



**Emilio Inzaurraga**

*President of the Justicia y Paz Commission Bishops' Conference Argentina – IFCA AMERICA*

We are all part of a people, pilgrim in the history.

Each one of us "is", because we "are" and it is important that each one of us recovers our own identity as part of the same people. There, we are invited to the common good. It is a good where everyone counts, where no one is discarded and where the common project, at the service of human dignity, exceeds the individual sum of each one.

In this time of pandemic we experience our limitations and our possibilities. We experience a greater awareness of our fragility, a greater awareness of inequalities and pre-existing pandemics, a greater awareness of the interdependence of one and the other. We experience the solidarity and the brotherhood, which we all need.

The social and political dimension (with a capital P, as Luisa characterized it) is in our own DNA, it is an "essential and unavoidable" dimension

Belonging to a people is not only manifested in the party political arena, but in all dimensions of social life. It is also manifested in participation in different sectors, in a trade union, in a business chamber, in an educational community, in a neighborhood institution, in civil society organizations...

The seriousness of the ecological crisis demands that we all think about the common good and move forward on a path of dialogue that requires patience, asceticism and generosity, remembering that reality is greater than the idea. (LS 201)

Looking at reality

According to the latest CEPAL estimates, the region will suffer a 9.1% drop in GDP and the unemployment rate will reach 13.5%. In 2020, poverty will increase by 7.1 percentage points (45.4 million more people) compared to the previous year, bringing the total number of people living in poverty to 230.9 million (37.3% of the region's population). Extreme poverty would increase by 4.5 percentage points (28.5 million additional people), affecting a total of 96.2 million (15.5% of the population), who will not be able to cover their basic food needs. Inequality (our continent is the most unequal region) will increase by 4.7% and informality

stands at 54% where women are the most affected, representing 60%. As a result of the pandemic, 2.7 million businesses will be lost, representing 19% of the region's business fabric.

On 13 July, CEPAL Executive Secretary Alicia Bárcena said that "we are facing an unprecedented crisis that requires transforming the development model in Latin America and the Caribbean and promoting universal, redistributive and solidarity-based social policies".

Deepening regional integration must be an essential component of any strategy to overcome the crisis, as well as a universal basic income, an assistance to microenterprises, a greater multilateral cooperation, a renegotiation of foreign debts, and a new social covenant that incorporates environmental sustainability.

#### The political vocation at the service of the community

Today more than ever, LAUDATO IS offers to us as a road map that illuminates, guides, brings together, as a strategic project for all humanity, for each country, for us, for today.

To the Argentineans, Card. Bergoglio and Pope Francis invited us on several occasions "to place our country on our shoulders". It is as if he now puts himself and invites us all "to put humanity on our shoulders" in the search for a "sustainable and integral development" (LS13) that listens and gives an effective response to the cry of the poor and the cry of the earth.

From the Christian community, attentive to the needs, in our groups, we usually make collections of food or clothing. There are also initiatives for job training or promotion of small community work ventures. There are also those who organize a dining room in some neighborhood, or give something hot to those who are in the street. But it is more difficult for us to participate as citizens in political or trade union or corporate activity, which is typical of the lay vocation.

For example, when on a rainy day we see that our house is leaking, we look for a bucket to collect the water. But the next day we do not go and buy more buckets or rags for the next storm, but we see how to repair the roof. In the same way, we should take care of changing the structures that expel children from schools, families from homes, native peoples from their lands, the poor from society.

#### Dialogue in a pluralistic society

Dialogue is a condition, a way. It does not ensure the achievement of results, of changes that make real what does not exist today, that transform. But the character that dialogue assumes will prefigure and condition the possibility of reaching agreements and working to achieve them.

In the current magisterium of the Church, three conditions for a fruitful dialogue can be seen: the duty of identity, the courage of otherness and the sincerity of intentions ... to transform competition into cooperation.

With these conditions, face to face encounters must be encouraged, without exclusions, fears or prejudices.

The international dimension
-----------------------------

The future demands new answers from us. Another world is possible if we are ready to take up again the path of a humanism based on brotherhood and solidarity. Certainly, many changes will be necessary that will not be achieved by individuals and countries on their own. It will not be possible without a globalization of solidarity, firm agreements and world bodies with the capacity to implement them.

The *Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development* (DPIHD) has responded to the challenge by calling on all the inhabitants of the planet to create a "new paradigm of a more supportive, fraternal, peaceful and sustainable world. And it has reminded us all that "this crisis is a unique opportunity to transform the destruction that surrounds us into a new way of living".

The Programme stresses that "the urgency of the situation requires immediate, holistic and unified responses at all levels: local, regional, national and international".

In this context, the maturation of stronger and more effectively organized international institutions, with authorities designated equitably by agreement among national governments, and endowed with the power to sanction, becomes indispensable". To achieve these objectives "the presence of a true world political authority is urgent" (LS, 175).

## Some recommendations

- Our work and formation spaces should be places of discernment where we can see the concrete reality in order to understand its fundamental connotations, identify the urgent needs and the main challenges it poses, illuminate it from the Word and the Magisterium and assume possible and transforming commitments (the always valid method of SEE-JUDGE-ACT)
- Study and reflection on the encyclical letter *Laudato Si'* and the apostolic exhortation *Querida Amazonia* Entering into its mysticism which invites us to a change in lifestyle.
- To accompany the members who make choices of social and political participation. Keep them linked to the community. Do not judge them. To bring them proposals. Encourage them in the task. Offer spaces for reflection and prayer. Use their experience to continue to raise up mature and co-responsible lay vocations.
- Encourage participation and dialogue among us. To live what we propose. To be creative. Avoid the "it has always been done this way". To believe that things can change
- To be a meeting place, to build bridges, between the real actors, between those who have the decisions in their hands. To dialogue with everyone, not to stigmatize, not to disqualify. From the local to the global.
- To offer our contribution to the political life of our time with the sap of an incarnated faith, capable of giving today's society the leaven of a vision of man and society, a sense of goodness and justice and a concrete commitment to the realization of a more just, freer and more fraternal human coexistence.
- To seek, without being discouraged, the meeting points between the declaration of principles and the possible concrete options. We have to be concrete, so that the great principles of the DSI do not remain mere generalities that do not challenge anyone and can have an effective impact on today's complex situations. (cf. EG 182), for example, Land, Roof and Work should be sacred rights and organizers of the economy and society
- To judge what happens in the public arena without partisan prejudice, but also without paying attention to those who wish "that we relegate religion to the secret intimacy of persons, without any influence on social and national life, without concern for the health of the institutions of civil society, without expressing ourselves on events that interest citizens" (GS 183).

Let us not be afraid! "An authentic faith - which is never comfortable and individualistic - always implies a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave something better behind our passage on earth. We love this magnificent planet where God has placed us, and we love the humanity that inhabits it, with all its dramas and fatigue, with its yearnings and hopes, with its values and fragilities." (EG183)

Better or worse

When we come out of the Pandemic... Pope Francis reminds us... You come out better or worse...

There is a need for Christian-inspired leadership with vocation to service in all areas, especially in politics.

You either come out better or worse, you don't come out the same... And he asks us, "How do you want to get out?"

May the Holy Spirit be in our hearts and help us to come out better. Thank you very much.