them again. I also kept a cow of someone who had run away. On his return, he came to thank me and decided to regularly give me a jug of milk. Among those who were refugees at my place and whom I had, with difficulty, succeeded at protecting, there was one who organized a party to thank me. He asked the guests to give thanks to God. For the moment I live on good terms with my neighbours, we share everything and we help one another in everything.*

D. Testimony of criminals who asked for pardon from the families of their victims

D.1. Jean Baptiste Nkundiye

*My name is Nkundiye. I am a prison in the Central Prison of Kigali. My testimony concerns Canisius Sibomana whom I killed. He was married and the father of five children. His wife's name is Aurélie Nyiratebuka. I only killed the man; I did not touch his wife or children. For this I asked pardon and they forgave me.*

*Arriving in prison I became a practicing Christian by praying often. I felt God asking me to acknowledge my crime and to ask for forgiveness. He asked me to confess before the relevant authorities and to plead guilty. I did it and I accepted it because I was telling the truth. I was quickly summonsed for trial. Upon arriving at the specialized trial chamber in Rushashi, I found that my deposition had been received. I asked the magistrates for permission to meet Aurélie, the wife of the dead man, to ask her forgiveness. The tribunal granted it. And so, I talked to Mrs. Aurélie Nyiratebuka; she appreciated my repentance and granted me pardon. The tribunal confirmed it publicly; on her part, she added: "The rest will depend on justice."*

*I thank God, because the sentence having been pronounced on August 11, 1999, I enjoyed the reduced sentence of 15 years in prison.*

*Thanks to God, the synod had been done in the Central Prison in Kigali. We strived to eradicate anything that could make the genocide and the massacres reappear in our country; also I gave this testimony to arouse courage to ask and grant forgiveness in*

*Christians. At present, I feel completely converted to the Christian life. And, in the village, my wife is involved in charismatic renewal.*

*In brief, our hearts, mine and my family's, are completely at peace. My testimony as to the presence of the Catholic Church in the Central Prison of Kigali can be summed up in these few points:*

- *It strengthened our spiritual life by teaching us the Word of God.*
- *With the help of the Archdiocese of Kigali, a priest (chaplain) came to say mass for us every day.*
- *The "Good Samaritan" group continues to share with us the testimonies of those whom we have offended. Face to face, they forgive us and sometimes they ask us pardon for having committed evil against us which would be a sin against God. For example, each time that they let themselves be dominated by human nature which would feed their feelings of vengeance towards us and wish us evil.*
- *The Catholic Church had obtained me a permanent assistance for my invalidity.*
- *In brief, the Church is for us a mother who surpasses our flesh and blood parents. We thank God for it from the bottom of our hearts. We give thanks to God who did not allow us to be abandoned; on the contrary, we have been the beneficiaries of his immeasurable*

In view of these testimonies, and the success of the synod in restoring dignity to a people dehumanized by the events of the genocide, it is evident, as John Paul II said, that we are beings whose beginning and end and entire being is in God, but who live in relationship with one another. Thus, only by acknowledging that we are all sinners, and through the asking and giving of forgiveness, we can restore our relationship with God and with others.

### 3. FROM SYNOD TO TRADITIONAL GACACA TRIBUNAL

Borrowing from the Church her methodology of the Synod, and relying on the experience and results of the Synod, the Government of Rwanda initiated the traditional tribunals known as Gacaca. Like in the Synod process, people from the same villages gather together to share information about what happened in 1994, in order to do justice.

Gacaca's goal was to establish the truth, to establish a list of the victims, to identify the authors of the genocide, and to liberate from jail those who were found not guilty of genocide, and to build unity and reconciliation based on justice and the truth. If anyone was found guilty, he or she should admit his/her crime and apologize to the victim's

survivors with the expectation to be forgiven or to respond legally to what he/she had done. This was the Government agenda, copied from the synod process even though in the Synod there was no punishment as it was not a judicial process but a process of reconciliation and forgiveness.

However, despite the fact that the population had elected people based on their integrity to guide them during the Gacaca process, as days went on, the Gacaca process had changed its nature to become the place where people could seek revenge and the hidden agenda became clear: to send as many Hutu as possible to jail, to take their land and belongings as a tribute to the genocide survivors, and to gather information. The procedure was that people who knew anything about what had happened that should tell it in its deepest details. However, the law of Gacaca forbade people to tell a lie but if two or more people say the same thing, it would be considered truth. The weakness of this kind of popular jurisdiction was that the judges didn't have any education. They could easily follow their emotions. This Gacaca took place also in prison where prisoners were encouraged to admit their crimes (plea bargaining) in order to be released from the jail, or to have their sentence reduced. Many of them were forced to tell lies.

This justice based on a hidden agenda could not lead a population divided into victims and killers to a real reconciliation and unity as the Synod had. But the success of the Synod was that people, not any people, but Roman Catholic Christians were educated on how, regardless of the crimes they had committed, they were still children of God, and though sinners, God's mercy is greater than their sin. But, in order to reconcile with God, the condition was to reconcile first with your neighbour. In the Synod process, the consciousness of the people was enlightened by the Word of God, by the sacraments, but

moreover by the psychological preparation prior to the process of the Synod in the archdiocese of Kigali.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it may be possible to conclude with James E. Hug<sup>224</sup> that John Paul II has created a kind of disconnect between his thoughts on economic justice from what was the Catholic tradition in the matter. The evidence suggests otherwise. Rather, as John Paul II states, he is not interested in recovering former privileges or imposing his vision. His interest is the human person, the "concrete" human being, the individual person to whom Christ united himself. Because, the human person is the primary route that the church must travel to fulfill its mission.<sup>225</sup> Based on the teaching of his predecessor popes, he emphasizes the heart of Catholic Social teaching which is the human person, his nature, dignity, value, rights and duties. John Paul II ties together all of these concepts along with the principles of solidarity, subsidiarity, and human work.

In his approach to a social justice economy, he uses the existential approach or the based on the principle that man is a being of needs. However, his needs are never sated despite all his efforts to satisfy them. At this point John Paul II reminds every human person that his nature does not allow him to indefinitely multiply his desires without considering the other human beings with whom he is called to form a family - human

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<sup>224</sup> Hug, James E., "Economic Justice and Globalization", Coleman, John, A., William F. Ryan, ed., *Globalization and Catholic Social Thought. Present Crisis, Future Hope* (Ottawa: Novalis, 2005), 55.

<sup>225</sup> *Centesimus Annus*, no. 53.

family in which they share everything with which God has provided them. John Paul II follows these key elements: the person human is a total unity, he is an organic whole as well as he is a livelihood. The human person according to his nature is an opening, a self-realization as well as relationship and theological reality.

Therefore, according to what we have seen with John Paul II, the human person is unity. The human person is neither his body nor his soul. He is both at the same time. His body and his soul are substantially united such that they cannot be separated and continue to be considered as human person. As such, to reduce a person to only his body is to escape to a materialist concept, or to an idealist concept if he only considers the function of his soul. With this reality, we cannot make a division between the "individual" and the "person". Also, one must not make a separation between the body and the mind as the mind specifies our human nature even though he does not realize it completely.

Otherwise, in doing so, the human person would be denied his freedom, responsibility and fully self-realization. Whatever concerns a human person must regard him as a totality. Also, John Paul II has showed us that the human person is an organic whole, and everything that composes him constitutes the structure of being and fits together structurally and functionally such that everything remains in the whole and the whole in each of the components.

From the point of view of John Paul II, the human person is also an opening. His nature is such that he must first be open to the Superior Being, his God in whose image and likeness he is created and from whom his existence and subsistence derive. The other human persons enrich him as he himself enriches them by what he is to them and what he

brings them. Even though, the human person is primarily a self-realization, he also depends on others, as he is an animal socialis - always in relation with others.

According to the principle of subsidiarity, he is first responsible for himself, and what he is able to do he must do it in order to realize himself and to contribute to the well being of the entire human family according to the principle of solidarity. He receives from the society, thus he must also give to the society. In this exchange based not only on justice but on justice-charity according to which every human person will receive from others not what he has worked for but rather what he needs for his subsistence and the subsistence of his family. Therefore, any political economic system that uses him as means not at end, as an object and not as subject, is to denature what the human person is as he is a theological reality which means that he is always in relationship with God, the beginning and the end of every human person. Therefore, any political economic social system that denies God, at the same time denies the human person of the possibility of a truly personal existence by condemning him to absurdity since it is in the nature of the human person that everything in him moves toward God.

Having said this, I can conclude by saying that if John Paul II's thought had been followed by many of the political economical social justice systems, perhaps the horrors of this war and the current economic crisis would not have existed or gone this far.



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