UNIAPAC Europe Spiritual Retreat

From courage to change to action for the Common Good



From 8 to 11 June 2023

Monferrato, Piemonte, Italy





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ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE FRANCIS TO THE PARTICIPANTS OF XXVII UNIAPAC WORLD CONGRESS

Paul VI Audience Hall - Friday, 21 October 2022

Dear leaders and participants in the 27th UNIAPAC World Congress!

First, I apologize for my lateness. Thank you for your patience in waiting for me. Today we had more meetings than were planned, and I am sorry about that.

I offer you a warm welcome as you meet for this important session to reflect on and strengthen your commitment to your noble vocation as business leaders (cf. Laudato si', 129). May we never forget that all our abilities, including success in business, are gifts from God and "should always be clearly directed to development of others and to eliminating poverty, especially through the creation of diversified work opportunities" (Fratelli 123). Change always requires courage. Yet true courage also includes acknowledging the presence of God's grace in our lives. In the words of the Psalmist: "Wait for the Lord, take courage; be stouthearted, wait for the Lord" [Psalm 27:14].

I pray that in these days together, but also when you return to your homes and to your places of business, you always be constantly aware of God's grace and wisdom at work in your lives, and allow him to guide and direct your interactions within the business world and with those whom you employ. "We are called to be creative in doing good ... using the goods

of this world – not only material goods, but all of the gifts we have received from the Lord – not to enrich ourselves, but to generate fraternal love and social fellowship"(Angelus, 18 September 2022). To generate social friendship.

The theme of your Congress also poses a significant challenge for yourselves and for many others in the business world: that of creating a new economy for the common good. There can be no doubt that our world urgently needs "a different kind of economy: one that brings life not death, one that is inclusive and not exclusive, humane and not dehumanizing, one that cares for the environment and does not despoil it".1 As you continue to consider a new economy, and, more importantly, work to achieve it, never forget that economic activity "must be directed to all men and to all peoples. Everyone has the right to participate in economic life and the duty to contribute, each according to his or her own capacity, to the progress of his or her own country and to that of the entire human family... This is a duty in solidarity and justice, but it is also the best way to bring economic progress to all humanity".2

¹ Message to Participants in the Meeting "Economy of Francesco", Assisi, 1 May 2019

² Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, No. 333

Any "new economy for the common good" will therefore have to be inclusive. Too often, the slogan "leave no one behind" is repeated without any intention of making the effort and sacrifice to make those words a reality. In his Encyclical Populorum Progressio, St. Paul VI observed that development "cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be well-rounded; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man (No. 14). In your professional lives as business leaders and entrepreneurs, you are called to act as a ensuring that development reaches all people, but most importantly the most marginalized and those in greatest need, so that the economy will always contribute to an integral human development. In this regard, let us not overlook the important contribution made by the informal sector during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. During lockdown, for most of society it was informal workers who assured the supply and delivery of goods needed for daily living and the care of the most maintained vulnerable, and basic economic activities despite the disruption experienced in many formal business activities.

In light of all this, "we are called upon to prioritize our response to workers who find themselves on the margins of the labour market... low-skilled workers, day labourers, those who work in the informal sector, migrant and refugee workers, those who perform what are commonly referred to as '3D occupations':

dangerous, dirty and degrading, and the list could go on".³

Let us also set aside the idea that the inclusion of the poor and marginalized can be achieved solely by our efforts to provide financial and material assistance. As I wrote in Laudato si', "helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work" (No. 128). Indeed, the door to the dignity of an individual is work. It is not enough to put bread on the table; it is more important to earn the bread we bring home.

Work must thus be understood and respected as a process that goes far beyond a commercial exchange between employer and employee. It is first and foremost "a part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfilment" (ibid.). Work "is an expression of our creation in the image and likeness of God, the worker (Gen. 2:3)... we are created with a vocation to work", in imitation of God, for he is the first "worker".

Such work should be properly integrated in an economy of care. "Care can be understood as taking care of people and nature, offering products and services for

³ Video Message for the 109th Meeting of the International Labour Organization (ILO), 17 June 2021

⁴ Message to Participants in the 108th Session of the International Labour Conference, Geneva, 10-21 June 2021

the growth of the common good. An economy that cares for work, creating employment opportunities that do not exploit workers through degrading working conditions and grueling hours".5 Here we are not just referring to work associated with assistance. "Care goes further; it must be a dimension of all work. Work that does not show care, that destroys creation, that endangers the survival of future generations, is not respectful of the dignity of workers and cannot be considered decent. On the contrary, work that shows care and that contributes to the restoration of full human dignity, will help to ensure a sustainable future for future generations. And this dimension of care involves, first and foremost, the workers themselves".6

In conclusion, I would like to share with you some "good news". Recently, in Assisi, the town where Saint Francis and his first friars embraced poverty and proposed a radical new economy to the business leaders of their time, a thousand young economists and entrepreneurs reflected on shaping a new economy and subsequently drafted and signed a Covenant to reform the global economic system to better the lives of all people. I would like to share some of its major points with you today. I do this for two reasons: first, because too often young people are excluded; second, because creativity and new thinking often comes from the young – and we older people need to be courageous enough to stop and listen to them. Just as young people need to listen to the elderly, so we need to listen to young people. Here is what these young people proposed for a new economy for the common good, an "economy of the Gospel", which entails:

- an economy of peace and not of war (Think about how much money is spent on the production of arms!);
- an economy that cares for creation and does not misuse it (Think about the many instances of deforestation!);
- an economy at the service of the human person, the family and life, respectful of every woman, man, and child, the elderly, and especially the most frail and vulnerable;
- an economy where care replaces rejection and indifference;
- an economy that leaves no one behind, in order to build a society in which the stones rejected by the dominant mentality become cornerstones;
- an economy that recognizes and protects secure and dignified work for everyone;
- → an economy where finance is a friend and ally of the real economy and of labour, and not against them. There is a danger that finance can render the economy "diluted" or, better, "effervescent"; and with such liquidity and "effervescence", it will end up like the chain of Saint Anthony!

⁶ Video Message for the 109th Meeting of the International Labour Organization (ILO), 17 June 2021

⁵ Video Message for the 7th International Day of Prayer and Reflection against Human Trafficking, 8 February 2021

⁷ Covenant for the Economy with Participants in the Meeting, "Economy of Francesco", Assisi, 24 September 2022

Today, there are hundreds, thousands, millions, and perhaps billions of young people who are struggling to have access to the formal economic systems or even to their first paid jobs, in the hope that they can apply their academic learning, acquired skills, energy and enthusiasm. I encourage you, as mature and successful business leaders and entrepreneurs, to consider a new alliance with the young people who developed and are committed to that Covenant. To walk with them, to teach them and to learn from them, as

together you shape "a new economy for the common good". It is true that young people always create problems, but they have a flair for pointing out the right road to take!

Thank you for all that you do, and for your presence here. I bless this process that you have undertaken and I bless each of you and your families. And I ask you too, please, to remember to pray for me. Thank you!





Opening Eucharist of the XXVII UNIAPAC World Congress

St Peter's Basilica, 21 october 2022 Card. Michael Czerny S.J.

God is Doing Something New

Isaiah 43, 19-21; Luke 19, 1-10

1. Isaiah tells us that God will make a pathway through the wilderness. And in a dry wasteland and desert, God will let a river gush out fresh water for all His creatures to drink and be refreshed.

God ardently desires to do new things in history in order to assure the proper conditions for human and cosmic flourishing. But the dry land, the hard soil and inhospitable desert that God will change: they didn't just happen. They are the destructive results of the abuse of human freedom as symbolized Babylon, who will "now be forced to flee in those ships they are so proud of" (Is 43:14).

Today violence, wars, grinding poverty and human suffering — all of it is brought very near — assault and sadden us. The tensions within countries, the violence spawning rivers of blood and rivers of tears for so many people in our world today, the environmental and climate deterioration: these result from so many abuses of our human freedom, from so many selfish and short-sighted choices.

2. When humans choose against the common good and against the care of creation, parched lands and sterile deserts result. But God is inviting us back

to our proper nature as his creatures. God calls humans to embrace what is beautiful, true, life- giving, and worthy of praise. We capture this original intention of God when we consider the beautiful, lush and fruitful garden at the beginning of Genesis or the verdant lands refreshed by the healing waters flowing from the temple as described by the prophet Ezekiel (Ez 47: 6-12).

But what is it like, to hear this call from God?

3. Let's turn our attention to Zacchaeus, the tax-collector desperate to glimpse Jesus. In biblical times, tax-collectors weren't civil servants public functionaries. Think of them as members of a guild of independent contractors whom the Romans engaged to collect taxes from subdued people. Each tax collector owed a certain sum to the Empire, and his earnings were whatever extra he could collect. Obviously, this could and did lead to terrible abuses and much suffering. It was brutal, vindictive, unjust.

Yet Zacchaeus was probably like many of us: not particularly bad and yet, unwittingly, propping up an abusive system and benefitting from it, enmeshed



in what Pope John Paul II called "structures of sin." And these structures of sin impede and undermine the common good.

What happened to Zacchaeus when he met the Lord Jesus? Being recognized affirmed Jesus liberated and by Zacchaeus from the typical tax-collector's logic which, until then, had dominated his life. Thenceforth, though still a tax collector, he was resolved to renounce extortion. He was liberated from the structures of sin. Jesus freed him to be decent, to be generous, to be free, and indeed to be human and happy. In fact, the name "Zacchaeus" means "clean" and now it seems appropriate.

4. Now to become aware, and to do something about it: is this not the mission of UNIAPAC and the purpose of a World Congress? Let us think of a liberating conversion like that of Zacchaeus as a dynamic movement away from the idolization of any temporal reality. The idol can be the self; the idols can be of the market, of finance, of cultures, of nations, of races, and especially of wealth and of economic orthodoxies. Think here of the rigid attachment to business practices that are driven only by profit without consideration for the common good of this earth, our common home. Here is a description of the problematic status quo:

"Extravagance and wretchedness exist side by side ... While a few enjoy very great power of choice, the majority are deprived of almost all possibility of acting on their own initiative and responsibility, and often subsist in living and working conditions unworthy of the human person" (Gaudium et Spes, 63). The year was 1965, the author is Vatican II, the text comes from Gaudium et Spes. About a month ago, Pope Francis quoted it in an audience with Spanish entrepreneurs.

We are invited then, like Zacchaeus was, to turn towards God as our Creator and Saviour and Lord, and to one another as siblings, in a spirit of reverence, care, recognition, and solidarity... a movement from the abuse of human freedom and exploitation of others, to the transformation of human freedom in serving God and our neighbour and caring for our common home.

Through the encounter with Jesus, Zacchaeus begins a new relationship with wealth through a radical and structural change that orients his life and activities towards God and others. He joins the ranks of those who, having turned towards God and their neighbours through good stewardship of their wealth, are helping God to "do something new" today.

An important point: a conversion like that of Zacchaeus is only the first if necessary step. It must be followed by "converting" the economy itself, so that money serves rather than rules. Such an economy would deliberately strive to serve the common good, not remain at the mercy of individual greed and self-interest.

5. I encourage you then, dear Christian entrepreneurs, to become architects of a new way of doing business that rejects the "recklessness" of Babylon and the avarice of the old Zacchaeus.

Two groups are really interested in such change: the poor, and the young.

To the poor, Pope Francis says, "We want your voices to be heard – voices that are rarely heard. No doubt this is because your voices cause embarrassment, no doubt it is because your cries are bothersome, no doubt because people are afraid of the change that you seek. However, without your presence, without truly going to the fringes, the good proposals and projects we often hear about at international conferences remain stuck in the realm of ideas and wishful thinking."

To the young, Francis says, "Indeed, when civil society and businesses lack the skills of the young, the whole of society withers and the life of everyone is extinguished. There is a lack of creativity, optimism, enthusiasm, and courage to take risks. A society and an economy without young people are sad, pessimistic and cynical."²

Have the poor and the young been invited to this Congress? If not, what have you put in place to ensure that they are not forgotten?

The Lord invites us to embrace a new way of seeing and acting like Zacchaeus, and Pope Francis expresses the invitation like this: "I encourage you to continue to creatively transform the face of the economy, so that it becomes more attentive to ethical principles (cf. Laudato si', 189) and does not forget that its activity is at the service of human beings, not only of the few but of all, especially the poor.

Moreover, it is important to realise that you are not above nature, but that you have to take care of it, because future generations depend on it."³

Listen again to Isaiah: "Now, thus says the LORD, who created you ... and formed you ... See, I am doing something new!" (Is 43:19).

¹ Pope Francis, Popular Movements, 28 October 2014

Pope Francis, "Economy of Francis",
 PalaEventi Santa Maria degli Angeli (Assisi),
 24 September 2022

³ Pope Francis, Audience with Entrepreneurs from Spain, 17.10.2022





Spiritual Retreat 2023 of UNIAPAC Europe

Content and Proceedings

The XXVII UNIAPAC Rome Congress on "Courage to change", held in October 2022, was a powerful experience of God's Spirit and Grace at work among This retreat will build on inspiration and the impulses of the Congress. It will follow methodological elements of the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola. The aim is to pray and to discern about God's call to contribute for a more just and fraternal social and economic order. There will be times of personal and Eucharistic prayer, silence, but also times of sharing in linguistic groups and moments of enjoying to be together.

Cardinal Michael Czerny reminded us in his homily at the Rome Congress that biblical change in terms means We conversion. cannot renew economy if we don't renew ourselves. But personal conversion must be followed by "converting" the economy itself, "so that money serves rather than rules. Such an economy would deliberately strive to serve the common good, not remain at the mercy of individual greed and selfinterest." We need a new economic model taking care of the human person, of nature and of future generations. Cardinal Czerny challenged us with the question: "Have the poor and the young been invited to this Congress? If not, what have you put in place to ensure that they are not forgotten?"

Pope Francis similarly reminded us in his speech the presence of God's Grace in our lives in order to create a new economy of the common good. He encouraged us as Christian business leaders and entrepreneurs to act as leaven. Refering to his groundbreaking encyclical "Laudato sí" he emphasized that "helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader perspective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work." This fits with our President Bruno Bobone's claim of a dignified salary as a condition of decent work: "A dignified salary means to ensure everyone a salary that allows him to pay for his needs, to pay for his children's education but even more to allow him to invest on his personal development that will insure his own growth towards happiness." Among our speakers there was a very concrete proposal to ensure that by the end of four years, nobody in our companies will earn a wage which does not allow them to aspire to a dignified level of life, a middle class standard of living.

With the Covid 19 pandemic and the war in Ukraine we are going through a deep crisis. But times of crisis are good times to change the rules. Change happens when people feel that there is hope for a better future. Hope is possible but only under the condition of radical change and



global cooperation. We have the freedom needed to put business at the service of another type of progress, one which is healthier, more human, more social, more integral. We urgently need a humanism capable of bringing together the principles of Christian Social Thinking with the social, economic, technological and ecological dimensions. We have to look for a balance between embracing technological innovation and increasingly competitive production while at the same time viewing progress within the greater horizon of the common good, human dignity and a just use of the natural resources intrusted to our care. To conceive a sustainable world economy should be seen no more as a burden but

as an investment in the future. The costs of non-acting are bigger than the costs of acting. It doesn't cost the earth to save the planet.

As Christian business leaders we are called to be the protagonists, the forrunners of change, of the urgently needed socio-ecological transformation. Another world is not only possible but necessary. As believers we trust in God's cooperation. God is doing something new. God is at work among us and through us. He has no other hands than ours to change this world. The aim of this retreat will be to discern in common concrete steps of action.

Principle and Foundation of the Spiritual Exercices

The goal of our life is to live with God forever. God, who loves us, gave us life. Our own response of love allows God's life to flow into us without limit.

All the things in this world are gifts of God, presented to us so that we can know God more easily and make a return of love more readily.

As a result, we appreciate and use all these gifts of God insofar as they help us develop as loving persons. But if any of these gifts become the centre of our lives, they displace God and so hinder our growth toward our goal.

In everyday life, then, we must hold ourselves in balance before all of these created gifts insofar as we have a choice and are not bound by some obligation. We should not fix our desires on health or sickness, wealth or poverty, success or failure, a long life or a short one. For everything has the potential of calling forth in us a deeper response to our life in God.

Our only desire and our one choice should be this: I want and I choose what better leads to God's deepening his life in me.

Contemporary version by David Fleming, SJ

Questions for the daily examen

As a Christian business leader, am I promoting human dignity and the common good in my sphere of influence?

Am I promoting the integral development of the person and respect of nature in my company and its sphere of influence?

Am I supporting the culture of life; justice; international regulations; transparency; civic, environmental, and labour standards; am I supporting the fight against corruption?

Do I accept the challenge of conversion to ever greater goodness and holiness in my personal life, my business role, and the communities where I am involved and have influence?



Martin Maier S.J. - Spiritual Advisor of UNIAPAC



Prayers

Prayer to God the Creator

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

Move us to create healthier societies and a more dignified world, a world without hunger, poverty, violence and war. May our hearts be open to all the peoples and nations of the earth. May we recognize the goodness and beauty that you have sown in each of us, and thus forge bonds of unity, common projects, and shared dreams.

Renew for us the wonders of your mercy: send forth your Spirit that He may work in the intimacy of hearts, that enemies may begin to dialogue, that adversaries may shake hands and peoples may encounter one another in harmony.

May all commit themselves to the sincere search for true peace which will extinguish all arguments, for charity which overcomes hatred, for pardon which disarms revenge. *Amen.*

Pope Francis, Fratelli tutti



Prayer for Europe

Father of mankind, Lord of history, watch over Europe to whom you have sent philosophers, legislators, wise people, Forerunners in faith of your Son, who has died and has risen again Watch over these peoples, evangelized by Peter and Paul, by the prophets, by the monks, by the saints; watch over these regions watered by the blood of the martyrs and touched by the voice of the Reformers. Watch over the peoples united by so many ties but also divided, over time, by hatred and war. Help us working for a Europe of the Spirit founded not only on economic agreements, but also on human and eternal values. A Europe capable of ethnic and ecumenical reconciliations, ready to welcome the stranger, respectful of each person's dignity. Grant that we assume our duty with hope to inspire and promote an understanding among peoples which ensures in all the continents, justice and bread, freedom and peace.

Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini

God doing something new

"But now, thus says the LORD, who created you, O Jacob, and formed you, O Israel: See, I am doing something new! Now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? In the desert I make a way, in the wasteland, rivers. Wild beasts honor me,

jackals and ostriches, For I put water in the desert and rivers in the wasteland for my chosen people to drink, The people whom I formed for myself, that they might announce my praise." (Isaiah 43, 19-21)



All creatures, bless the Lord

Bless the Lord, all his works, praise and exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, you heavens; all his angels, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, you waters above the heavens; all his powers, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, sun and moon; all stars of the sky, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, rain and dew; all you winds, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, fire and heat; cold and warmth, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, dew and frost; ice and cold, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, ice and snow; day and night, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, light and darkness; lightning and storm-clouds, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, all the earth, praise and exalt him for ever.

Bless the Lord, mountains and hills; all growing things, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, seas and rivers; springs and fountains, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, whales and fish; birds of the air, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, wild beasts and tame; sons of men, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, O Israel, praise and exalt him for ever. Bless the Lord, his priests; all his servants, bless the Lord. Bless the Lord, spirits and souls of the just; all who are holy and humble, bless the Lord. Ananias, Azarias, Mishael, bless the Lord, praise and exalt him for ever. Let us bless Father, Son and Holy Spirit, praise and exalt them for ever. Bless the Lord in the firmament of heaven,

Jesus calling for a new life

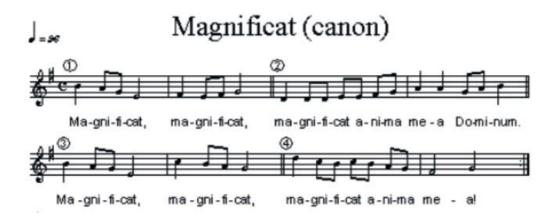
Jesus came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he

came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham." (Luke 19, 1-10)

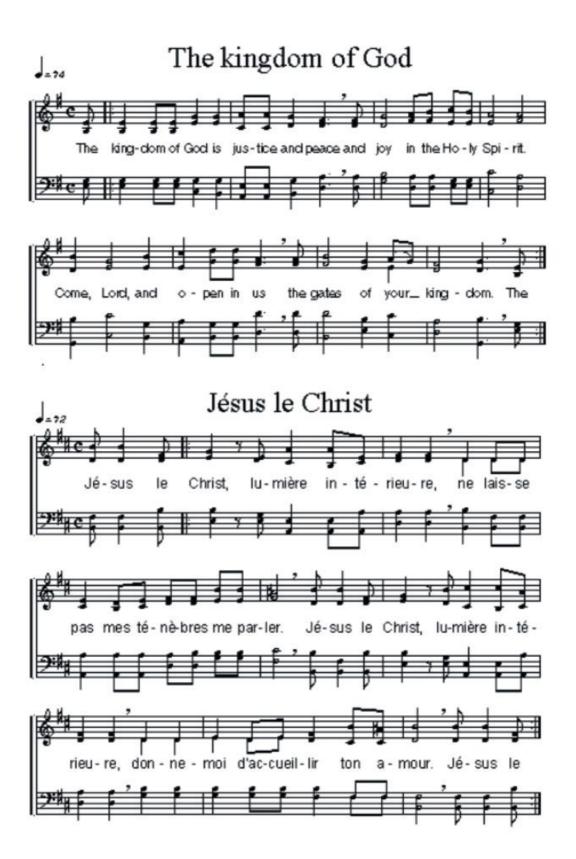
praise and glorify him for ever.

Songs













| Notes | |
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If you would like to learn more about our missions or support our initiatives, please contact Rodrigo Whitelaw,

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