

## THE RIGHT TO PEACE IN THE MOST RECENT DOCUMENTS OF THE CATHOLIC MAGISTERIUM

### ABSTRACT

The close coincidence between the 50 years of the Council and the 50 years of the Encyclical “Pacem in Terris” by John XXIII is significantly representative of the particular kind of journey undertaken by the Catholic Church, which insists on the very topic of peace. With its reflections and its concrete work on this crucial issue of human history and contemporary history in particular, the Church stands as one of the most active subjects of the scenario of today’s world engaged in the construction of theoretical and practical scenarios of peaceful coexistence among peoples. This is particularly evident considering the topics which the last two Popes Benedict XVI and Francis cared and taught about.

Particularly, the central idea of the first message of Pope Francis for the International Day of Peace (January 1<sup>st</sup> 2014) talks about the brotherhood that, as the essential dimension of man as rational being, is an essential dimension for the building of a just society and of a solid and long lasting peace. This observation leads to the contemporary and delicate matter of the relationships between North and South, to the raising occurrence of immigration, to the problem of the relationship and balance between cultures and different worlds. As in this field, and more widely in the one of the acceptance and solidarity, the work of the Church seems particularly intense, and the Pope’s judgment is of a great importance. According to the Pope, the relational difficulties of men in a time of multiculturalism are born of a cultural matter and of a particular vision of the reality. The new ideologies

– according to Francis – characterized by widespread individualism, egocentrism and materialistic consumerism, weaken the social bounds.

Francis considers the principle of brotherhood (that is the evangelical concept quite different from the most generic concept of solidarity) as a concrete articulation of the opportunity to build peaceful human relationships. The brotherhood is a condition for concrete and political human works to reach the social justice, to defeat poverty, to set economical systems based on new economical models and lifestyles, to check fears and wars, to defeat corruption and crime, to help preserving the natural resources. The way of peace today – according to Pope Francis’ specific interpretation – is bound to the development of links of brotherly relations, mutuality and forgiveness: these concepts are not really moralistic but they are set out according to a precise way of growth of the contemporary society.

This vision of dignity of man as a condition of harmonic social development, based on mutuality and global peace, comprises an in-depth analysis of the topics of social doctrine already confronted by Benedict XVI, whose reflections on the topic of peace among men and Countries, have been widely dealt with.

Pope Ratzinger’s approach cares about the human being with his vital – material and spiritual – needs thus explaining his particular persistence on economical and social topics linked to today’s economical and financial crisis, as it appears clear in the message for the International Day of Peace of the year 2013. The economical growth cannot be pursued by penalizing “the social functions of the State and the webs of solidarity of civil society”, thus violating the social rights and duties, in particular the right to work.

For the peace operators a high, even political, profile, is expected: to act for the affirmation of a “new model of development and economy”, that is, of a model of good global *governance*, bound to the binomial State of right/social State, the two faces of the same coin called humanly sustainable statehood. Thus, Pope Benedict makes his own a fundamental principle of the current international Law of human rights, the principle of interdependency and indivisibility of all person right’s, which means that the right to work, the right to feed, the right to assistance in case of necessity, the right to health, the right to education, are as fundamental as the right to freedom of association. This principle has its root in the ontological, material and spiritual truth of human being.

This is the field of humanism that, according to Benedict XVI, must be “a humanism open to the transcendence”, marked by “the ethic of communion and partake” and respectful of “the unavoidable natural moral law written by God in the conscience of each and every man”.

The Pope states that the first education to peace is within family, that the article 16<sup>th</sup> of the Universal Declaration defines as “the fundamental and natural core of society that has the right to be protected from the society and the State”.

On the same educational field the Pope assigns a special task to “the cultural, scholastic and academic institutions” to make them undertake, besides the formation of “new generations of leaders”, “the renewal of public, national and international institutions” too.

In the multi-thematic vision of Benedict XVI the considerations on freedom of religion have great relevance, which the Pope means as dual freedom: freedom from (for example, from constriction about the choosing of its own religion) and freedom to (witness, teach, etc.). Strictly linked to this passage is the affirmation that “an important cooperation to peace is that judiciary and the administration of justice recognize the right to use the principle of freedom of conscience towards the laws and governmental measures that threaten the human dignity, as abortion and euthanasia”.

The widest theological interpretation of the history proposed by Pope Ratzinger gives an overall view to world and time, so that it can set contemporary culture free, mostly the Catholic one, from non-Christian lines of interpretation that have been dominant in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Objectives**

The study has the purpose to go deep through the conceptual and cooperative contribution of the most recent teaching of Catholic Church about human rights, peace, peaceful interstate and intercultural relationships. The research underlines the contribution that the papal Magisterium has given to the building of a more aware sensibility, among peoples and the people in charge of the States, towards the concrete topics linked to the theme of peace.

### **Methods**

The method pursued in the course of the study is about a systematic illustration of the sources, giving ample space to original the texts. The interpretation of papal documents always considers the published critical literature. The topics carried out are developed for thematic units, to give a better expositive and interpretative clarity.

**KEYWORDS:** *peace, brotherhood, human rights, culture of peace, humanism*

## **THE WORLD DAYS OF PEACE**

The Messages of the Roman Popes in the occasion of the World Day of Peace are – for the various topics discussed and the depth of contents – a magisterial heritage of culture and Christian pedagogy that in recent years the Catholic Church has proposed to the world on the theme of peace (“An enlightening doctrine from the Church for this fundamental human good”). They are also

a thermometer of the evolution of the issues and the sensibilities developed since 1968 when Pope Paul VI decided to establish this annual celebration on January 1st to express the wish, as he wrote, “that be the peace to rule the sequence of the upcoming history with its just and balanced beneficial”.

The next Popes have confirmed these meeting, that has a thematic title, in which are developed specific topics that are, for the faithfuls and the whole world, an indicator of the judgment that the Church suggests on the most relevant contemporary issues linked to the theme of peace. The Message of the Pope is worldwide sent to chancelleries and also marks the diplomatic line of the Holy See for the opening year.

Thus, it is interesting to resume the contests of most recent Days of peace at least, from Pope Benedict to Pope Francis, to understand through the enlightened issues, what concerns or worries the Catholic Church the most.

The general issues selected by Benedict XVI, since 2006, are the following: the Truth, the Human being, the Family, the Poverty, the Environment, the Religious freedom, the Education, the Peacemakers; the issues selected by Francis are: Brotherhood for 2014 and Slavery for 2015.

The general considerations recalled the most within the Messages of Pope Ratzinger have first concerned the theological and scriptural sides related to the peace theme, followed by: Globalization, Announcement, Ethics, religious Freedom, Relativism, Economy, Family, Justice, Persecution of Christians, Laity, Law, Politics, Ecology, Environment, religious Fanaticism. Pope Bergoglio too has focused on the Theology of peace, and also on: Globalization, Human Rights, Solidarity, Economy, Social Ethics, Resources of the Earth, Brotherhood.

## **POPE FANCESCO AND CONTEMPORARY SLAVERY**

It is interesting to start from the Pope and the main theme of the 48th World Day of Peace of 2015, called “No more slaves but brothers”. This theme may seem peculiar, as, commonly, slavery is considered as an heritage of the “dark centuries” of the past, that no longer belongs to the “fully-developed” and “emancipated” contemporary world.

If it is true that enslaving human beings disgusts the legal consciousness and the contemporary politics and is strictly forbidden by international laws,

today the abominable faces of slavery are a lot: the trade of human beings, the trade of immigrants and prostitution, the “slave-work”, the exploitation over men, the slave mentality towards women and children.

High lightening the theme of slavery as a tragedy of contemporary life represents a significant challenge to the contemporary mentality that, with a marked positivist self-importance, judges from above a historical past that has soiled its hands with guilts as severe as today’s ones.

How can we try to overcome this tragedy of contemporaneity? The theme is closely related to the 47th World Day “Brotherhood as foundation and way to peace”.

In the Message for 2014 the issue had already been recalled as a grave injury of fundamental human rights and introduced to the theme of the right to life and freedom of religion: “The tragic phenomenon of human trafficking, in which the unscrupulous prey on the lives and the desperation of others, is but one unsettling example of this. Alongside overt armed conflicts are the less visible but no less cruel wars fought in the economic and financial sectors with means which are equally destructive of lives, families and businesses” (n. 1). The papal document identifies the root of the tragedy within the individual egoism, that grows socially: “In the many forms of corruption, so widespread today, or in the formation of criminal organizations, from small groups to those organized on a global scale... I also think of the heartbreaking drama of drug abuse, which reaps profits in contempt of the moral and civil laws. I think of the devastation of natural resources and ongoing pollution, and the tragedy of the exploitation of labour. I think too of illicit money trafficking and financial speculation, which often prove both predatory and harmful for entire economic and social systems, exposing millions of men and women to poverty. I think of prostitution, which every day reaps innocent victims, especially the young, robbing them of their future. I think of the abomination of human trafficking, crimes and abuses against minors, the horror of slavery still present in many parts of the world; the frequently overlooked tragedy of migrants, who are often victims of disgraceful and illegal manipulation” (n. 8).

The papal document finds, in the brotherhood, the way to overcome the injustice that often weights on today’s man: “The many situations of inequality, poverty and injustice, are signs not only of a profound lack of fraternity, but

also of the absence of a culture of solidarity. New ideologies, characterized by rampant individualism, egocentrism and materialistic consumerism, weaken social bonds, fuelling that «throw away» mentality which leads to contempt for, and the abandonment of, the weakest and those considered «useless». In this way human coexistence increasingly tends to resemble a mere *do ut des* which is both pragmatic and selfish” (n. 1)<sup>1</sup>.

Pope Francis suggests to the contemporary world to experience the way to brotherhood consecrated by Christ on the Cross so that it can become the way to a new solidarity among men and can lay the basis of a different model of development in economy: “The succession of economic crises should lead to a timely rethinking of our models of economic development and to a change in lifestyles. Today’s crisis, even with its serious implications for people’s lives, can also provide us with a fruitful opportunity to rediscover the virtues of prudence, temperance, justice and strength” (n. 6).

For this reason, I appeal forcefully to all those who sow violence and death by force of arms (n. 7) and it is a truly pressing duty to use the earth’s resources in such a way that all may be free from hunger (9), walking the demanding path of that love which knows how to give and spend itself freely for the good of all our brothers and sisters (n. 10).

Pope Francis has lingered over the theme of peace, besides many speeches, even in the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (nn. 238–258), where he focuses the contribution of the Church to the cause of peace within the dialogue the Church must speak about to the States, the society, the other religions.

In particular, as for this last occasion, the Pontiff precises that if the interfaith dialogue must always be “pleasant and cordial”, at the same time we have to consider “In this dialogue, ever friendly and sincere, attention must always be paid to the essential bond between dialogue and proclamation, which leads the Church to maintain and intensify her relationship with non-Christians. A facile syncretism would ultimately be a totalitarian gesture on the part of those who would ignore greater values of which they are not the masters. True openness involves remaining steadfast in one’s deepest convictions, clear and joyful in one’s own identity, while at the same time being »open to understanding those of the other party« and »knowing that dialogue can enrich each side«. What is not helpful is a diplomatic openness

which says »yes« to everything in order to avoid problems, for this would be a way of deceiving others and denying them the good which we have been given to share generously with others” (251).

From this point of view, the Pontiff does not allow, in this text, any kind of religious relativism, aiming instead to a precise affirmation of identity as sole condition that permits both the dialogue and the giving and asking for respect.

## THE PROBLEM OF PACIFISM

Besides, the debate created by certain statements made by Pope Francis cannot be omitted, they have been interpreted by some editor as a surpassing of the traditional and consolidated “just war” point of view of the Church.<sup>3</sup> In addition, a prolonged silence of the Holy See about the persecution of Christians in Iraq, presumably not to hurt the susceptibility of the Arab community and not to show a lack of respect in the “supreme” sign of dialogue, have been judged negatively by others,<sup>4</sup> also for the fact that the very patriarch of Baghdad, Louis Sako, has asked the armed intervention to defend the Christian community<sup>5</sup>.

Historically, the Church has used the notion of “just war” to defend the rights of faith and the *libertas ecclesiae* when they have been threatened by an aggressive enemy like, for example, in the battles of Poitiers (732), Lepanto (1571) and Vienna (1683), without which the west would have had a very different destiny. The concept of “just war” has been continued and conceptually deepened, with the usual sharpness of arguments, by the cardinal Ratzinger who, in his speech in Normandy, June 4<sup>th</sup> 2004, defined the war of the Allies “*bellum iustum*”, because they acted “also for the wellbeing of those living in the enemy Country during the war”<sup>6</sup>. In April 1st 2005, during a congress in Subiaco (the last one as cardinal), Ratzinger compared extreme pacifism to the “anarchy” in which the “principles of freedom have been lost”. This pacifism can divert “towards a disruptive anarchism and towards terrorism”; therefore, peace cannot be considered as a mere absence of armed conflicts, but it is instead “inseparably connected” to right and justice<sup>7</sup>.

Those notions strongly clash against the mentality that is prevalent in the current days, defined by cardinal Ratzinger the “dictatorship of relativism”<sup>8</sup>, a strong feature of the nihilism that dominated Europe from at least the last

decades of the '900. That very mentality was the most rooted in the pacifist movements in the '80s, during the dramatic nuclear confrontation between NATO and the Pact of Warsaw, in the time when the principle of *Lieber rot als tot*, "better red than dead", a slogan that spread in the Western Europe from the Federal Germany, was most prevalent among the demonstrationists against the ballistic arrays<sup>9</sup>.

## THE DEFENSE OF THE CHRISTIANS AND THEIR RIGHTS VIOLATED

If the defeatist pacifism is considered far removed from the interest considered central by the Church (the one for the defense of the right of faith), then the work of the military appears much more meaningful, especially the ones of those who work for the International Organizations and the international humanitarian right. Those very soldiers "engaged in delicate operations of conflicts contexture and restoring the necessary conditions for peace" were the subject of Benedict XVI thought in his first message as Pontiff for the XXXIX Day of Peace in which he recalls (at n.8) the *Gaudium et Spes* in n. 79, that considers the soldiers serving the Homeland as "ministers of the security and the freedom of people". The fact that the Pope has expressly included the soldiers that defend security and freedom among peaceful men has its meaning, because it is included in the idea of "just war" and it is not an obvious point of view within the Church<sup>10</sup>.

The very notion of "just war" involves an appeal to law and justice, for which "As a means of limiting the devastating consequences of war as much as possible, especially for civilians, the international community has created an international humanitarian law"<sup>11</sup>. Instead the appeal to the international humanitarian law, developed in the "consciousness that there are inalienable human rights linked to the basic nature of men", requires also, "These are reassuring signs which need to be confirmed and consolidated by tireless cooperation and activity, above all on the part of the international community and its agencies charged with preventing conflicts and providing a peaceful solution to those in course"<sup>12</sup>. Even in this case the Pope seems to confirm that, in some circumstances provided by the humanitarian law, it is good to move military to defend defenseless populations.<sup>13</sup>



According to Pope Ratzinger it is pressing that in the world of Relativism – with the mentality of “do as you like”, that becomes necessarily abused of the strong on the weak – catches even more on a Right as rule of justice, a Right which regulates the fields of rights and duties.<sup>14</sup> Indeed, justice, as Benedict noticed, is not bound to what is useful, but has transcendental roots: “Justice, indeed, is not simply a human convention, since what is just is ultimately determined not by positive law, but by the profound identity of the human being. It is the integral vision of man that saves us from falling into a contractual conception of justice and enables us to locate justice within the horizon of solidarity and love”<sup>15</sup>.

If “a real and permanent peace implies the respect of the human rights” it is true that such rights are weakened by “a weak conception of human beings”, from which it is easy to understand “Here we can see how profoundly insufficient is *a relativistic conception of the person* when it comes to justifying and defending his rights”<sup>16</sup>, as in the case of “the silent deaths caused by hunger, abortion, experimentation on human embryos and euthanasia. How can we fail to see in all this an attack on peace?”<sup>17</sup>.

But the attention of Pope Benedict focuses particularly on those conceptions of God that stimulate “Yet what cannot be admitted is the cultivation of *anthropological conceptions* that contain the seeds of hostility and violence. Equally unacceptable are *conceptions of God* that would encourage intolerance and recourse to violence against others. This is a point which must be clearly reaffirmed: war *in God’s name* is never acceptable! When a certain notion of God is at the origin of criminal acts, it is a sign that that notion has already become an ideology”<sup>18</sup>. On this main point the Pontiff at that time expresses very precise evaluations on the terrorist threaten that “has carried out an “uncommon violence”, for which ones, according to Benedict, it is necessary that “I the international community reaffirm international humanitarian law, and apply it to all present-day situations of armed conflict, including those not currently provided for by international law”<sup>19</sup>.

Once again, in an implicit but clear way, there is the conception of the “just war” that must direct the intervention of the International Organizations and of the States towards an ethical and legal side, so that there can be an authentic peace, observant either to the right to life or “Speaking of Christians in

particular, I must point out with pain that not only are they at times prevented from doing so; in some States they are actually persecuted, and even recently tragic cases of ferocious violence have been recorded. There are regimes that impose a single religion upon everyone, while secular regimes often lead not so much to violent persecution as to systematic cultural denigration of religious beliefs. In both instances, a fundamental human right is not being respected, with serious repercussions for peaceful coexistence. This can only promote *a mentality and culture that is not conducive to peace*<sup>20</sup>.

It is known that the defense of the violated rights of the Christians is a persistent concern inside Benedict's Pontificate that he bravely and truly showed in many occasions, and these very occasions are the Messages for the day of Peace, where we can find again the issue of the protection of religious freedom in the world. To this main theme it is specially dedicated the XLIV Day of Peace 2011, in which the whole first part (n. 1) is given to the backgrounds of violence in Iraq, and are mentioned the sufferings of the Christian community and "I think of the recent sufferings of the Christian community, and in particular the reprehensible attack on the Syro-Catholic Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help in Baghdad, where on 31 October two priests and over fifty faithful were killed as they gathered for the celebration of Holy Mass. In the days that followed, other attacks ensued, even on private homes, spreading fear within the Christian community and a desire on the part of many to emigrate in search of a better life. I assure them of my own closeness and that of the entire Church".

In these words there is no granting on the fine diplomatic or interfaith distinctions, no hesitation on saying a simple and brave word and no kind of *ostpolitik* of the past; besides, the German Pope underlines a little later that, generally all around the world "Christians are now the religious group that is mostly persecuted for its faith. Many of them are daily offended and often live in fear because their search for the truth, because of their faith in Jesus Christ and of their sincere appeal to recognize the religious freedom. All this cannot be accepted because it is an offence to God and to human dignity; moreover, it is a threaten to security and peace and prevents the realization of a real complete human development". In the final part of the document Ratzinger speaks again to the point with strong words in the defense of the

Christians persecuted by the Islamic fanaticism: “Finally I wish to say a word to the Christian communities suffering from persecution, discrimination, violence and intolerance, particularly in Asia, in Africa, in the Middle East and especially in the Holy Land, a place chosen and blessed by God. I assure them once more of my paternal affection and prayers, and I ask all those in authority to act promptly to end every injustice against the Christians living in those lands” (n. 14).

## FREEDOM OF RELIGION AND FANATICISM

According to the Pope one of the most severe dangers that threaten religious freedom today is the ethic Relativism.<sup>21</sup> Once we noticed that the religious freedom is “also an acquisition of political and legal civilization”, the papal document underlines that: “*The free expression of personal faith* is concerned, another disturbing symptom of lack of peace in the world is represented by the difficulties that both Christians and the followers of other religions frequently encounter in publicly and freely professing their religious convictions” (n. 5).

From this point of view in Europe the relativist culture of an illuminist kind of tolerance has made even extreme sorts of intolerance and self-important rationalism<sup>22</sup>, that have not spared Benedict himself, as for the 2006 speech at the University of Ratisbone or the extremist protest that in 2007 has prevented the Pope from entering the University “La Sapienza” in Rome, for the opening academic year. Even from this point of view it is significant the auspice, expressed in the document, “*affinché in Occidente, specie in Europa, cessino l’ostilità e i pregiudizi contro i cristiani per il fatto che essi intendono orientare la propria vita in modo coerente ai valori e ai principi espressi nel Vangelo. L’Europa, piuttosto, sappia riconciliarsi con le proprie radici cristiane, che sono fondamentali per comprendere il ruolo che ha avuto, che ha e che intende avere nella storia*” (n. 14)<sup>23</sup>.

The Pontiff argues that nihilism and religious fanaticism share the same condition to force their condition with violence about the truth, according to which even the very phenomenon of terrorism is easy to understand if you catch the cultural, religious and ideological reasons: “Looked at closely, nihilism and the fundamentalism of which we are speaking share an erroneous

relationship to truth: the nihilist denies the very existence of truth, while the fundamentalist claims to be able to impose it by force. Despite their different origins and cultural backgrounds, both show a dangerous contempt for human beings and human life, and ultimately for God himself. Indeed, this shared tragic outcome results from a distortion of the full truth about God: nihilism denies God's existence and his provident presence in history, while fanatical fundamentalism disfigures his loving and merciful countenance, replacing him with idols made in its own image"<sup>24</sup>.

That is the reason why since his first Message for the peace (39<sup>th</sup> one, 2006) Benedict XVI has set the respect of the truth as the basis of the life in common among people, as "Peace can not be reduced to the simple absence of armed conflict" (n. 3); indeed, it takes "Any authentic search for peace must begin with the realization that the problem of truth and untruth is the concern of every man and woman; it is decisive for the peaceful future of our planet" (n. 5); thus, it takes "We need to regain an awareness that we share a common destiny which is ultimately transcendent, so as to maximize our historical and cultural differences, not in opposition to, but in cooperation with, people belonging to other cultures. These simple truths are what make peace possible; they are easily understood whenever we listen to our own hearts with pure intentions" (n. 6).

In this way, we can say that the real peace comes from the respect of the truth and, therefore, from the respect of everybody's rights; about that, Benedict XVI has never kept silent about the persecution of the Christians in some (and not few) Islamic regimes, giving a straight judgment.

## **THE PEACE AND THE GLOBAL ECONOMIC ORDER**

Another theme of particular importance within the Messages of Pope Benedict is about a just worldwide economic order fighting against disparity and poverty and preventing the arise of conflicts caused by them. The argument, as we know, is fully discussed in the encyclical *Caritas in veritate* and is restarted and analyzed, with Pope Ratzinger's usual clearness of judgment without simulations. He starts from the phenomenon of the globalization, that holds positive and negative sides, for which it is necessary a "commitment in pursuit of the common good ... It is alarming to see hotbeds of tension and

conflict caused by growing instances of inequality between rich and poor, by the prevalence of a selfish and individualistic mindset which also finds expression in an unregulated financial capitalism”<sup>25</sup>.

The Pope states that an effective struggle against poverty: “All of this would indicate that the fight against poverty requires cooperation both on the economic level and on the legal level, so as to allow the international community, and especially poorer countries, to identify and implement coordinated strategies to deal with the problems discussed above, thereby providing an effective legal framework for the economy”<sup>26</sup>.

About the theme of family Benedict also marks that it “in addition to a foundation of shared values, an economy capable of responding effectively to the requirements of a common good which is now planetary in scope... Efforts must also be made to ensure a *prudent use of resources* and an *equitable distribution of wealth*. In particular, the aid given to poor countries must be guided by sound economic principles, avoiding forms of waste associated principally with the maintenance of expensive bureaucracies. Due account must also be taken of the moral obligation to ensure that the economy is not governed solely by the ruthless laws of instant profit, which can prove inhumane”<sup>27</sup>.

This view is worth even talking about the defense of natural resources, for which it takes to: “Prudence would thus dictate a *profound, long-term review of our model of development*, one which would take into consideration the meaning of the economy and its goals with an eye to correcting its malfunctions and misapplications. The ecological health of the planet calls for this, but it is also demanded by the cultural and moral crisis of humanity”<sup>28</sup>. The environmental crisis rises when “I also observed that whenever nature, and human beings in particular, are seen merely as products of chance or an evolutionary determinism, our overall sense of responsibility wanes”<sup>29</sup>. Thus, even the Pope, besides far-sighted political projects from governments, asks for “the respect of well-defined laws from an economic and legal point of view too”<sup>30</sup>, as the environmental crisis “The ecological crisis offers an historic opportunity to develop a common plan of action aimed at orienting the model of global development towards greater respect for creation and for an integral human development inspired by the values proper to charity in truth”<sup>31</sup>.

These are some of the essential conditions that, according to Pope Benedict XVI, can grant the world a future of peace and even if “Humanity today is unfortunately experiencing great division and sharp conflicts which *cast dark shadows on its future*”<sup>32</sup>, remains true that “Peace is not a dream or something utopian; it is possible”<sup>33</sup>. The Church looks to young people with hope and confidence; she encourages them to seek truth, to defend the common good<sup>34</sup>, because” authentic human development concerns the whole of the person in *every single*”<sup>35</sup>. And, the Pope says: “The first step in education is learning to recognize the Creator’s image in man, and consequently learning to have a profound respect for every human being and helping others to live a life consonant with this supreme dignity. We must never forget that »authentic human development concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension«, including the transcendent dimension, and that the person cannot be sacrificed for the sake of attaining a particular good, whether this be economic or social, individual or collective.

Only in relation to God does man come to understand also the meaning of human freedom. It is the task of education to form people in authentic freedom. This is not the absence of constraint or the supremacy of free will, it is not the absolutism of the self. When man believes himself to be absolute, to depend on nothing and no one, to be able to do anything he wants, he ends up contradicting the truth of his own being and forfeiting his freedom. On the contrary, man is a relational being, who lives in relationship with others and especially with God. Authentic freedom can never be attained independently of God”<sup>36</sup>.

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- Ratzinger J., *Omelia alla Messa “Pro eligendo Romano Pontifice”*, 18 April 2005, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 8 June 2005, p. 7; cfr. also J. Ratzinger, *L'Europa di Benedetto nella crisi delle culture, cit.*, p. 49.
- Ratzinger J., *Speech held for the 60th anniversary of the Allied landings in Normandy, 4 June 2004*, <http://papabenedettoxivitesti.blogspot.it/>, the translation from the French, not revised by the author, was published in *Vita e Pensiero*, n. 5 (September – October) 2004.
- The intellectual premises of the defeatist mentality were well specified by V. Cesareo-I. Vaccarini, *L'era del narcisismo*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2012, pp. 117–118.

## Endnotes

- <sup>1</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2008 World Day of Peace, *The human family, a community of peace*, 1 January 2008, n. 15.
- <sup>2</sup> Cfr. Francis, Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium*, 24 November 2013, nn. 53–56.  
3 S. Fiori, “Cacciari: ‘Le parole del Papa su guerra e pace? Una svolta radicale per la Chiesa cattolica’”, in *La Repubblica*, 20 August, <http://www.repubblica.it>; S. Pergameno, “Papa Francesco e la ‘guerra giusta’ al Califfato”, in *Nuova Agenzia Radicale*, <http://www.agenziaradicale.com>.
- <sup>3</sup> Cfr. A. Soggi, *Non è Francesco. La Chiesa nella grande tempesta*, Mondadori, Milano 2014; Id. “Francesco dimentica i cristiani”, in *Liberio*, 1/10/2014.
- <sup>4</sup> I. Ingrao, “Papa Francesco e la guerra giusta”, in *Panorama* 19 August 2014, <http://www.panorama.it>.
- <sup>5</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Speech held for the 60th anniversary of the Allied landings in Normandy, 4 June 2004*, <http://papabenedettoxivitesti.blogspot.it/>, the translation



from the French, not revised by the author, was published in *Vita e Pensiero*, n. 5 (September-October) 2004.

- <sup>6</sup> Ratzinger, *L'Europa nella crisi delle culture*, Conference held on the evening of Friday, 1 April 2005 in Subiaco, the Monastery of St. Scholastica, upon delivery to the author of St. Benedict Award “for the promotion of life and the family in Europe”, <http://papabenedettoxivitesti.blogspot.it/>, then in J. Ratzinger, *L'Europa di Benedetto nella crisi delle culture*, with introduction of Marcello Pera, trad. di Lorenzo Cappelletti e Silvia Kritzenberger, Cantagalli, Siena 2005.
- <sup>7</sup> J. Ratzinger, *Omelia alla Messa “Pro eligendo Romano Pontifice”*, 18 April 2005, in *L'Osservatore Romano*, 8 June 2005, p. 7; cfr. also J. Ratzinger, *L'Europa di Benedetto nella crisi delle culture*, cit., p. 49.
- <sup>8</sup> The intellectual premises of the defeatist mentality were well specified by V. Cesareo-I. Vaccarini, *L'era del narcisismo*, Franco Angeli, Milano 2012, pp. 117-118.
- <sup>9</sup> Cfr. M. De Leonardis, “Guerra giusta” e “pacifismo”: la dottrina della Chiesa, <http://www.ilgiudiziocattolico.com/>.
- <sup>10</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2006 World Day of Peace, *In Truth, Peace*, 1 January 2006, n.7; Id. *Message for the 2007 World Day of Peace, The human person, the heart of peace*, 1 January 2007, n. 13.
- <sup>11</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2007 World Day of Peace, n. 14; the Pontiff adds: “Moreover, the scourge of terrorism demands a profound reflection on the ethical limits restricting the use of modern methods of guaranteeing internal security. Increasingly, wars are not declared, especially when they are initiated by terrorist groups determined to attain their ends by any means available. In the face of the disturbing events of recent years, States cannot fail to recognize the need to establish clearer rules to counter effectively the dramatic decline that we are witnessing. War always represents a failure for the international community and a grave loss for humanity. When, despite every effort, war does break out, at least the essential principles of humanity and the basic values of all civil coexistence must be safeguarded; norms of conduct must be established that limit the damage as far as possible and help to alleviate the suffering of civilians and of all the victims of conflicts”.
- <sup>12</sup> “The family of peoples experiences many cases of arbitrary conduct, both within individual States and in the relations of States among themselves. In many situations the weak must bow not to the demands of justice, but to the naked power of those stronger than themselves. It bears repeating: power must always be disciplined by law, and this applies also to relations between sovereign States. The *juridic norm*, which regulates relationships between individuals, disciplines external conduct and establishes penalties for offenders, has as its criterion the *moral norm* grounded in

nature itself. ...The moral norm must be the rule for decisions of conscience and the guide for all human behaviour... *it is necessary to go back to the natural moral norm as the basis of the juridic norm*; otherwise the latter constantly remains at the mercy of a fragile and provisional consensus”, Benedict XVI, Message for the 2008 World Day of Peace, nn. 11-12.

<sup>13</sup> J. Ratzinger, Speech held for the 60th anniversary of the Allied landings in Normandy, cit.

<sup>14</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2012 World Day of Peace, *Educating young people in justice and peace*, 1 January 2012, n. 4.

<sup>15</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2007 World Day of Peace, n. 12.

<sup>16</sup> *Ivi*, n. 5.

<sup>17</sup> *Ivi*, n. 10.

<sup>18</sup> *Ivi*, n. 14.

<sup>19</sup> *Ivi*, n. 5.

<sup>20</sup> “Today, however, peace is not only threatened by the conflict between reductive visions of man, in other words, between ideologies. It is also threatened by *indifference as to what constitutes man’s true nature*. Many of our contemporaries actually deny the existence of a specific human nature and thus open the door to the most extravagant interpretations of what essentially constitutes a human being. Here too clarity is necessary: a “weak” vision of the person, which would leave room for every conception, even the most bizarre, only apparently favours peace. In reality, it hinders authentic dialogue and opens the way to authoritarian impositions, ultimately leaving the person defenceless and, as a result, easy prey to oppression and violence”, Benedict XVI, Message for the 2007 World Day of Peace, n. 11.

<sup>21</sup> “Sadly, even in countries of long-standing Christian tradition, instances of religious intolerance are becoming more numerous, especially in relation to Christianity and those who simply wear identifying signs of their religion”, Benedict XVI, Message for the 2013 World Day of Peace, *Blessed are the peacemakers*, 1 January 2007, n. 4.

<sup>22</sup> J. Ratzinger, *L’Europa nella crisi delle culture*, cit., p. 25.

<sup>23</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2006 World Day of Peace, n. 10. “Violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul... and not acting reasonably (σὺν λόγῳ) is contrary to God’s nature”, Benedict XVI, *Faith, Reason and the University. Memories and Reflections*, speech held in Aula Magna of the University of Regensburg, Tuesday, 12 September 2006, <http://www.vatican.va>.

“Peace is also endangered by those forms of fundamentalism and fanaticism which distort the true nature of religion, which is called to foster fellowship and reconciliation among people”, Benedict XVI, Message for the 2013 World Day of Peace, n. 1.

- <sup>24</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2013 World Day of Peace, n. 1. “In order to emerge from the present financial and economic crisis – which has engendered ever greater inequalities – we need people, groups and institutions which will promote life by fostering human creativity, in order to draw from the crisis itself an opportunity for discernment and for a new economic model. The predominant model of recent decades called for seeking maximum profit and consumption, on the basis of an individualistic and selfish mindset, aimed at considering individuals solely in terms of their ability to meet the demands of competitiveness. Yet, from another standpoint, true and lasting success is attained through the gift of ourselves, our intellectual abilities and our entrepreneurial skills, since a “liveable” or truly human economic development requires the principle of gratuitousness as an expression of fraternity and the logic of gift”. Cfr. Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, 29 June 2009, nn. 34- 36; L. Bruni-S. Zamagni, *Economia civile. Efficienza, equità, felicità pubblica*, il Mulino, Bologna 2004, pp. 146 ss.; Benedict XVI, Message for the 2009 World Day of Peace, *Fighting poverty to build peace*, 1 January 2009, n. 10.
- <sup>25</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2009 World Day of Peace, n. 11.
- <sup>26</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2008 World Day of Peace, n. 10.
- <sup>27</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2010 World Day of Peace, *If you want to cultivate peace, protect creation*, 1 January 2010, n. 5.
- <sup>28</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2010 World Day of Peace, n. 2.
- <sup>29</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2010 World Day of Peace, n. 7.
- <sup>30</sup> *Ibidem*, n. 9; similar concepts in the Message for the 2008 World Day of Peace, n. 7 and Message for the 2007 World Day of Peace, nn. 8 and 9.
- <sup>31</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2008 World Day of Peace, n. 14.
- <sup>32</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2013 World Day of Peace, n. 3.
- <sup>33</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2012 World Day of Peace, n. 1.
- <sup>34</sup> Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate*, n. 11.
- <sup>35</sup> Benedict XVI, Message for the 2012 World Day of Peace, n. 3; Francis, Encyclical Letter *Lumen Fidei*, 29 June 2013, n. 25.

