



Spirituality and Higher Education: Perspectives from Service-Learning

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Uniservitate Collection

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Design of the collection and of this volume: Adrián Goldfrid

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CLAYSS, Centro Latinoamericano de Aprendizaje y Servicio Solidario

www.clayss.org / www.uniservitate.org

ISBN 978-987-4487-30-8



Spirituality and Higher Education: Perspectives from Service-Learning / María Nieves Tapia ... [et al.] ; adaptado por Karina Marconi ; M. Alejandra Linares ; coordinación general de María Nieves Tapia ; M. Beatriz Isola ; Laura Gherlone. - 1a ed adaptada. - Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires : CLAYSS, 2022.
Libro digital, PDF - (Uniservitate)

Archivo Digital: descarga

Traducción de: Karina Marconi ; M. Alejandra Linares.

ISBN 978-987-4487-30-8

1. Trabajo Solidario. 2. Pedagogía. 3. Espiritualidad. I. Tapia, María Nieves II. Marconi, Karina, adapt. III. Linares, M. Alejandra, adapt. IV. Tapia, María Nieves, coord. V. Isola, M. Beatriz, coord. VI. Gherlone, Laura, coord. VII. Marconi, Karina, trad. VIII. Linares, M. Alejandra, trad.

CDD 370



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ABOUT US

Uniservitate

Uniservitate is a global programme for the promotion of service-learning (SL) in Catholic Higher Education Institutions (CHEIs). It is an initiative of Porticus and is coordinated by the Latin American Center for Service-Learning (CLAYSS).

The programme's objective is to generate a systemic change through the institutionalisation of service-learning as a tool for higher education institutions to fulfil their mission of offering a comprehensive education to new generations and involving them in an active commitment to the problems of our time.

Porticus

Porticus coordinates and develops the philanthropic endeavours of the Brenninkmeijer family, whose social engagement stretching back as far as 1841, when Clemens and August Brenninkmeijer founded the C&A company, starting a tradition of doing good while doing business.

Several businesses, charitable foundations and philanthropic programmes joined Porticus and expanded through numerous family initiatives.

Since its foundation in 1995, Porticus has grown to become one of the most committed institutions working to address the challenges of our time, to improve the lives of those most in need and to create a sustainable future where justice and human dignity flourish.

Porticus has two goals which guide their way it works: to listen and learn from the people they seek to serve, and to act on evidence that demonstrates what works.

CLAYSS

The Latin American Center for Service-Learning—CLAYSS—is a leading organisation for the promotion of service-learning in Latin America, and a worldwide reference. It promotes the development of service-learning in both formal and non-formal education, and provides advice to policy makers, NGO leaders, communities, educators and students.

The *Uniservitate* collection

The *Uniservitate* Collection is an editorial project of CLAYSS (Latin American Center for Service-Learning) in collaboration with Porticus.

It is aimed at Catholic Higher Education professors and authorities, other educational institutions, specialists in Service-Learning, ecclesiastical leaders, as well as the general public interested in education and social change.

With the contribution and collaboration of outstanding international scholars and specialists, the objective is to offer contributions from different regions and to share multicultural perspectives on topics of interest related to spirituality and the pedagogy of Service-learning in the world.

Each digital book is published in English, Spanish and French, and can be downloaded free of charge from the Uniservitate website: www.uniservitate.org/



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Holds a Bachelor's Degree in Educational Psychology and a Master's Degree in Social Doctrine of the Church. She has specialized in educational institutional counseling and the formation of young people, educators and administrators. In Chile she has designed and moderated courses on initiation to Solidarity Service-Learning for educators and administrators. She has collaborated in the institutionalization of Service-Learning in Higher Education Institutions. She has served as a university professor in Catholic Social Teaching and coordinated courses of Christian Training in Higher Education and University Pastoral Teams.

Her experience in Ecumenism has led her to teach diploma courses and to be a member of research teams. She is the co-author of the book Con "El sueño de Chile" del Cardenal Raúl. Construyendo la amistad cívica (Foundation Cardinal Raúl Silva Henríquez, Chile).



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Tapia, the area of research, spiritual reflection and epistemological exploration of service-learning. She is particularly interested in the disciplinary field of education in the light of postcolonial and decolonial debate.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Reason for this Book

Higher education faces a number of challenges today. Among them, the search for a profound meaning that jointly guides faculty members, students and university staff, and which contemplates interaction with the community as a constitutive component.

While this is generally true, it echoes with an even greater urgency in those institutions that have in their roots an explicit vocation and choice of social commitment, as is the case of Catholic institutions, and not only them.

From this standpoint, academic excellence emerges as a high, universal goal by including in its objectives the common good, service to others from an ecumenical and inter-religious perspective, creative learning, holistic pedagogical experiences, and sustainable development based on the revitalization of the person-environment link. In short: human flourishing according to an integral and inclusive education.

A research topic that is increasingly attracting the attention of the academic world is the link between teaching and spirituality. The aim is to provide, both for Catholic Institutions of Higher Education and universities at large, a space for reflection in their itinerary of discernment about their identity and specific mission.

A research topic that is increasingly attracting the attention of the academic world¹ is the link between teaching and spirituality, understood in its broadest sense. This will be the focus of the volume that we present to our readers today.

The aim is to provide, both for Catholic Institutions of Higher Education and universities at large, a space for reflection in their itinerary of discernment about their identity and specific mission.

This book, the third of the Uniservitate collection, explores these topics, bringing together research and experiences of international scope, from the Catholic university world as well as of other creeds and non-religious convictions, which delve into service-learning from the ethics of care and fraternity.

¹ Throughout the book, the reader will find an extensive bibliography, useful for further in-depth research.

The Importance of Context

This volume was written amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Therefore, its reflections take on a relevant character in the face of the present crisis which has exposed the fragility of humanity and revealed socio-environmental instability, known and unknown.

Educating requires entering a situation: educating *for* the reality that is taking place and *in* the reality that is taking place. To rethink education implies bringing to the classroom reality itself, together with the wounds of present society. Only thus will learning recover meaning for our young people—they are the ones who highlight the urgency to educate for today: not “being strangers” in the face of a world that suffers.

What is at stake here is the social mission of our universities and educational institutions, the coherence between what is announced and how it becomes institutional style, permeating their whole being, their work and mission. As stated by the joint document of the World Council of Churches and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue: “*This is a time to discover new forms of solidarity to rethink the world after COVID-19*” (WCC-PCID, 2020, p. 10).

Efforts to approach “the most vulnerable other” exist in our educational spaces. However, the reality which surrounds us calls us “to transcend the limits in the service one renders to those who suffer and in the solidarity with them”, and to recognize “the true meaning of service and solidarity”. Reality does not allow us to wait, to remain involved in a mere discussion; we must get the ball rolling now and respond to the current challenges, in order to inject new hope.

Undoubtedly, efforts to approach “the most vulnerable other” exist in our educational spaces. However, the reality which surrounds us calls us “to transcend the limits in the service one renders to those who suffer and in the solidarity with them”, and to recognize “the true meaning of service and solidarity” (WCC-PCID, 2020, p. 7). Reality does not allow us to wait, to remain involved in a mere discussion; we must get the ball rolling

now and respond to the current challenges, in order to inject new hope.

When it comes to analyzing this context, also the 2030 UN Agenda questions our educational priorities, identifying specific objectives at a global level (UNDP, 2015). Faced with this clear “road map” towards a new paradigm of integral development, religious

educational institutions become valid interlocutors when they discuss the SDGs because of their involvement in humanitarian actions and social service, which lead to a revitalization of the social fabric in an ethical key. (See especially SDG n. 17). As Elena López Ruf has emphasized,

Civil society and religious organizations play a significant role in developing proposals, monitoring advances and ensuring that all the voices participate and are heard in the process. The challenge lies in generating a space of strategic and constructive collaboration in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, taking into account religious identity as an evaluative element which is expressed in both group and individual attitudes and choices, which can provide innovative proposals for human and sustainable development. (López Ruf, 2019, p. 8)

Educational institutions can and must respond to today's needs and join the global call explicitly stated in the SDGs. As Pope Francis affirms,

today, three and a half years after the adoption of the SDGs, we must become even more aware of the importance of accelerating and adapting our actions to respond adequately to the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor: they are connected. (Pope Francis, 2019)²

Service-learning can be analyzed, then, as an effective response to today's humanity. Thematic development will confront us with the challenge of combining quality learning with quality service, where service becomes learning and learning turns into service, led by student protagonism and professor accompaniment, sensitive to the urgencies of our context.

This brief outline allows us to sense the topicality and opportunity that service-learning offers, seen from the articulation between spirituality and education.

A Polyhedral View

If we are to respond to today's educational challenges, it is not enough to approach them from a single perspective. The image of the polyhedron used by Pope Francis,³ so highly valued in the context of Uniservitate, expresses the diversity of thoughts and approaches towards the same topic.

In the symphony of the world of Education, educational institutions can learn from one another to consolidate pedagogical practices which open their horizons to the surround-

² In this quote, Pope Francis refers to the Encyclical *Laudato si'* (LS, 2015, p. 49).

³ Cf. Pope Francis, 2013, *EG*, 235-237.

ing reality, each one from their own mission and institutional identity. Service-learning is nourished by such richness and the present volume is a sign of it.

In this regard, the book offers readers the contribution of authors from different cultural contexts, with specific academic and research careers, from which they deepen the scope of the topic: “*Spirituality and Higher Education: a Perspective from Service-Learning*”.

We present here a brief overview of its chapters.

Structure of the Book

This book is divided into three parts. In the first, the authors address different views on the thought of the Catholic Church on Higher Education. Novelty and history, local dimension and global horizon, institution and spirituality, university social commitment and service-learning converse in view of the person’s integral formation and the genuine university social commitment.

In the second part, as we move into spirituality and education, service-learning is explored through the lens of different approaches and settings. Their common denominator will be the necessary formation of young people for a positive, *socially responsible leadership*. A view which emerges from the role played by trainers and the formative impact on the students’ education.

Finally, in the third and last part of the book, reflections come from different university contexts, incorporating ecumenical, interreligious and non-religious reflections. In all of them we find *spirituality as an intentional movement towards care*, the urgency of which is particularly manifested in the post-COVID-19 educational world.

First Part

Institutional Spirituality and Service-Learning from the Mission of Catholic Higher Education

In his contribution, Father Mauro Mantovani SDB (Italy) proposes to move from the pair spirituality-institution to an institutional spirituality capable, not only of validating academic excellence but also of ensuring an identity synthesis of “being” and “acting”, shared by the community. Mantovani delves into the deep reflection on the educational heritage

Novelty and history, local dimension and global horizon, institution and spirituality, university social commitment and service-learning converse in view of the person's integral formation and the genuine university social commitment.

of the Catholic Church. In his view, service-learning represents an essential *appointment with history*, the path to a New Humanism. To this contribution is added a “Colloquium between University Presidents”, as a multimedia resource: Fernando Ponce

SJ (President of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador) and Mauro Mantovani SDB (then, President of the Pontifical Salesian University of Rome), with the moderation of Daniela Gargantini (Catholic University of Córdoba), converse about Institutional Spirituality. The link to this video is available on page: <https://youtu.be/3t-4vJU4HgA>

Carina Rossa (Argentina/Italy) lets us immerse in Pope Francis's theology, focusing on three fundamental aspects of his social ethics: mercy, the preferential option for the poor and the centrality of the spirit of discernment. It is from these three central concepts and their implication for education that the new challenges highlighted by the Pope are addressed: the pedagogy of harmony, the pedagogy of the people and the pedagogy of tenderness. From this perspective, service-learning is presented as a form of education which enables us to gain a more loving view of ourselves and of others, learning to *de-center ourselves* and to embrace the reality that surrounds us with its wounds and creative possibilities.

The chapter by Father Andrzej S. Wodka CSsR (Vatican) introduces us to the charismatic reflection on spirituality that animates (or could potentially animate) service-learning in a Catholic institution of higher education. Wodka highlights the way in which service-learning has proved to be a nutrient for the *spirit of gratuitousness* (which, in fact, as etymology suggests, means *thanks*), inherent in each charism, helping to understand the specificity of one's own educational and social mission. This presentation is completed with the four papers from Catholic universities, born of different charisms, and where service-learning, chosen in a more or less explicit way, is a pillar in its implementation: from the Universidad Javeriana Cali in Colombia, Claudia Mora Motta, the Ignatian charism; from Argentina, Isabel Egaña, the spirituality of *Opus Dei* in the Austral University; from the College of Saint Benilde in the Philippines, Michael Valenzuela FSC, the influence of the Lasallian charism; from the United States, Daniel Horan OFM, Franciscan charism in the University.⁴

⁴ The chapter proposed here is a reprint of a work related to Friar Horan's experience at Siena College in the United States, a university of the Order of Friars Minor.

Following the trail of reflection on the charismatic dimension in service-learning, this first part closes with the contribution of Patrick M. Green from the American context, offering research based on four universities. The analysis of its implementation defines the distinctive features, the particular mission, identity and specificity of community engagement in each institution, and how service-learning practice is linked to faith formation and/or spiritual development.

Second Part

Higher Education and Youth Leadership; Reflections on Positive, Socially Responsible Leadership

Service-learning is explored through the lens of different approaches and contexts. Its common denominator common denominator will be the necessary training for virtuous and socially responsible leadership. A view which emerges from the role played by trainers and the formative impact on the students' education.

Within the framework of the so-called "Education of Character", James Arthur and Tom Harrison (Great Britain) propose to read service-learning based on the practice of moral and civic virtues, where service would represent the path (the *forma mentis*) towards spiritual, personal and community growth: in short, towards the flourishing of

character and the building of the common good. The two authors base their proposal on a large collection of case studies promoted by the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues of the University of Birmingham and the Oxford Character Project of the University of Oxford.

Kevin Ahern (the United States) offers us a historical reconstruction of the "See-Judge-Act" model and method and its possible contribution to the development of Spirituality for Action, capable of nourishing the service-learning approach from its foundations. Far from being a reduction of solidarity, the spiritual principle of this pedagogical approach leads it to become a key element in the formation of holistic and ethical leaders: leaders that do not favor low-cost formulas, but who discern and opt for realistic solutions to injustices and power inequalities.

In this dynamic between virtuous formation and leadership, faculty play a key role with

their accompaniment activity. This topic is addressed by Arantzazu Martínez-Odría, Ana Isabel Gómez Villalba and Ernesto Jesús Brotóns Tena (Spain), who focus on the role of the educator in promoting integral learning, according to a spirituality of gift. Based on the three main thematic focuses (F. Torralba's spiritual intelligence, P. Teilhard de Chardin's itinerary of personalization and M. N. Tapia's pedagogical innovation in solidarity), the authors propose a three-phase model and six processes to start up an educational path to "training in humanity".

Finally, Daniela Gargantini and Federico Giraudo (Argentina) bring the students' voices closer and, specifically, study the impact of University Social Responsibility on the graduate students' lives. To this end, they offer the outcomes of qualitative research conducted at the Catholic University of Córdoba (Argentina), emphasizing integral educational quality: an attribute that is such to the extent that it brings about changes in all the stakeholders in the process and fosters the development of a personal, long-lasting spirituality associated with service-learning experiences and their transcendence.

Third Part

Spirituality as Intentional Movement towards Care

Reflections come from different university contexts, incorporating ecumenical, interreligious and non-religious reflections. In all of them we find spirituality as an intentional movement towards care.

James Kielsmeier emphasizes that, during a time of personal and social instability such as the one we are now experiencing, service-learning can become a strategy both for academic growth and spiritual development. His reflection, backed by

decades of research in the field of education and nurtured by an ecumenical Christian perspective within the institutional framework of the National Youth Leadership Council (NYLC), offers an accurate diagnosis of today's educational world: a structural shift towards service-learning requires and, at the same time, can boost two major changes in thinking: a new vision of youth in society and a new concept of learning.

With Priscilla A.S. and Mercy Pushpalatha (India) the book is enriched by the Asian stance, with its millenary approach in spirituality. As the authors underscore, spirituality—understood as the ongoing development of the meaning of the own authentic self—is

outlined as a process intrinsically linked to the network of caring relationships between human beings and the world which is their home. In this light, an education that accounts for spiritual dimension needs to include in its foundations a holistic approach together with service to others, as is shown by the cases of service-learning in Asia presented in this chapter.

Xus Martin (Spain) links spiritual dimension to the values of care and fraternity, interpreting the crisis engendered by COVID-19 as a “magnifying glass effect”—a crisis that has expanded, unmasking them, innumerable social issues while, at the same time, it unleashed its global effects, as a chain reaction—. According to Martin, service-learning allows civic engagement to be seriously introduced as a third mission of the university institution whilst it incorporates the ethical dimension of the formative-experiential students’ experience, placing the concepts of care and fraternity at the very center.

The book ends with the contribution of Father José Ivo Follmann S.J. (Brazil), who places the reflection on service-learning (as a philosophy, a methodology and a set of practices) at the intersection of education, spirituality and ecology, highly topical themes. The paradigm of “integral ecology” opens to the conception of socio-environmental justice, which carries the spirituality of care, in view of sustainable development. Referring particularly to the Brazilian context, his study is based on the results of eighteen social projects developed by the University of Vale do Rio dos Sinos.

Laura Gherlone and María Beatriz Isola

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FIRST PART

Institutional Spirituality and Service-Learning from the Mission of Catholic Higher Education



Mauro Mantovani, SDB

A Salesian priest, is Rector of the Pontifical Salesian University and President of the Conference of Rectors of Pontifical Roman Universities and Institutions.

He gained a Doctoral degree in Philosophy and Theology and is a full professor of Theoretical Philosophy. He has been conducting research and has several publications on philosophical theology, the philosophy of history and issues at the boundary between theology, philosophy and science. He is a member of the Pontifical Academy of St. Thomas Aquinas and the Scientific Council of the AVEPRO agency and collaborates with the University Pastoral of

the Diocese of Rome. On this subject, he has published, among others, together with E. dal Covolo and M. Pellerey, L'Università per il Patto Educativo (2020).

2. GUIDELINES FOR AN "INSTITUTIONAL SPIRITUALITY" IN CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION: TOWARDS A "NEW HUMANISM"

Mauro Mantovani

Salesian Pontifical University, Rome, Italy

Abstract

In Catholic Higher Education, a cursory glance between the binomial spirituality—the proper place for creativity, expression of the vitality and charismatic novelty with which the Spirit guides the Church along the paths of history—and institutional reality, structured instead to stabilise what already exists, would seem antithetical. On closer examination, on the contrary, they are profoundly interconnected in a virtuous relational dynamic.

The various Catholic and ecclesiastical institutions, renewing their respective legislation and university regulations, are developing, in the light of the new cultural and social challenges and on-site service. The "*fundamental criteria*" set out by Pope Francis in the foreword of the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* are very significant for the "*bold cultural revolution*" sponsored by the encyclical letter *Laudato si'* (n. 114), for which "a new way of thinking" is necessary and "We lack leadership capable of striking out on new paths".

For this, it is necessary to move from the binomial spirituality-institution to an "institutional spirituality" understood as a synthesis of shared identity of being and acting: this builds and shapes the profiles of teachers, students and staff, expresses the values and specific characteristics of the educational and cultural offer, encourages the decision-making dynamics and internal and external communication, inspires the projectualities. In this light, the following actions make sense: the promotion of the "new humanism", integral ecology and care for the common home, the valorisation of relationality, communion and sharing, the "global compact on education", generativity, transdisciplinary and intergenerational dialogue, the protagonism of young people, the vocation to self-giving and competent service, openness to a more inclusive "we" and to "universal fraternity". In this context, service-learning, recovering the category of "intellectual" charity alongside "Samaritan" and "political" charity, represents a true and real "date with history" that we cannot afford to miss.

Introduction

Within the reflection on service-learning in Catholic Higher Education, and particularly on the relationship between spirituality and service-learning, this contribution proposes some lines of thought on the issue of "institutional spirituality" within Catholic and ecclesiastical centres of higher education.

On superficial analysis, it would seem almost antithetical to the binomial between spirituality—the proper place for creativity, expression of the vitality and charismatic novelty with which the Spirit guides the Church along the paths of history "*as a sign and instrument both of a very closely-knit union with God and of the unity of the whole human race*" (Second Vatican Council, 1965, LG, 1)—and institutional reality, structured instead to stabilise what already exists, on the contrary, they are profoundly interconnected in a virtuous relational dynamic.

As is well known, the Catholic Higher Education system is configured according to the apostolic constitution of Pope Saint John Paul II *Ex Corde Ecclesiae* (cf. John Paul II, 1990, ECE) on Catholic universities and to the apostolic constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* of Pope Francis (cf. Francis, 2017, VG) on Ecclesiastical universities. In the light of these documents, the various institutions adapted their statutes and renewed their respective university legislation and regulations, deepening their understanding of the new cultural and social challenges we are facing: their identity, vision, mission and therefore their educational and cultural service—both in an international and local sense—to the Church and the whole human family.

"Institutional spirituality" represents a further step beyond the simple binomial "spirituality-institution" because it presents the identity dimension which, in a shared way, unites the esse and the agere of each reality involved in higher education and training.

"Institutional spirituality" in this sense represents a further step beyond the simple binomial "spirituality-institution" because it presents the identity dimension which, in a shared way, unites the esse and the agere of each reality involved in higher education

and training. Profiles of teachers, students and staff derive from it, the values and specific characteristics of the cultural offer are expressed, the styles and dynamics of decision-making are born, the features of internal and external institutional communication are outlined, and the projectualities of the various areas and sectors find inspiration.

In this regard, we offer some lines of reflection and operational suggestions by first asking ourselves the following questions: 1) about the meaning and value of an "institutional and charismatic spirituality"; and then 2) about how it can constitute a fundamental "strategic" dimension given the future of our institutions and their educational and cultural service.

Why an "institutional spirituality"?

Identity and Charisma

Catholic and ecclesiastical universities are identified by a specific identity intrinsically linked to a believing experience, which carries with it the need to live and bear witness to the faith both in being and in acting, thus incarnating it in all its dimensions, both individual and collective. Today, however, some Catholic and ecclesiastical Institutions of Higher Education seem to suffer from an identity crisis due to internal divergence and "de-linkage" between the institutional and academic aspects and the educational and pastoral aims and values, with the real risk of discrepancy and incoherence between their statutes and the actual procedures and practices that are carried out. The particular risk is that there is a lack of "a soul" to give shape to the institutional "body", which would rekindle the whole university life. This is why reflecting on "institutional spirituality" may be very appropriate to deepen this necessary "incarnation", i.e. to translate into cultural terms the potentialities and particularities of a "proper" charismatic identity.

First of all, what is meant by "spirituality" and "charisma"? It is an experience of faith that can be lived and passed on, which therefore becomes an educational and formative proposal offered to the whole Church and the human family, with a role —also civil, cultural, social, economic and projectual— that must be taken very seriously. This is how, for example, the economist L. Bruni describes a charism:

I understand a gift of 'new eyes' capable of seeing things that others do not see, eyes that see more and differently than others. He or she who receives a charism can see values where others see only devalues, beauty in ugliness, gifts in problems. The action of charisms is vast and powerful, it covers and permeates the world, it is like the blood that runs through the veins of history. Religions have always been privileged places where charisms flourish because they find particularly fertile ground there; but the action of charisms goes far beyond the visible confines of religions, it is the most secular thing imaginable. [...] The history of humanity, including economic and social history, is also the fruit of these charisms. (Own translation) (Bruni, 2007, p. 22)

The magisterium of the popes from the Second Vatican Council onwards has made clear the importance and value of spiritualities and charisms for the evangelising mission of the Church, also in terms of cultural promotion. Today we know well that without the charism of Benedict of Nursia and other founders of monasteries, and the charism of Francis of Assisi, the European economy would not have been the same; spiritualities played a fundamental role in economic, political and cultural life, exercising an active presence and a determining influence on the development of society.

Benedict of Nursia, for example, gave us the intuition that according to the monk work and prayer have the same dignity and thus began that "fundamental revolution" which has gradually attributed to manual work an enormous value in medieval humanism and not only. If before work was an activity ensured by slaves when monks began to be seen working in the fields, then... cities understood that work is something important, it is for the freeman and in turn, liberates and promotes his dignity. Benedictine monasticism, in its many historical forms, contributed significantly to the shaping of Western culture, expressing itself in architecture, painting, poetry, music and literature. The same can be said of the Mendicant Movements, of the Clerics Regular, of the Orders and Congregations that were and still are involved in education and formation.

Franciscanism contributed to giving us a vision in which fraternity is considered a cornerstone of social and relational life. It is a founding principle of modernity and, as is well known, it is one of the three fundamental nuclei of the French Revolution, together with liberty and equality. It is understood that it is not enough to affirm individual rights to liberty and equality, because a "right of bonding" is necessary: fraternity, as Pope Francis reminds us not by chance in *Fratelli tutti* and as dramatically experienced in times of crisis, such as during the social and health emergency of the pandemic, exercises precisely this function.

In this regard, it is also interesting to note the cultural, social and political influence of the charisms, starting from those of the main religious orders and the many works that emerged from them: these show unequivocally the absence of the apparent dichotomy between spirituality and commitment to mankind. F. Ciardi points out in the field of culture:

The instances of eugenic-sociological-sociobiological thought [...], social utopia [...], human rights [...]. Also, social commitment and commitment in the field of peace, creation, life and health, and mission, are to a large extent taken on religious paths. [...] Among the religious, we find historians, writers, geographers, anthropologists, mathematicians, astronomers, scientists... Their cultural impact is linked above all to the charism and spirituality of which they were bearers, which led them, according to the diversity of grace, to work in favour of man taken in his integrity and concreteness, in an attitude of authentic

service, which led them to concern themselves with every authentically human expression. The 'interior' life was expressed in 'external' works suited to it. (Own translation) (Ciar-di, 2007, p. 16)

Western history has been marked over the centuries by spiritual forces capable of creating original and innovative ideas and institutions, the origin of profound changes. From the Cistercian order to the post-Tridentines, from the Franciscans to the Dominicans to the Jesuits and the Salesians, to the great saints—think for example of Clare of Assisi, Catherine of Siena, John of the Cross and Teresa of Avila, John Baptist de La Salle, Charles de Foucauld, Thérèse of Lisieux, Teresa of Calcutta—our history is full of charismatic figures and religious movements that have influenced the *ethos*, society and culture in Europe and worldwide (cf. Motta, 2015). And in this perspective, the more recent phenomenon of ecclesial Movements and the consolidation of the "spirituality of communion" is particularly interesting, a challenge that old and new charisms are called to take up to be a prophetic response for the whole of humanity today.

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And "today"—Bruni continues to point out—,

we can find, if we know and want to see them, many charismatic people who found social cooperatives, NGOs, schools, hospitals, banks, trade unions, who fight for the rights denied to others, to children, to animals, to the environment, because they see 'more and differently' than everyone else. In this day and age, even if it is true that on some fronts radical leanings towards individualism and ideal and spiritual impoverishment are observed, at the same time we are indeed witnessing an abundant proliferation of charismas, which operate in the thousand battles for civilisation and freedom: Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Martin Luther King, Dorothy Day, but also Mohammad Yunus, or [about Italy] Andrea Riccardi, Father Benzi, Ernesto Olivero, Luigi Giussani, Chiara Lubich. Different people, but all capable of not running away from the problems of the world, but of remaining attracted to it, loving it and thus transforming pain into love, the cross into resurrection. (Own translation) (Bruni, 2007, p. 24)

This awareness is particularly valuable concerning the charismas of yesterday and today that are directly involved in the educational and formative action. Therefore, rather than focusing on the difficulties that are faced, it is worth concentrating on the fact that a promising era is opening up before us for the enhancement of the various charismatic identities and the spiritualities they carry, within an increasingly inclusive ecclesial and social "we".

Spirituality and Culture

Within the specificity of each institution and its concrete context of insertion, a Catholic institutional spirituality has behind it the long and deeply rooted "history" we have just mentioned. Precisely because it is "Catholic", it must be open and inclusive; if in fact, it starts from a particular experience, it is—as such—oriented to spread in "concentric circles" as an offer accessible to all those who are willing to accept and experience it. The bearer of a charismatic spirituality is not essentially an altruist or a philanthropist but is first and foremost a *community* builder and a *passionate person*, driven by desire, because he is endowed with the eyes to see something that fascinates him, and thanks to this he succeeds in dragging and attracting others behind him.

So we must recognise the never-ending dynamics between "charisma" and "institution". The charismatic innovates, sees unsatisfied needs, recognises people falling into poverty, opens new paths for fraternity, pushes beyond "the limits of human frailty" and civilisation. Then comes the institution that imitates the innovator, embraces innovation, "normalising" and institutionalising such innovation. It is the task of *leadership* to reinforce specificities, not in opposition to others, but by presenting them as a characteristic offering within a larger "system".

The incarnation of institutional spirituality in every Catholic and ecclesiastical university today can offer an important contribution as a gift to all humanity and as an expression of the "Church that goes forth". In this way, spirituality and institution become the two faces of the same formative and cultural identity aimed at promoting the "new Humanism".

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identity aimed at promoting the "new Humanism", already predicted by Pope Saint Paul VI at the end of the Second Vatican Council and to which his successors have frequently drawn attention, even Pope Francis does. A "new Humanism" that is integral, planetary, in solidarity... as an expression and an integral part of the "culture of dialogue" and the "culture of encounter".

Those who have experience in university life, undoubtedly agree on the urgent need for growth, in the various Institutions, of a shared "academic wisdom" that not only includes and preserves, but also consolidates and develops an explicit spiritual dimension, so that a serious and critical search for and living witness to the truth is carried out, through collaboration, dialogue, openness to communion. The fraternity of life, study, research, work and organisation is a precious stimulus for the cultivation, communication and application of knowledge.

In fact, in past centuries there is no shortage of testimonies of educational experiences, to name but a few—think for example of Plato's Academy, the community around Origen, the school of Nisibis between the end of the 5th and the beginning of the 7th century, the *Scholae* and medieval Universities, the Renaissance Academies—where it is clear that truth is sought together and not alone. Friendship is cultivated and a fundamental value is given to the quality of relational and community life, aware that instruction does not consist only in transmitting theories, but in communicating and sharing an experience, a life, through a process of learning and mutual exchange of reciprocal gift and acceptance that does not refer only to the faculty of intelligence, but existentially involves the whole person.

In this context, it is interesting to note what Pope Francis writes in *Veritatis Gaudium* when he affirms that:

So too, in the nineteenth century, Blessed Antonio Rosmini called for a decisive reform in the area of Christian education [...] Only in this way is it possible to overcome the 'fatal separation of theory and practice', for in the unity of science and holiness 'we find the true spirit of that doctrine which is destined to save the world.' For the teaching of that doctrine, in ancient times, 'did not end with the brief daily lesson; it was continued in the constant intercourse of the disciple with his master.' (Francis, 2017, VG, 4)

As L. Bruni pointed out,

In the pre-modern world, charismas saw and healed physical wounds mostly, giving life to structures of blessing, as were for centuries hospitals, schools, orphanages, etc., wounds loved by the many founders of religious orders and not only, who made the human ever more human and earthly existence bearable for many disadvantaged and excluded. In

In modernity and post-modernity, the wound to be healed is more and more the wound of relationship, the inability to meet in reciprocity: this 'spiritual and relational' wound shows its drama further and further. We are waiting for new charismas (what if they were already in action?), for new eyes that help us to see blessings in these wounds.

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Undoubtedly this is a fundamental task for Catholic Higher Education, exactly as it reads in *Christus Vivit*:

we cannot separate spiritual from cultural formation. The Church has always sought to develop ways of providing the young with the best education possible. Nor should she stop now, for young people have a right to it. 'Today, above all, the right to a good education means protecting wisdom, that is, knowledge that is human and humanizing. All too often we are conditioned by trivial and fleeting models of life that drive us to pursue success at a low price, discrediting sacrifice and inculcating the idea that education is not necessary unless it immediately provides concrete results. No, education makes us raise questions, keeps us from being anaesthetized by banality, and impels us to pursue meaning in life. [...] This, then, is your great challenge: to respond to the crippling refrains of cultural consumerism with thoughtful and firm decisions, with research, knowledge and sharing.' (Francis, 2019, ChV, 223)

The vital assumption and witnessing of identity and charismatic values

Institutional spirituality must be constantly promoted in academic life and the "third mission" of the university. In this perspective, the continuous training of teachers and all university staff is strategic and multidimensional, because it is called to unite professionalism—which can never be lacking and which must be increasingly qualified and verified—with identity, spiritual and value aspects. In this perspective, as P. Carlotti underlines,

there is no one who does not see the three missions of the university: investigative or research, didactic or teaching, and socio-educational or social justice. The educational and social challenge today emerges when it comes to combining unity and diversity and above all communion and freedom, uniqueness of the person and communal and social

interpersonality, freedom and truth, for example, in social justice. The healthy personal and social capacity for encounter and dialogue with others who are different from us refuses to stand up to their measures and to homologate them to oneself, considering them simply as one's version. (Own translation) (Carlotti, 2020, pp. 3-4)

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It is therefore strategically necessary to develop shared cultures that make explicit the spirituality that inspires the Institution: for this purpose, the frequent awareness of all the components of the university community can be very useful, to be aware of the specific nature of the Institution and its values. In the

real exercise of this spirituality, everyone is a protagonist, leaders, teachers, administrators and students themselves: it is therefore essential to create a climate of collaboration and co-participation, avoiding certain directives or orientations, that have not been matured and taken on board, arrive only "from above" and therefore do not reach the various institutional levels and the "grassroots" in a capillary way. In particular, the teaching role is undergoing a profound transformation, which must be understood as a responsible, personal and integrated commitment within the educational community as a whole, with vocational and training teaching skills, to develop an increasingly adequate service to students and society (cf. Esmenjaud Zermeño, 2021). This requires careful discernment in the choice of collaborators and in the allocation of managerial and coordination roles, which must be entrusted to people who effectively share the institutional spirituality.

Care for the relational quality of the university environment at all levels is decisive because the vital assumption of the characteristic elements of an Institution *that has a soul* is experienced—starting from the students—almost more by osmosis and by a lived and concrete experience than by the mere announcement and declarations present in the regulations and official university documents. The excellence of the University, its quality and effectiveness, as well as the value and timeliness of the academic offer, depends very much on the *care of relationships*: positive relationships among teachers, between students and professors, and between the University and society. The university functions themselves (teaching, research, *outreach*, administrative management, etc.) are all involved. Teaching—in the method of implementation, in the choice of privileged and shared themes, in the relationship among teachers—must show the institutional charac-

teristics together with its strategic choices and values. Research must be geared towards that which is inherent to it, with a new impetus and by improving the quality, and with a real *"shared and convergent research between specialists of different disciplines"* (Francis, 2017, VG, 5). The "third mission" is the dimension that makes the Institution present in the territory, showing its ability to read the needs, to dialogue and collaborate with other realities and stakeholders, to give shape and continuity also to *collaborative projects and service-learning*. The Administration activity has a very important task in showing consistency with its professed values. It is also necessary that *leadership* attracts and involves, promotes participation and knows how to manifest in the institution, the harmony of diversities and the "conviviality of differences" according to the well-known model of the "polyhedron" and not the exclusive disharmony of the repetitive and homologous of the "sphere".

The life and development of the *"universitas personarum et scientiarum"* has, inevitably, a symphonic character. *"Every change, even the current one—Pope Francis affirmed in 2017 while visiting an Italian University—is a step that brings with it difficulties, weariness and suffering. However, it also brings new horizons of good. Great changes demand rethinking our economic, cultural and social models to recover the central value of the human person"*⁵. Catholic and ecclesiastical higher education is called to show the effective value of the application of this dialogical and oblation dimension, not only in interpersonal relationships but also in the interweaving of formal structure and institutional life and also in the concrete fields of knowledge. Dialogue and self-giving are precious in the academic field because dialectics, research, scientific production, efficiency and effectiveness of technical services, etc., are favoured by the climate of communion and exchange that is established among all the components of the academic community.

Moreover, an institutional spirituality is never something static and achieved once and for all, but it is a *dynamic process of continuous construction*, which can be threatened especially by the assumption of competitive and "market" logics, ranking requirements, etc., which sometimes, little by little, force one to give up making one's own, real identity, explicit and visible.

If we look particularly at the relationship between institutional culture and service-learning, we can speak of a reciprocal reinforcement, because service-learning corresponds very well to that dynamic of "knowing, knowing how to do, knowing how to be" and to the aspects of "head-heart-hands" (cf. Francis, 2019, ChV, 222) which, Pope Francis reminds us, are fundamental to respond to the challenge of the educational emergency and to

5 Francis, 2017, Address of his Holiness Pope Francis to Roma Tre University, Rome, 17 February 2017.
https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2017/february/documents/papa-francesco_20170217_universita-romatre.html

To sustain service-learning and to consolidate the spirituality and institutional culture, there is not only a "technique" among many others, but a true and proper relational anthropology of the "gift of self".

relaunch "the global compact on education" in an intergenerational key (cf, among others, dal Covolo, Mantovani, Pellerey, 2020; Ciferri, 2021). To sustain service-learning and to consolidate the spirituality and institutional culture,

there is not only a "technique" among many others, but a true and proper relational anthropology of the "gift of self", which must be cultivated and spread more and more: the human person is fulfilled not by the amount of "knowledge" that he/she manages to accumulate and handle, but by the ability to "wisely" invest his/her freedom for the good of an ever wider "we".

This is a fundamental dimension of "meaning" and also of the hierarchy of energies and resources, which should make the "difference" concerning other cultures and institutional logic. Following with what has been stated so far, there emerges the demand for attention to the poorest and most vulnerable, *"the option for those who are least, [and] those whom society discards"* (Francis, 2017, VG, 4), which should not be lacking in our institutions, starting by offering real opportunities to young people who find themselves in unfavourable situations.

The University is proposed as *"the natural place to experience the alliance between the notum of the parents and the novum of the children, between the reasons of culture and the responsibilities of politics, between the answers of technology and the questions of Humanism"* (Own translation) (Dionigi, 2021, p. 27); where a "bridge" is built between generations, in the testimony of the *studium* (understood both as competence and as passion) in which teachers transmit to students an education of "great perspective" and "broad thinking" with the ability to fascinate (*delectare*), instruct (*docere*, thanks to the fact that the commitment to learn, the *discere*, is constant) and mobilise (*moveré*) towards the true, the good, the just and the beautiful.

Towards the future

Some key benchmarks

We are not only living a "time of changes *'but are experiencing a true epochal shift'*" (Francis, 2017, VG, 3) and we find ourselves not only amid an economic-financial crisis and

in a social, health and environmental crisis, but above all in an anthropological and ethical crisis. For this reason, there is a strong need for a *"culture necessary to confront this crisis"* (Francis, 2017, VG, 3), and so the indispensable and fundamental contribution of the university institution emerges towards a radical change.

More than fifty years ago, Pope Saint Paul VI had pointed out in *Populorum Progressio* that *"men very often find themselves in a sad state because they do not give enough thought and consideration to these things"* (Paul VI, 1967, PP, 85), Pope Benedict XVI invited to *"broadening the scope of reason and making it capable of knowing and directing these powerful new forces"* (Benedict XVI, 2009, CV, 33), this challenge was fully taken up by *Veritatis Gaudium* and entrusted to our institutions, at a time when it is even necessary to *"rethink thinking"* (cf. Morin, 2020; Coda, 2018). Universities are therefore called to become *"laboratories of interpretation, not only informative, or even formative, but also reality maker, so that they can be promoted towards better forms and solutions, i.e. they are at the service of the quality of life of individuals and peoples"* (Own translation) (Carlotti, 2020, p. 5).

As P. Carlotti continues, the perspective in which this discourse is inserted

It has its roots in the conciliar vision, activated in the incipit of the apostolic constitution Veritatis Gaudium concerning Gaudium et Spes 22, a text widely used by the magisterium and theology. Christ, by revealing God to man, fully reveals man to himself: the Christology-anthropology connection is placed in the foreground, which gives rise to the new humanism; the new man, saved in Christ, created in the Word and the awaited Lord. It is a new integral humanism, which in the university context becomes educational, according to an anthropology capable of thinking in dynamic terms. The Christological order contains another order within, the paschal order. It is at Easter that Christ and the Christian are born, the new man whose newness is paschal, when love overcomes to the end the mysterium iniquitatis, therefore, there is obedience to the Father, the outpouring of the Spirit and the revelation of God to man. It is this kerygma that is present and moves all evangelisation, including university evangelisation, the new humanism, integral and educational. [...] In authentic, integral and educational humanism, university institutions find themselves in the beautiful and challenging mission of scientific research and teaching of excellence: it is here that the newness of the service to man inaugurated by the Lord, the Crucified and Risen One, can open up. (Own translation) (Carlotti, 2020, pp. 6-7; cf. Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 1965, GS, 22)

The preceding long quotation reminds us to what extent Christian revelation profoundly illuminates the fact that the human being is essentially dialogue and is fulfilled in dialogue and reminds us that the human person is created in the image of a Trinitarian

God whose life (intra-Trinitarian), is itself dialogical because it is a continuous flow and exchange of love between the Father, the Son and the Spirit, forever gift. If God is himself a communion of different persons, then every human person is called by grace to enter into communion with all persons other than itself and therefore to love, transforming dialogue into communion. In the archetypal intra-Trinitarian dialogue and self-giving, dialogue and

Veritatis Gaudium explicitly states that "the Church carries out the performative interpretation of the reality brought about by the Christ event and nourished by the gifts of wisdom and knowledge by which the Holy Spirit enriches the People of God in manifold ways".

reciprocal self-giving among human persons are illuminated, also in the context of Higher Education.

In this regard, *Veritatis Gaudium* explicitly states that "the Church carries out the performative interpretation of the reality brought about by the Christ event and nour-

ished by the gifts of wisdom and knowledge by which the Holy Spirit enriches the People of God in manifold ways" (Francis, 2017, VG, 3). It is therefore invoked "to promote [...] the renewal of ecclesiastical studies at every level [...] as part of the new phase of the Church's mission" (Francis, 2017, VG, 1) and promises "that wise and courageous renewal demanded by the missionary transformation of a Church that 'goes forth'" (Francis, 2017, VG, 3).

From the epistemological point of view, *Veritatis Gaudium* maintains "What distinguishes the academic, formative and research approach of the system of [...] studies, on the level of both content and method, is the vital intellectual principle of the unity in difference of knowledge and respect for its multiple, correlated and convergent expressions." (Francis, 2017, VG, 4). The "fundamental criteria for a renewal and revival" set out in the Foreword of the apostolic constitution mentioned above (Francis, 2017, VG, 4), provide significant elements to orient towards a necessary "new way of thinking" and a "leadership capable of striking out on new paths" (Francis, 2017, VG, 2-3).

These four criteria can constitute an important reference for our subject: "contemplation and the presentation of a spiritual, intellectual and existential introduction to the heart of the kerygma, namely the ever fresh and attractive good news of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, 'which continues to take flesh' in the life of the Church and of humanity"; "wide-ranging dialogue"; "inter-disciplinary and cross-disciplinary approaches carried out with wisdom and creativity in the light of Revelation"; "networking" (cf. Francis, 2017, VG, 4). In this sense, the cultural heritage of "Christian education" has virtuosities and potentialities that are still latent and can represent a real response to today's needs.

Growing in the synergies facing new challenges

The requirement for "networking" and for working between academic institutions in synergy, in an ever more convergent and shared manner, is presented in *Veritas Caudium* in a certain sense as a very appropriate output for the input of an inclusive approach, as Pope Francis had already indicated when in *Laudato si'* he invited us to "*to think of one world with a common plan*" (Francis, 2015, LS, 164).

Among the positive experiences in our institutions, we note in this regard, first and foremost, the commitment to reformulate curricula based on an interpretation of the real needs and the possibilities of opportunities, and not based on "firm positions" or to satisfy individual demands in the assignment of subjects. This perspective can help to overcome the limits of the multiplication and fragmentation of study and training paths, which are becoming more and more sectorised. In the field of culture, on the other hand, it is the "wisdom" of life that confers a horizon of full scientificity to knowledge, which does require specialisation, but never fragmentation; indeed, it gives and orients towards a unitary and organic vision, and therefore integrated and functional. This was the task that Pope Saint John Paul II entrusted more than twenty years ago in *Fides et Ratio* to the Christian thought of the third millennium when he recalled that "*The segmentation of knowledge, with its splintered approach to truth and consequent fragmentation of meaning, keeps people today from coming to an interior unity.*" (John Paul II, 1998, FR, 85). This makes it possible to understand and to show clearly the fundamental difference between specialisation and fragmentation. Specialisation is necessary for the development of knowledge and the person and is inevitable because of the very limits of man. Fragmentation, on the other hand, is harmful, its negative effects are obvious and cannot be ignored: there is an ever-increasing and redundant multiplicity of data and knowledge, but if a unitary vision is not achieved, the meaning of knowledge and the real and the very meaning of existence is lost in the end. Separation and fragmentation reveal their full drama when they occur not only in the relationship between two sciences in particular but also in the relationship between faith and reason, between science and faith.

Through academic excellence and the true gesture of social commitment, it is necessary to try to avoid a hierarchy of knowledge and disciplines whose priority criteria are the possibility of immediate consumption or momentary events; instead, it is necessary to emphasise that all disciplines are necessary within an architecture and an integrated vision of knowledge, trying to ensure that the different levels interact, including theological, philosophical, social and scientific.

At the root of this vision is an anthropology which—as has already been said—considers the human person in its essence, as openness, encounter, dialogue; characterised by the

fact that the self exists to the extent that it exists with the other and for the other. This "dialogical dimension" is not only a methodological question but, being a constitutive aspect of man as a person, it inevitably embraces the whole of life, individually and socially. From this anthropological and ethical orientation derive the main lines of education to humanism in solidarity, taking into account the current social scenarios, as effectively indicated in a Document of the Congregation for Catholic Education: *humanising education; a culture of dialogue; globalising hope; for a true inclusion; cooperation networks* (cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, 2017).

A specific realisation can be seen in the following elements: integral ecology and care for the common home; valorisation of relationality, communion and sharing; "global compact on education"; generativity; transdisciplinary and intergenerational dialogue; protagonism of young people; vocation to self-giving and competent service; openness to an inclusive "we" and to universal fraternity; recovery of the category of "intellectual charity" which goes together with "Samaritan" and politics. These are the ingredients of our "new Humanism".

V. Zani wisely indicated the three main challenges of the present context: the "*crisis of relationships and communication between generations, the question of transhumanism and the loss of the sense of history*" (cf. Zani, 2020, pp. 8-11) in a volume dedicated to the relationship between young people and the social dimension of faith to build the future. R. Cursi, meanwhile, points to "*post-humanism, secularism and international and intercontinental relations*" within a unitary and inclusive view of the human family (cf. Cursi, 2021, pp. 83-91). It is precisely in this perspective that Catholic and ecclesiastical university institutions, thanks to their charismatic identity, have an irreplaceable contribution to make.

It is also important to organise the various activities in such a way that university evaluative practices reach the level of institutional spirituality, and do not stop at formal or technical elements; this is also a culture, that of "quality" and evaluation, that must always be helped to grow. Moreover, the recognition—in the light of the Strategic Project of the various institutions—of a shared, co-partnered and frequently revised annual objective, contributes to increasing elements of awareness and convergence in proposals and events.

Catholic Higher Education is therefore called to respond to the "*great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge*" which "*is taking shape before us today*" and which—*Veritatis Gaudium* continues— "*will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal*" (Francis, 2017, VG, 6; cf. Francis, 2015, LS, 202): there is, in fact, an *enormous and unpostponable task* at the cultural level, of academic formation and scientific research, to elaborate "*a radical paradigm shift*" (Francis, 2017, VG, 3) and no doubt the university constitutes (or can be) the most suitable and creative laboratory.

On the occasion of the Synod of Bishops on *Young people, faith and vocational discernment*, it was rightly reiterated that, for the Christian community, it is important to express a significant presence in the school and university environment,

with good teachers, flourishing chaplaincies and serious cultural engagement. Catholic educational institutions should be the subject of particular reflection. They express the Church's concern for the integral formation of the young. These are precious arenas for encounters between the Gospel and the culture of a people and for the development of research. Such institutions are called to propose a model of formation that can bring faith into dialogue with the questions of the contemporary world, with different anthropological perspectives, with the challenges of science and technology, with changes in social customs and with the commitment to justice. Special attention should be given in these settings to the promotion of young people's creativity in the fields of science and art, poetry and literature, music and sport, the digital world and the media, etc. In this way, the young will be able to discover their talents and put them at the disposal of society for the good of all. (Synod of Bishops, 2018, 158)

To build the "civilisation of love"

The rector emeritus of the Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna, I. Dionigi, recently underlined the need for a "new humanism":

We need humanism: understood not as the re-edition of a historical-cultural moment, not as the other half of thought and knowledge, not as a particular point of view of the world; but as the capacity to face a triple responsibility, which is not taken care of by technocratic ideology [...]: to rediscover questioning thought, which feeds on criticism, self-criticism and foreign culture; to make peace with time, mortified and devoured by a present deprived both of the memory of the ancestors and of the project of those to be born. To re-appropriate the art of synthesis, the science of the whole, the vision of the whole. (Own translation) (Dionigi, 2021, p. 26)

A very significant quotation, because it links—in a vital way—the epistemological and anthropological spheres, in such a way that it points to the perspective of the "civilisation of love" and the "new humanism" in specific terms of cultural offerings; any form of humanism, to be truly and fully "human", as Pope Saint Paul VI affirmed in *Populorum Progressio*, must be "complete" and "full-bodied" (cf. Paul VI, 1967, PP, 42-43).

To this end, it is important to promote the scientificity of research, didactics and the epistemological relationality of sciences, with a "strong", ordered and multifaceted interdisciplinarity. It is also necessary to overcome all types of corporatism, whether underlying

or not, of whatever nature—be it academic, religious or cultural—, overcoming particular logics and dynamics and opening up, instead, with conviction, to relations with other university institutions. This is to complete, intensify and create good theories and good practices that are already present and operational, not only *in nuce* but above all in the federations and the *ad hoc* bodies in charge (cf. (Carlotti, 2020).

In 1996, the rector of Harvard, Derek Bok, had written to his students: "*we are not able to prepare you for that work which will almost certainly no longer exist around you. We can only teach you to be able to learn because you will have to continually relearn*" (Own translation) (cf. Dionigi, 2021, p. 26). If we look to the future, we are faced with the challenges of innovation, in teaching and research, arising from the development of digital technologies, artificial intelligence, the consequences of the social and health crisis due to the pandemic: there were, there are and there will be different criticalities to face, but there are also new opportunities, with the possibility of extensively "widening" our campuses and the accessibility of our educational and cultural offer, without losing the inestimable value of the face-to-face experience, of direct interpersonal and intergenerational relations. In all cases, the challenges of digital transformation and the development of innovative teaching methods are always central.

Catholic and ecclesiastical university institutions are called upon to contribute to give constructive vitality and greater impact to the lines of the Catholic social teaching which they are to the credit of the vast majority of the issues dealt with by our institutions. The social question, which is eminently anthropological, which calls for an educational function that cannot be postponed, requires a clear proposal; in a world marked by multiple cultural differences, full of heterogeneous visions of good and life, and characterised by the coexistence of different beliefs (cf. Congregation for Catholic Education, 2017).

In this sense, the richness that comes from dialogue, as suggested in *Veritatis Gaudium*, with Christians belonging to other Churches and ecclesial communities and with those who adhere to other religious or humanist convictions, cannot be neglected. True dialogue in universities creates cultural *agorà* that can become an instrument-place of elaboration of the encounter between faith and culture given the "paradigm shift". It is a matter of developing perspectives of listening and collaboration, of receptivity and conviviality, of an intercultural rapport which, without endorsing relativism, not only respects individual differences but also highlights their richness. In this way, genuine processes of inclusion and networks of cooperation will help to "globalise" not indifference but hope. To conclude, growing synergies with academic institutions in other countries are a specific way to contribute to the building of universal human brotherhood and care for the common home.

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This is why we look upon our institutions of Catholic higher education as indispensable *cultural laboratories*, which attach increasing emphasis on education for the promotion of an authentic humanism of solidarity. It

is necessary to promote an integral formation of the person, open to interiority, interpersonal relationships and transcendence. The world, and in particular young people, need a renewed commitment to the ethical formation, the consolidation of dialogue and peace, and the solidarity of a sustainable economy.

Therefore, today it is providential and strategic to work for a virtuous articulation between didactics, research and the third mission, to encourage the commitment of young people as effective protagonists of the social change they wish to see in society; so that they commit themselves to the construction of the "civilisation of love" (cf. Toso, 2021).

University, service and investment in culture

Investing in the themes of sustainability and care for the common home, in terms of an authentic "integral ecology"⁶ and therefore not only in an environmental perspective but also in a spiritual, anthropological and ethical perspective, given a new model of development and a true conversion in lifestyles and relationships, is certainly a priority that our institutions must take very seriously today.

It is certainly also necessary to promote a greater and more adequate valorisation of the role of women in the Church and in society, along the lines of a dual anthropology capable of expressing their specific nature and vocation, not neutralising but integrating differences in a virtuous way.

The concepts of universal human fraternity, of the culture of dialogue and encounter, constitute — as we have said — a path and a task for Catholic and ecclesiastical universities and faculties, and provide us with a historical and cultural *diakonia* to be exercised.

Philosophy and other humanistic subjects offer, in this respect, a precious interdisciplinary space for knowledge, especially in the dialogue between theology and human and

6 Cf. Francis, 2015, *LS*, 10-11, 62, 124, 137-162, 225, 230.

natural sciences, and for realising the commitment — previously mentioned — to “*integrate the knowledge of head, heart and hands*” (cf. Francis, 2019, *ChV*, 222).

In this vein, it is evident that the experience of quality *service-learning* can offer a specific pedagogical contribution to Catholic and ecclesiastical higher education, helping to bring together its spiritual identity, academic activities and social promotion action in the territory, making a fundamental contribution to achieving an effective integral education. To this end, it is certainly important to develop institutionalised service-learning programmes, also as a way of generating and promoting culture.

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about meeting others, seeking points of contact, building bridges, planning a project that includes everyone. This becomes an aspiration and a style of life. The subject of this culture is the people, not simply one part of society that would pacify the rest with the help of professional and media resources. (Francis, 2019, FT, 216)

In this regard, it is interesting to note the very concrete way in which Pope Francis refers to “culture” in *Fratelli tutti*, where he states that

A people’s ‘culture’ is more than an abstract idea. It has to do with their desires, their interests and ultimately the way they live their lives. To speak of a ‘culture of encounter’ means that we, as a people, should be passionate

Particularly after the pandemic, there is a great need to start again — not by going back, but by looking forward. This is why *teachers* are needed to develop didactic, professional and formative competence to offer a better service to students and society; they must be always dynamically open to continuous training that transcends the idea of updating the content of the discipline and is projected, instead, on a much broader and multidimensional spectrum of personal and professional growth (cf. Esmenjaud Zermeño, 2021, pp. 199-203).

It is also necessary to encourage networking and confrontation between *students*; to help each other in their studies, with particular attention to the last and the most vulnerable. A transformation of learning times and environments is taking place in university structures, and it is necessary to always place the person at the centre, in their relational aspects precisely in terms of “laboratory”, favouring—for example—the practice of story-

telling as a privileged way of transmitting knowledge. Students should be protagonists in voluntary, "third sector" groups, taking care of those who—among them—are at risk of abandonment or do not have sufficient technological access.

One of the consequences of the current affirmation and globalisation of the "technocratic paradigm" (cf. Francis, 2015, *LS*, 102-136) is the gradual but almost inexorable resizing and marginalisation of historical, scientific and humanistic knowledge, with its literary and artistic heritage. Precisely because it is *uni-versitas*, every academic and formative institution is called to be—as it is written in its DNA—a privileged place and a vital experience of convergence *ad unum* of the "cultures" that belong to — and in some way manifest and transmit — the different disciplines: thus, University becomes a "laboratory of *interculture*"

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and not of a simple juxtaposition of cultures. In the same way that we speak of interdisciplinarity in the "strong" sense, therefore of transdisciplinarity, similarly, academic interculturality, precisely because if it is a true culture it is always open to dialogue and confrontation, carries within itself an intrinsic dimension of "transculturality".

The aforementioned document of the Congregation for Catholic Education rightly states that

a correct view of history, along with the spirit with which our ancestors faced and overcame their challenges, can help man in the complex adventure of the present-day. Human societies, communities, peoples and nations are the result of chapters of history, by means of which a specific, ever-changing identity is revealed. Understanding the fruitful link between a community's historical development and its vocation both to the common good and to accomplishing fraternal humanism implies the formation of a historical awareness, based on the indissoluble unity that brings ancestors, contemporaries and posterity to surmount their degrees of kinship, so that all are equally recognized as being children of the Father and thus in a relationship of universal solidarity. (Congregation for Catholic Education, 2017, 23)

It is, therefore, necessary to offer young people, through Catholic higher education, the lived and witnessed the experience of a passion for culture, as well as for truth, goodness,

justice and beauty. Therefore, there is a need for adults—also in universities—who know, on the one hand, how to maintain a relationship of solidarity with the generations that preceded them and, on the other hand, how to deal with the decisive and qualitative criterion of sustainability—at all levels—with the demands of future generations. In the same way, tomorrow, in the perspective of true human flourishing and its corresponding good results that will know how to update it, the gifts of God and his grace will be incarnated—by assuming it—in the culture of those who will receive them.

Conclusion

In these pages, we have tried to deepen the value of "institutional spirituality" in the context of the reflection on the valorisation, extension and institutionalisation of service-learning. In this perspective, *service-learning* is not "forced", but contributes to expressing the charismatic-prophetic dimension of Catholic and ecclesiastical higher education, helping it to realise its mission of integral education, to raise agents of social change to build a better society, using the wisdom of the Magisterium of the Roman Catholic Church.

Our Institutions have the task of representing "*a sort of providential cultural laboratory*" (Francis, 2017, VG, 3) given a "*bold cultural revolution*" (Francis, 2017, VG, 3; Francis, LS, 114). A value that is the fruit of the prophetic dimension that comes from spiritualities and charismas, and that represents a precious heritage, which must be passed on from one generation to the next, also through university life.

We read in *Christus Vivit*:

When young and old alike are open to the Holy Spirit, they make a wonderful combination. The old dream dreams and the young see visions. [...] If young people sink roots in those dreams, they can peer into the future; they can have visions that broaden their horizons and show them new paths. But if the elderly do not dream, young people lose clear sight of the horizon. [...] The very first dream of all is the creative dream of God our Father, which precedes and accompanies the lives of all his children. The memory of this blessing that extends from generation to generation is a precious legacy that we should keep alive so that we too can pass it on. (Francis, 2019, ChV, 192-194)

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DIALOGUE BETWEEN UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS



Within the framework of the writing of this book, and with the motto "Institutional Spirituality and Service-Learning", Uniservitate organized a colloquy between university presidents, on April 26, 2021. Fernando Ponce SJ (President of the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador) and Mauro Mantovani SDB (then President of the Pontifical Salesian University of Rome) converse about Institutional Spirituality in this colloquy moderated by Daniela Gargantini (Catholic University of Córdoba).

Link to Dialogue between University Presidents: <https://youtu.be/3t-4vJU4HgA>



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3. FRANCIS'S PEDAGOGY AND SERVICE-LEARNING SPIRITUALITY

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Abstract

There are multiple speeches addressed to the education world likely to define some of Pope Francis's pedagogy principles. In order to approach his thinking and identify some reading keys, we have explored his cultural and spiritual lines. The ideal horizon where Bergoglio belongs is that of the French Jesuit School, greatly influenced by the Argentine phenomenology and by the People's Theology theorists. Guardini's principle of polar opposites has a paramount role expressing thought, action and management logic that is not dialectical, where synthesis absorbs—and destroys—the identity of its distinct parts. It is not the addition of such parts; it is more of a triadic, generative, and creative view, which prompts a third potential area, the space of promise, fruit of tension between the parts. Mercy is the sign of his pontificate and the base on which the social dimension is founded: "a poor Church, for the poor". These principles lead to a pedagogy defined by the search for harmony between opposing and contrasting elements (peacebuilding pedagogy), by the social prominence of the poor and excluded (pedagogy of the people), by listening to the call of mercy that encourages the mission to live it, experience it, and teach it (pedagogy of tenderness). These principles have

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been part of the pedagogical proposal of service-learning from the beginning. This article deals particularly with some of the antinomies faced by this pedagogical approach and the implicit promise to surmount them; the place of the socially excluded and the spaces of encounter inside and out of the classroom; the role of the education agents in the care of the concrete and living being and its connection with academic learning.

Introduction

Pope Francis is regarded as a major hodiern Master. His vision, full of wisdom and concrete action, is recognized by a public not strictly limited to the Catholic Church. Particularly, he exposes, as a unique feature—compared with other popes—a special attention towards pedagogical topics; continuously appealing to the great influence education has on the political, social, and environmental fields. Actually, there are multiple speeches addressed to the education world (around 150) likely to define some of his pedagogical proposal principles.

In order to approach his thinking and identify some reading keys, we have explored his cultural and spiritual line. The ideal horizon where Bergoglio belongs is that of the French Jesuit School, greatly influenced by Argentine phenomenology and by the People's Theology theorists. His charism is Jesuit, but he is profoundly Franciscan as well. He was formed in the light of the Vatican Council II and the Latin-American Conference of Medellin, also, an active protagonist of the Conference of Aparecida, which he presided over. He is a great admirer of Paul VI and appreciates the views of Gaston Ferrary, Michel De Certeau and Alberto Methol Ferré. Still, it is Romano Guardini and his notion of the symphony of opposites and the doctrine of the unity of the transcendentals, his major influence on the construction of his vision, shown at the Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium*.

There are three polar pairs in *Evangelii Gaudium*: fullness and limit; idea and reality; globalization and localization. These three pairs give rise to the principles of discernment: time is superior to space; unity is superior to conflict; reality is superior to ideas; the sum is superior to the part. The Apostolic Exhortation deals with other antinomies as well, such as: being contemplative in action; counterposition of theory and praxis; evangelization and human promotion. This is not about counter positions; it is more about a reciprocal call, which does not preclude differences between the parts.

For this article we have chosen, apart from Guardini's thought, Juan Carlos Scannone's view (Scannone 2017) —Jesuit priest, regarded as one of the Theory of the People's fathers, Bergoglio's teacher in Argentina—to start depicting the fundamental lines of Pope Francis's spirituality in terms of his social ethics. This view is intertwined with speeches, writings, reflections, and some meditations written by Bergoglio himself —even before becoming the Pope— interpreted in the light of education and of current times (Bergoglio 2014a; Bergoglio 2014b).

Pope Francis's social ethics

The social ethics of Pope Francis, as described by Scannone (Scannone, 2017), pursues mercy. One of the resulting consequences is the preferential option for the poor, notion arising in the Latin American Church between Medellín and Aparecida. Bergoglio declared from the very beginning his desire of “a poor Church for the poor”, regarding the latter as both recipients and protagonists of the Church's mission. Today, “Sister Mother Earth”

The social ethics of Pope Francis pursues mercy. One of the resulting consequences is the preferential option for the poor. Today, “Sister Mother Earth” is among the most fragile of the fragile. This is why we are immersed in a unique social and environmental crisis especially considered by the Pope in an encyclical which challenges us to make decisions out of mercy, historically effective, aiming at the life of the poor and the earth. His social ethics involves not only these notions, but also a method; the practice of discernment.

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His social ethics involves not only these notions, but also a method; the practice of discernment, the presence and action of the Holy Spirit, who leads us to acknowledge the will of the Father in Christ.

Even though there are other key subjects to Bergoglio, such as the joy of Gospel, a non-self-referential ecclesial community, an outgoing Church, the pastoral conversion, going out to the peripheries; his approach to facing the family's great issues, culture, economy, politics, ecology and also education, always lead to these three concepts: mercy, the preferential option for the poor, and a spirit of discernment.

Mercy

Francis's motto is “*miserando atque eligendo*”: “Jesus looked upon Matthew with merciful love and chose him”. By acknowledging himself a sinner, he accepts being chosen by pure and gratuitous mercy and, thus, called to live it, practice it and teach it: “A sinner, yet a minister of mercy”. According to Scannone,

This is the charism, the existential mood, the doctrine and style of Pope Francis's government. (Scannone, 2017 p. 17)

This is, thus, the beginning of a prophetic time of Mercy for the Church and for humankind. Mercy comes as a message of Grace in times of violence, conflict and pandemic which define this moment, with an encouraging offer to open our hearts, our eyes, our ears towards brothers and sisters in need. In fact, the word Mercy literally means “*to have a heart (cor) for the poor (miseri).*” In times of suffering, only Mercy can awaken hearts.

Mercy reveals itself as tenderness, translating the affection God provides us and which, therefore, we can offer to our neighbor and society as a whole, triggering the so-called “*revolution of tenderness*”, naturally inherent to our fragility. We step into this world weak, unarmed, deprived of all what is necessary and, consequently, objects to tenderness, compassion, care. It is preserving this condition that evidences the limits of being human, our own fragility, to the extent of feeling ashamed; what opens us to Mercy, on the grounds of reciprocity, through which Misery and Mercy encounter and embrace each other.

The path of Mercy and tenderness leads us to a subsequent polar pair, the one existing between Truth and Mercy. Mercy is not affirmed against the Truth, but as a representation of Truth. Tension lies between the universal value of what is true and the practice of Mercy, which is always particular. Both poles imply each other to such extent that there is no moral of the situation capable of relativizing what is true; just like no abstract doctrine can terminate the specific mode of Charity requested by the same Truth. In the words of the pontiff in the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*,

(...) mercy does not exclude justice and truth, but first and foremost we have to say that mercy is the fullness of justice and the most radiant manifestation of God's truth. (Pope Francis, 2016, AL, 311)

According to Scannone (Scannone, 2017) Mercy has, to Bergoglio, a trinitarian approach, since the main source of Mercy is the Father, who reveals himself in the Son's Gospel, both through the social doctrine of the Church and through every faithful, in the light of the Spirit, which provides the strength to put it into practice.

To Francis, mercy has a trinitarian root, on which the social dimension of Gospel grounds, this means, every woman's and every man's infinite dignity stems from the Father's infinite love, thanks to the redemptive blood of the Son, which does not only redeem the individual, but also the social relationships between men, and from the overwhelming action of the Holy Spirit, who reaches everyone, penetrates every human and social situation and undoes the knots, even the most insurmountable and impenetrable human affairs. (Scannone, 2017, p. 19)

The Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* also contains references to the conceptual unity that gathers Mercy, social ethics, and the mystery of the Trinity.

This joyful and life-giving contemplation of the face of God, revealed in Jesus Christ as a Father rich in mercy (cf. Ef 2,4), enables us to experience in a liberating and responsible way the 'mystique of living together' as a Church, which provides the leaven of the universal fraternity 'capable of seeing the sacred grandeur of our neighbor, of finding God in every human being, of tolerating the nuisances of life in common by clinging to the love of God, of opening the heart to divine love and seeking the happiness of others just as their heavenly Father does'. It is also the source of the imperative to allow our hearts and minds to heed the cry of the poor and of the earth, and to give concrete expression to the 'social dimension of evangelization', as an integral part of the Church's mission; for 'God, in Christ, redeems not only the individual person but also the social relationships existing between men'. It is true that 'we may not always be able to reflect adequately the beauty of Gospel, but there is one sign which we should never neglect: the option for the last ones, those whom society throws away'. This option must pervade the presentation and study of Christian truth. This is why, in the course of forming

of a Christianly inspired culture, the focus is mainly on the discovery of the Trinitarian imprint of creation, since it turns the cosmos in which we live into a 'relationship network', and where 'it is proper to every living being to tend towards other things', in order to foster 'a spirituality of that global solidarity which flows from the mystery of the Trinity'. (Pope Francis, 2017, VG 4a)

According to Francis, we have been called to foster a culture of mercy to the extent of giving birth to a real cultural revolution: the revolution of tenderness. Infinite mercy comes first; it can take the first step, break new ground without fear, go ahead towards the encounter, seek what is further away and reach the crossroad to embrace the excluded.

The poor and the earth invoke the heaven, and demand justice and compassion from us, not only for those who experience it, but also for the personal, social, and structural sin of those who cause such suffering. According to Francis, we have been called to foster a culture of mercy to the extent of giving birth to a real cultural revolution: the revolution of tenderness. Infinite mercy "comes first"; it can take the first step, break new ground without fear, go ahead towards the encounter, seek what is further away and reach the crossroad to embrace the excluded.

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Preferential Option for the Poor

According to Francis, the truth is more clearly seen and in a more complete way, if you do not look at it from the center, but from the peripheries, instead. It is there where he stands to observe, in the view of the smallest and the poorest, today's world, its crisis, and the answer the Church should give towards its missionary conversion and to the whole humankind, towards its social, environmental and community conversion.

From the peripheries and from his perspective, therefore, there is a re-discovery of reality: both the centrality of the poor in Jesus' message and the current inhumane situation of the human poor majority, which suffers the consequences of exclusion, arising from the multiple crisis the modern world is undergoing: economic, political, democratic, environmental, demographic, migratory and sanitary. We are facing a process defined as an epoch change, which grounds on the paradigm of indifference or "*the globalization of indifference*" (Pope Francis, 2013b), as Pope Francis defined it during his first trip to Lampedusa, given the dramatic situation of migrants dead in the Mediterranean.

Therefore, the Pope encourages us to "*heed the cry of the poor*" (Pope Francis, 2013a, EG, 187-188), which demands us not only to the simplest and most common gestures of solidarity, but also to find a solution to the structural causes of poverty and pursue an integral development. To such purpose, it is necessary to value solidarity, which Francis views as a cultural change from competitive individualism towards the creation of a new mindset focused on the community,

The word 'solidarity' is quite worn out and is sometimes misinterpreted. It is much more than a few rare acts of generosity. It means creating a new mindset focused on the community, on everybody's life prevailing over the acquisition of everything by a few. Solidarity is a spontaneous reaction of those who understand the social role of property and the universal destination of goods as a reality prior to private property. The private ownership of goods is justified by the need to protect and increase them, so that they can better serve the common good. That is why solidarity must be lived as the determination to restitute the poor what belongs to them. (Pope Francis, 2013, EG, 188-189)

Says the Venezuelan theologian Pedro Trigo (Trigo, 2013, pp. 247-262), there are at least three possible interpretations of the expression "*Church of the poor*": 1) that the Church, although not poor, regards them as the preferential recipients of its actions; 2) that they feel at home when at Church; 3) that they are privileged active subjects of their life and mission, as the heart of the Church and its praxis. The first option must be, in Pope Francis's view, discarded, since it places them as mere beneficiaries or passive addressees of a Church self-regarded as a benefactor and assistance provider. The second is already a

fact in many places; the third, instead, is yet to be seen. A genuine spiritual, pastoral, and structural conversion is required to place them in the center of the Church's pathway as privileged active subjects.

Another aspect pointed out by Scannone (Scannone, 2017) is how much the Holy Father appreciates the poor's way to live faith; that is to say, in uncultivated popular piety, central element of the People's Theology.

Francis propounds a new practice and a new hermeneutics, in the light of listening to the People: The questions of our people, their suffering, their plights, their dreams, their struggles, their worries, they all carry a hermeneutic value we cannot ignore if we mean to seriously incorporate the notion of incarnation. What they wonder helps us wonder, their inquiries, inquire us.

te the notion of incarnation. What they wonder helps us wonder, their inquiries, inquire us. (Pope Francis, 2018, GE 44)

Also, in the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exsultate*, on the call to holiness in today's world, Francis propounds a new practice and a new hermeneutics, in the light of listening to the People:

The questions of our people, their suffering, their plights, their dreams, their struggles, their worries, they all carry a hermeneutic value we cannot ignore if we mean to seriously incorpora-

This openness to listening to the People also appears in Miguel Angel Fiorito's writings, a Jesuit and spiritual father of Bergoglio's,

The fundamental questions a pastor should ask himself if he claims: 'I believe in the Holy Spirit' should lead to discover the Holy Spirit's effect on his faithful people. To put it bluntly, he will ask himself: how does the Lord go through my people's lives? How do they receive His presence? How do my people confess to the Holy Spirit? (Fiorito, 2019, p. 339)

These are some of the theological and spiritual elements that encourage and enlighten the pontiff's decisions, which become, as well, a clear discernment criterion in the view of the latter.

In the Spirit of Discernment

According to Pope Bergoglio, Love is stronger than sin (personal or structural) both in personal and historic-social situations. From tension and excess, novelty and abundance

of harmony and life arise, there, where discord and death would seem obvious. This is confirmed, for instance, by the journey of the social movements, whom he calls “*social poets*”: community salvation experiences which often lead to creative reactions.

Evangelii Gaudium describes the dynamics of conflict resolution finding inspiration in the harmony of opposites, which shows a dialectic of opposites (rather than of contradictions), as explained by Guardini⁷ (Guardini, 1997). In both levels, without losing tensional dynamism, we reach the unity of opposites in a superior synthesis which does not prevent conflict but is not trapped in it, either; in both of them unity, peace and harmony are the follow-up criteria.

The Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Gaudium develops four principles as discernment criteria.

The Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* develops four principles as discernment criteria:

1. “*Time is greater than space*” (Pope Francis, 2013a, *EG*, 222-225): this first principle of discernment encourages us, in a revolutionary way, to initiate processes rather than possess spaces. This involves generating processes of people-building, rather than reaching immediate results which yield easy, quick and short-term gains, but which do not enhance human fullness. It means generating new dynamisms to build people and human fullness but where those who create them do not pursue positions of power.

2. “*Unity prevails over conflict*” (Pope Francis, 2013a, *EG*, 226-230): Consonance, both interior and public, comes with resolution in a superior level, which preserves the precious potentialities of the contrasting polarities. This is achieved when conflict is faced, that is to say, when conflict is embraced to be resolved and transformed into a link in a chain leading to a new process, in a new vital area where conflict, tension and the opposites can

⁷ According to Guardini, there is a certain structure of concepts related in terms of “opposition” or polarity. The notions of “opposition” and “polarity” coincide. Guardini prefers to use the word “polarity” because, as he himself says, it is “less worn out”. Subsequently, the expression “polar opposites”, the title of his book, began to be used. What does the expression “polar opposites” mean to Guardini? It is a particular relationship where two things or moments exclude each other and, however, they are connected at the same time. This relationship, which appears in every quantitative, qualitative or form determination, is called “polar opposition”. That is to say, two extremes exclude and connect to each other at the same time. Contrarily, when using “contradictions”, Guardini means the relationship between two things that mutually deny and exclude and, therefore, cannot be together. An example of polar opposites in Pope Francis’s language would be the relationship between “formal” and “non- formal” education, where there is a distinction of form, but where both reclaim each other. An example of “contradiction” is the relationship between the “Throw-away Culture” and the “Culture of Encounter”, where one of them implies the denial of the other. Guardini thinks that polar opposite realities, as elements of a single reality in tension (not in contradiction), move towards a “new unity”, a third superior element that arises creatively, thanks to the same tension that boosts them. This “new unity” is not created by mixing or negotiating, but by raising these realities towards a superior and transcendent level.

reach a diversified and life-giving unity. The result is a criterion of good discernment and also peace which, as explained, harmonizes all diversities. Beauty crowns, confirms and fills with harmony, since diversity is beautiful when it can constantly enter into a process of reconciliation. It becomes a reconciled diversity.

3. *“Reality is more important than ideas”* (Pope Francis, 2013a, EG, 231-233): Ideas, conceptual elaborations, are supposed to capture, understand and manage reality. Since they are a human elaboration, it is necessary to determine their bipolar opposition to reality. Ideas must be prevented from detaching reality, from deforming or hiding it, instead of showing it. Among the diverse ways of masking reality, he mentions the following: angelic forms of purity, dictatorships of relativism, declarationist nominalisms, formal rather than real projects, brands of ahistorical fundamentalism, ethical systems bereft of kindness, intellectual discourse bereft of wisdom.

4. *“The whole is greater than the part (and of the mere sum of its parts)”* (Pope Francis, 2013a, EG, 234-237): A distorted conception of reality is biased, just as is the mere affirmation of one of the poles in conflictive tension. To Bergoglio, the priority of time is related to the final fullness in front of the limit. It always keeps a polar tension between the global and the local sphere. However, the criterion is broad, 360°, since it embraces all kinds of totality. It distinguishes uniform totality (and homogeneous) and multiform totality (differentiated), in order to discard the former and support the latter.

These four principles are represented, in terms of thought, as the “polar opposites”, and in terms of image, as a polyhedron.

The model is not the sphere, which is not greater than its parts, where every point is equidistant from the center, and there are no differences between them. The model is the polyhedron, which represents the convergence of all its parts, which preserve their distinctiveness. Both pastoral and political activities seek to gather in this polyhedron the best of every one. (Pope Francis, 2013a, EG, 236)

Another common trait is that the four principles reject any kind of partial absolute-ness (of a part, of an idea, etc.) which denies the interrelation between the opposites in tension.

Underneath these polarities and their synthesis in a “new unity”, a Trinitarian vision can be perceived as its root and support.

Pope Francis and education

The challenges posed by education have always been in the heart and in the careful eyes of this Pontiff. Bearing in mind the central ideas of his thinking, it is possible to identify certain principles which give rise to a pedagogy focused on seeking harmony between opposite and counter opposite elements (peacebuilding pedagogy), the social prominence of the poor and excluded (people's pedagogy), and listening to the call of mercy, which encourages the mission to live it, incarnate it and teach it (pedagogy of tenderness).

Peacebuilding Pedagogy

Interestingly, in his multiple speeches to the education world, Bergoglio establishes a relationship between education, dialogue, art, beauty, creativity, and harmony. This pursuit of harmony appears in both of his “cornerstones”, which he frequently mentions: personal harmony, which links together “*head, hands and heart*” and the “*restoration of the educational pact, which has been breached*” (Pope Francis 2015). These topics are not to be developed here since literature in connection with them abounds.

Nonetheless, it may be useful to acknowledge this principle or modality proposed by Bergoglio in “his manner”, causing disorder, “making a mess”, and in this way, creating harmonies which arise from a constant tension that is productive and creative. Opposites compose a fertile history. In Spadaro's words,

Spirit and institution never deny each other, says Francis. The Church is institutionalized by the Holy Spirit (...). This means there is a fluent process of institutionalization and deinstitutionalization: what is useful remains, what is not, does not. The future of the Church is not stiff or rigid. (Spadaro, 2020, p. 352)

The dynamicity he applies to institutional matters is also a criterion to pursue knowledge and “encounter” the truth. To Francis, the truth is not owned; it is found; the wish for the truth comes from “one encounter to the other”, and our relationship with it is not static, since the truth is infinite and it is always possible to immerse in the mystery. It is more of a journey, or an adventure.

The truth on which our existence is based must be open to dialogue, to the challenges posed by the others or by circumstances. The truth is always “sensible”, even if I am not, and the challenge involves remaining open to the other's point of view, trying not to regard our beliefs as something still. It means a dialogue without relativism, but with logos, one that can be shared, reasoning presented in Love, in order to build together a more and more liberating reality.

There are truths that challenge the individual as a whole, not just his intellect. Therefore, the quest for truth involves a relational harmony of contents, habits, assessments, perceptions, which go beyond a mere collection of information. Walking the way of beauty, from education.

Perhaps, the hermeneutic key of the quest for truth and hence, the pedagogical method to reach profound knowledge, to Bergoglio, lies in the unity of the transcendentals: the truth is never alone; it is such if good and beautiful.

There are truths that challenge the individual as a whole, not just his intellect. The encyclopedic illusion, however, can trick us when we mistake the quest for truth with the effort to know things. Simple information overlooks the surface of reality and of the soul: it does neither shake nor move the depths of thought. (Bergoglio, 2014a, p. 24)⁸

Therefore, the quest for truth involves a relational harmony of contents, habits, assessments, perceptions, which go beyond a mere collection of information. Beauty, regarded not just as what is pleasant or attractive but as that which, when perceivable, fills us with the wonderful profoundness of its mystery and allows us to open to a still more profound truth. Actually, it is said that artists are closer to God because they are more sensitive to the spirit, to the transcendent dimension. What amazes us seizes and abducts us; the truth found this way makes us free.

How many conflicts could be prevented if we started to think reality as beautiful and only then as good and true! The three things go together. Dividing them has caused lack of unity between contents, attitudes and behaviors, and methods; that is why we often go astray. (Bergoglio, 2014a, p. 23)⁹

This is the reason of Pope Francis's invitation to seek

inside of ourselves, in our peoples, beauty, the beauty that is our foundation, with our art, our music, our painting, our sculpture, our literature, what is beautiful. Educate in beauty... (Pope Francis, 2015a)

Walking the way of beauty, from education, leads us to build harmonies; both at a personal level, offering an education that constitutes the person, and at a community and social level: harmony in the education system.

⁸ Translation from Italian into Spanish: Carina Rossa

⁹ Translation from Italian into Spanish: Carina Rossa

People's Pedagogy

A pedagogy of the people, then, requires educators to “encounter the people”, to address to the peripheries and give, from there, an answer to the entire world. The greatest failure of an educator may be to teach within the walls.

As we said earlier, the preferential option for the poor gives them a role of active subjects, in the center of the action and as the protagonists of change. In *Dear Amazonia* what is discussed is the education offered to develop

their capacities and empowerment; but so that it becomes such, it must be an education suitable to cultivate without uprooting, to foster growth without weakening identity, to support without trespassing (Pope Francis, 2020, DA).

A pedagogy of the people, then, requires educators to “encounter the people”, to address to the peripheries and give, from there, an answer to the entire world.

At the Catholic Education Conference, 2015, an important part of his speech was addressed to religious congregations, whose charisms were born in reply to emergency situations, but which today have transformed their mission. He encouraged them to “go back to their origin”, go to the existential peripheries with an open attitude to learn from them and from their condition:

This is the first challenge for you: leave those places with plenty of educators and go to the peripheries. (...) Find the needy there, the poor; and they have one thing the youth in the wealthier areas do not, it is not their fault, but a sociological reality: they have experienced survival, even cruelty, even hunger, even injustice. They have a wounded humanity; and I think that our salvation comes from the wounds of a wounded man in the cross. They gain, from such wounds, wisdom, if there is a good educator to guide them. It is not about charity, or teaching to read, or feeding them... No! This is necessary, but temporary. This is the first step. The challenge—and I am encouraging you—is to go there and help them grow in humanity, in intelligence, in values, in habits, so that they can move ahead and take them to other experiences they do not know. (Pope Francis, 2015)¹⁰

Another very forceful statement he pronounced during this conference, when discussing educational and social inclusion, was an invitation to “educate outside the walls”:

¹⁰ Translation from Italian into Spanish: Carina Rossa

The greatest failure of an educator may be to teach within the walls: educating within the walls of a privileged culture, the walls of a culture of safety, the walls of a well-off social group which does not move forward. (Pope Francis, 2015)¹¹

Building a “classroom without walls” has multiple meanings to Francis. It is a classroom for everyone, inclusive, one where there are no obstacles or barriers to learning and participating, in accordance with the proposal “Education for everyone without exception” (UNESCO, 2020). Particularly, the wall means a symbol of the inclusion of refugees and immigrants, as well as the broad discourse on a suitable intercultural education.

On the other hand, wishing a “classroom without walls” refers to the global dimension of education, to building networks between schools all around the world, always beginning at the peripheries—let us remind ourselves that Francis’s *forma mentis* is global, but it always goes from the peripheries towards the center—and the consequent positive use of technology, which makes the “Global Classroom” possible.

Finally, the expression “classroom without walls” leads to pedagogical proposals which encourage students to leave the classroom, to learn in and from the real contact with the territory needs.

Pedagogy of Tenderness

Mercy —as discussed earlier—boosts Francis’s mission and that is why heeding the clamor of people in pain, of distressing social situations and of the suffering sister and mother earth is at the heart of his educational proposal. This listening is also a call which becomes vocation that renovates the passion for education.

When Pope Francis speaks about “*head, hands and heart*” (Pope Francis, 2015) he is referring to such compassionate attitude towards the one who suffers and the intention to do something concrete to transform their reality.

The head does not only mean the intellectual rational aspect. It also involves the opening channels: the eyes and the ears, without which the educational action is impossible. No opening means no learning; therefore, the core of the pedagogical task is teaching the ability to hear and see, merging these components with the heart.

¹¹ Translation from Italian into Spanish: Carina Rossa

This is how a whole new scenario is displayed with attitudes and behaviors likely to be developed within the “pedagogy of tenderness”. They range from educating one’s listening, look, compassion, closeness and “fellowness”, to the broad and complex skill of “care” (for oneself, the other, the surrounding world, the Common House); all attitudes and behaviors which conjugate with the value of gratitude and gratuitousness.

Emotions, which symbolically reside in the heart, enable the opening of these channels, and among them, astonishment and amazement have a privileged place, *There is a fundamental emotion in the learning process: amazement, the capacity to allow ourselves to be wondered, shaken and moved in order to open to a new reality: ‘Learn from amazement, cultivate amazement’.* (Pope Francis, 2021)

Hardships can also “shake and move” inside. Pain gets us closer to mystery, giving rise to questions of meaning which—very often—open the eyes towards the transcendent dimension. At the same time, these experiences require knowledge and skills suitable to change this so-called negative reality.

Both amazement and a painful experience (personal or not) lead, then, to a conversion which involves several postures, arranged to trigger the capacity of care, closeness, and tenderness.

This is how a whole new scenario is displayed with attitudes and behaviors likely to be developed within the “pedagogy of tenderness”. They range from educating one’s listening, look, compassion, closeness and “fellowness”, to the broad and complex skill of “care” (for oneself, the other, the surrounding world, the Common House); all attitudes and behaviors which conjugate with the value of gratitude and gratuitousness.

Service-learning and Francis’s pedagogy

The principles mentioned hitherto have been part of the service-learning pedagogical proposal from the very beginning. These are some of the clues that may enlighten such educational practice and help us open up to new horizons, to new “promises”. They include, but are not limited to, the following, namely:

Service-learning, between Antinomies and Harmonies

We are discussing service-learning when the performance of a project includes both a pedagogical and a service intention. Generally speaking, these two intentions oppose in our educational institutions, since aspects like theory v. practice, reflection v. experience or study v. life are polarized. However, in the words of Puig Rovira and Palos Rodriguez, what is new about this proposal is precisely the harmony between these two aspects:

This is an innovative proposal, although based on well-known and long-standing tradition elements, such as service, voluntary work, active citizenship, on the one hand and—on the other—learning, knowledge, skills, and values. Innovation, or novelty, does not reside in the constituent parts but in the close relationship between service and learning in a single articulated, coordinated, and coherent activity. (Puig Rovira & Palos Rodriguez, 2006, p. 61)

Merging learning and service gives rise to a third element, a new pedagogical proposal: service-learning, which transforms both components, adds value and meaning to each one of them and creates new educational qualities. It becomes a profound bond between these two poles, which makes them better and produces new and different results that they would never obtain in isolation.

I could be stated here that the force of this pedagogy lies precisely in the tension existing between these two opposites, visualized in the dash (service-learning) that joins both realities. All the peacebuilding pedagogy potential could be applied and read from the dash that links and transcends the parts.

According to Nieves Tapia,

One of the greatest strengths of S-L lies precisely in overcoming old antinomies between scientific and ethical education, learning content and developing skills, academic excellence and educational inclusion. (Tapia, 2014, p. 55)

Overcoming these antinomies has resulted in a relationship of mutual benefit, or “virtuous circle” between learning and service, by means of which systematically learned contents nourish the quality of social activity and service impacts on formation and encourages further production of knowledge. Numerous investigations evidence such effects:

On a worldwide scale, during the last few decades, a growing number of research works have shown how S-L does not only enable the use of learned knowledge in real contexts, but also fosters the acquisition of new knowledge and skills for life, work and citizen participation (Furco, 2005; Billig, 2006; PNES, 2007; Ierullo, 2012) (...) Research and case studies throughout the five continents are definitely showing that good S-L practices produce ‘a kind of learning that changes perspectives’ (Eyler y Giles, 1999). (Tapia, 2014, p. 54)

The newly built knowledge and skills development in excess of the teacher's expectations may become one of the new elements arising from this polar tension.

Service-Learning, between Truth, Goodness, and Beauty

In the view of many educators and educational institutions, the fact that students learn more than expected is already a positive result of the teaching and learning processes. From the standpoint of Francis's Pedagogy and from a spiritual look of the service-learning approach, we should still pose a few more questions: What kind of knowledge has been acquired? Could such knowledge be considered sapiential? Does such knowledge allow students to reach a dimension of understanding, value, and transcendent sense?

In the view of many educators and educational institutions, the fact that students learn more than expected is already a positive result of the teaching and learning processes. From the standpoint of Francis's Pedagogy and from a spiritual look of the service-learning approach, we should still pose a few more questions: What kind of knowledge has been acquired? Could such knowledge be considered sapiential? Does such knowledge allow students to reach a di-

mension of understanding, value, and transcendent sense?

A first possible answer is brought about by the unquestionable horizon of meaning offered by service-learning to students. They discover through service how useful it is to study and that everything they learn can be a gift for the others. In general, a person understands the purpose of studying after a good experience of S-L; that it goes beyond the quest of truth (knowledge, information, beliefs reassurance), but of goodness as well (the quest of common good, self-transcendence in the quest of the neighbor's welfare) along with a great deal of gratuitousness.

These two purposes, Truth and Goodness, need each other and open towards a new tridimensional dimension that also includes Beauty.

The trinomial of transcendental values Truth, Goodness, and Beauty, which, from ancient times, philosophers, theologians, and artists have tried to depict, defines Bergoglio's proposal, as previously explained. To the Pope, what is true cannot be detached from what

is good or beautiful. Other contemporary authors, like Howard Gardner (Gardner, 2011), propound it as necessary knowledge for the education of the future; in times of technological progress that neglects transcendent values of the human nature.

From the point of view of prosocial¹² behaviors, it is considered that the transcendent value that leads to performing actions that benefit others—without foreseeing a reward—is Goodness, which within service-learning leads also to Truth since it connects it to certain knowledge. The question arising naturally, following Francis's pedagogy, is: What is the role of Beauty as a value? Is Beauty always present as a typical principle?

This is undoubtedly an interesting field to explore, bearing in mind that an “education to look” would lead us to see elements arising out of Beauty that, so far, have not been evidenced immediately in a service-learning project.¹³ Nevertheless, in our opinion, this is a *sine qua non* characteristic, since it observes Beauty's opposite value: Ugliness, meaning all those realities that cause disdain, indignity, shame, distortion, limit; that is to say, all those characteristics of “the thrown-away” and which constitute the social reality selected to be faced by this project.

What is beautiful is immediately attractive. In turn, what is ugly is rejected. We keep trying to remove all that is connected with suffering, poverty, illness, everything inefficient, disharmonic, everything Pope Francis calls “throw-away culture”, represented in the new forms of poverty: the homeless, the addicts, the migrants and refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly, victims of human trafficking, women who suffer exclusion, mistreatment, and violence, etc. Migrants are the greatest victims of these times besieged by terrorism, urban violence, futurelessness and starvation.

Ugliness vindicates the excluded's wounds. In a service-learning experience, students are encouraged to “touch with their hands”, with a merciful heart, and with the reason competencies such wounds, in order to inquire on the structural causes that provoked them and, if possible, try to change them by means of what they learned in class.

12 The investigation center LIPA (for its acronym in Spanish: Laboratorio de Investigación Prosocial Aplicada), in Spain, considers as prosocial behaviors: “Those behaviors that, without foreseeing extrinsic or material rewards, are beneficial to other people or groups in the other's view, or social goals objectively positive, which increase the chances of positive reciprocity of quality and solidarity in interpersonal or social consequent relationships, preserving the identity, creativity and initiative of the individuals or groups involved” (Roche Olivar, 2010). This definition leaves the target of the assistance action as the last criterion; this means a difference with other approaches centered in the doer of the action, instead of in the recipient. A prosocial action benefits the other, like the other wants to benefit; therefore, it involves knowing the needs, identity and culture of the other, through empathy. The incorporation of the other's reality prevents the risk of tolerating prosocial actions which, rather than benefit, damage the other, by producing dependent relationships or causing others to feel undervalued. (Escotorin et al., 2014, p. 13-14).

13 Except in experiences in the world of Art, but in this case it would be a partial aspect involving only a few projects.

Ugliness vindicates the excluded's wounds. In a service-learning experience, students are encouraged to touch with their hands, with a merciful heart, and with the reason competencies such wounds, in order to inquire on the structural causes that provoked them and, if possible, try to change them by means of what they learned in class. Perhaps, the most important thing we can teach our students is learning how to develop a "fellowness" attitude and its value.

This is the compassion we need today in order to defeat the globalization of indifference. This is the look we need when we come across a poor person, an outcast, a sinner. It is a compassion that nourishes from the consciousness that we are sinners as well. (Francis, 2016, p. 102)

But, perhaps, the most important thing we can teach our students is learning how to develop a "fellowness" attitude and its value. This would mean to come closer to the thrown-away humanity, just like Francis, who gathered the poorest ones under St. Peter's Square colonnade. Learning to approach and return some of their lost dignity, or—at least—to share our own misery in solidarity, which joins us together, as humans. In Pope Francis's words,

Beauty becomes, thus, the "promise" of service-learning, and the way to reach it is Mercy.

Service-Learning, between Looks and Love for the World

Lastly, it is important to highlight the faculty task, encouraged by service-learning, who—due to the particulars of this pedagogy—is "displaced", moves out from the center to leave the students and the pursuit of community welfare instead. This "displacement" does not undermine them, though. On the contrary, it entails great responsibility: allowing students to gain wisdom by getting in contact with the wounds of the humankind; relating this wisdom with formal knowledge; educating the look, "learning to see" the surrounding reality, with a creative look leading to new Harmonies.

As stated by Donha Schlobitten, learning is shaped from the look, and educators must accompany such development,

Within the space of the look the tasks and questions of the world arise. We must regard the world as a task, superseding ourselves in what is finite and acknowledging what we must develop, based on that which only our vulnerability reveals. (Donha Schlobitten, 2020, p. 236)

This way to see reality requires care and look training, love for the world and magnanimity.

Conclusion

Mercy encourages Francis's mission, it is its conducting thread and it is even translated into a pedagogical proposal that keeps the transcendental values—Beauty, Goodness and Truth—alive, always and constantly creating new Harmonies.

Service-Learning joins theory and practice, propounding a kind of incarnated education that teaches student to open their eyes to the misery of the world and their ears to heed their cry.

In education, how could I put merciful acts into practice?

Pope Francis, in his closing speech at the Catholic Education Conference 2015, suggested everybody should

think about this: *In education, how could I put merciful acts into practice?* (Pope Francis, 2015)¹⁴

We would like to present, at the end of the chapter, for homework—as he himself says—one of his reflections on the final exam:

Let us open our eyes to see the misery of the world, the wounds of so many brothers and sisters deprived of their dignity and let us feel compelled to heed their cry for help. May our hands reach theirs and hold them close to us so that they can feel the warmth of our presence, of our friendship, and of fraternity. May their cry become our own and together may we break down the barriers of indifference that often reign supreme and conceal hypocrisy and selfishness. (...) We cannot escape the Lord's words, and they will serve to judge us: if we fed the hungry and gave drink to the thirsty; if we welcomed the stranger and clothed the naked; if we devoted time to visit the sick or imprisoned. (cfr. Mt 25, 31-45) Likewise, we shall be asked if we helped to clear the doubt, which leads to fear and sometimes to loneliness; if we could fight ignorance in which millions of people live, especially children deprived of the necessary means to be rescued from poverty; if we could be close to the lonely and afflicted; if we have forgiven those who offended us and have rejected all forms of anger and hate leading to violence; if we were patient, following God's example, who is so patient with us; finally, if we commended our brothers and sisters to Lord in prayer. In every one of these "little ones", Christ himself is present. His flesh becomes visible in the flesh of the tortured, the crushed, the scourged, the malnourished, the exiled...

¹⁴ Translation from Italian into Spanish: Carina Rossa

to be acknowledged, touched, and carefully assisted by us. Let us not forget the words of Saint John of the Cross: 'in the twilight of life, we will be judged on the basis of love.' (Pope Francis, 2015b, MV15)

In the twilight of life, we will be judged on the basis of love, this is what the most important exam we must pass is about. As repeatedly stated by Nieves Tapia, service-learning is the proposal that prepares us not only to acquire the necessary competencies to perform well in society, but also in the most important exam of all our existence: the final exam.

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4. CHARISMAS AND SOLIDARITY LEARNING: A SYMPHONY OF FOUR UNIVERSITY TESTIMONIALS

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Introduction

Service-learning has developed a central dimension for education: solidarity. This has to do with passing from “simply” *teaching to learning*. This passage places the student in the centre of the educational spotlight and entails different dynamics.

The art of teaching is fruitful when it awakens the students' subjectivity, infusing them with the capacity for personal and personalized learning. The potentialities generated by the reflection on one's learning in the existential and community space confirm the conviction about “learning to serve, serving to learn”.

The art of teaching is fruitful when it awakens the students' subjectivity, infusing them with the capacity for personal and personalized learning. The potentialities generated by the reflection on one's learning in the *existential and community space* confirm the conviction about “learning to serve, serving to

learn”. Thus the various initiatives that intend to “*accompany and serve students, educators and community-based organizations that develop or wish to implement solidarity or service-learning (SL) projects*” (Del Campo et al., 2017) find full justification.

Charismas and education: a natural relationship?

Quite a few institutions in the Catholic educational world were born out of a charisma, emerging in a specific historical context, with an educational requirement “of their own”, sustained over time.

In theology, charismas are gifts of the Spirit, given to support the journey of the believing community towards the final Parousia. In his “farewell” speeches (John, 13-17), Jesus announced five promises regarding the coming of “Another Paraclete” and his role in the

post-Easter life of the Church. Before John, with the decisive contribution of Paul, it was better understood how the Spirit continues to give his gifts to sustain the Church on its journey, often battered by headwinds and dramatic historical turbulence, as testified in the correspondence with the Corinthian community.

Such gifts, both personal and communal, are given to the community for the good and for building up the whole Body of Christ, where He is the head and the believers are the members (cf. Romans, 12:4-5; Ephesians, 4:11-13). Reciprocal edification and Christian solidarity, in one Body, express the true “law of Christ” that is realized in “bear one another’s burdens” (Galatians, 6:2). As spiritual gifts that depend on the Spirit, these energies and the consequent works are distinguished by the freedom of the Paraclete and are not subject, in history, to a presumed total human “control.”

In history, charismas have often expressed themselves as particular responses of God given to the specific needs of the time. They give rise to new movements, often varied and multi secular, bringing new operational sensitivities to unprecedented social and religious wounds with which humanity must confront itself. Charismas suggest that purely “institutional” human resources and, in any case, only human resources are not enough to face the new, often dramatic, emergencies. History teaches that it is only by resorting to the trans-historical springs of gratuitousness that it is possible to reorient oneself and be reborn.

This is how the religious families were born, precisely defined as “charismas”, which in time also had to be organized and institutionalized as “works”. Outpourings of these manifestations continue as Providence responds to the cry of humanity at every juncture in its history. The historical set of such manifestations was defined as “Christ unfolding through the centuries” (Lubich, 1994), embracing forms of life that are ever more communitarian and ever more explicitly at the service of the human being, with whom the Redeemer of man has always identified himself, taking on as his own the wounds of each of his brothers and sisters. The “charismas”, as openings from Heaven to Earth, are surprisingly abundant today, even coming out of the consecrated life and taking on more secular tones, always originating in the Gospel.

A particular dimension of the historical irradiation of charismas is love for the Truth of the Gospel, which is both a *splendour of God’s plan* for man and the *joy of a redeemed existence*, shared in the face of what is true, beautiful, good and fair. Simplifying, this is how numerous universities were born, created as a response to the incarnational impulses typical of a charisma, needed to translate (as an explicit face of Truth) the potentialities of the grace itself that heals humanity. The charismas manifested in the founding saints such

It is to unite all elements of nature and grace in a way accessible to shared cultural language so that they converge; indeed, to “uni-direct” towards a new epiphany of the Truth that loves; therefore, it saves, heals, and makes the human family grow in history.

as Benedict, Francis, Dominic, Ignatius, Alfonso, John Bosco and many others, responded, each in their way, to this intimate invitation of the “gift of grace” itself to integrate as “universitas”. It is to unite all elements of nature and grace in a way accessible to shared

cultural language so that they converge; indeed, to “uni-direct” towards a new epiphany of the Truth that loves; therefore, it saves, heals and makes the human family grow in history.

The next four contributions express this specific potentiality that each charisma carries with it and that sooner or later is dressed up in a formal, expository, argumentative and communicative language, accessible to every mind and heart that sincerely seeks and studies the Truth. If the Gospel of grace is a common denominator for all the charismas that are only understood together in the body of the Church, the specificity of the “charismatic face” of salvific truth is different for each one of them and this is also seen in the academic field. This special charismatic “colouring” will be linked here to service-learning which, with its initiatives and dynamics, is a fixed point for the four university institutions taken into consideration at the global level and inspired respectively by the Ignatian charisma (Company of Jesus), and charismas of Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer (*Opus Dei*), John Baptist de La Salle and Saint Francis of Assisi.

This rose of charismas will be further enriched by Patrick M. Green’s reflection that focuses on the North American context, taking into account the impact of service-learning in four universities inspired by the Jesuit, Marianist, Vincentian and Catholic charismas respectively.¹⁵

The *maius* of Saint Ignatius: training and service to justice

With the first contribution of Claudia Mora Motta, service-learning promoter at the Xaverian University of Cali, we get straight to the point: “The Ignatian charisma, the university and service-learning.” The charisma here is that of Saint Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), founder of the Society of Jesus (1540). It is universally known how active the Jesuits are in the field of education in the world, in the 112 nations of their evangelising mission.

¹⁵ We will consider the latter through the case study of the University of San Diego, born out of an agreement between the Diocese of San Diego and the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus.

Prompted by the inspirations of Pope Francis, contained in his book *Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future* (2020), Mora stresses that the starting point is always the concrete human need to which God responds with the resources of a charisma. In this case, the Ignatian charisma. The invitation of Francis, a Jesuit pontiff, to “decentralise” and “transcend” is better understood, also valid for the university: it is about broadening the perspective to make contact with reality, assuming the risk of changing ways of thinking and acting in each crisis that hits society.

Here universities are called to find and implement experiential methodologies suitable for developing attitudes of stewardship and service, in an authentic education that engages the heart, the mind and the hands.

The current pandemic crisis has also exposed multiple wounds in the society in which we live: extreme poverty, inequity in the health and education systems, unlimited desire to accumulate and “voracious” ill-treatment of

Mother Earth. Here universities are called to find and implement experiential methodologies suitable for developing attitudes of stewardship and service, in an authentic education that engages the heart, the mind and the hands.

The reflections of this contribution focus on *justice* and the role of service-learning in the way it was assumed by the University of the Society of Jesus, called—by charisma—to form men and women into a life lived “for the others, for the greater glory of God.” The Ignatian *magis*, the horizon of the “something else”, pushes us to search for the “greater”, more universal good, marked by excellence. In the university context, the *magis* also implies a *social and intellectual apostolate* to put knowledge and science at the service of others.

Therefore, the university is called to be “inserted” in the local social dynamics, and this leads to the definition of political and cultural projects in favour of the poorest. This is evidenced by the experience reported by Mora on a group of Jesuit martyrs from the José Simeón Cañas University in El Salvador (late 1980s). The Ignatian inspiration stimulated a courageous analysis of the social, economic and political reality, aimed at universal respect for human dignity. Thus, the university was able to carry out a “social projection” towards a movement of liberation, greater awareness and transformation.

The relevant presence of the Ignatian university in society was masterfully illustrated by some interventions by Peter H. Kolvenbach (1928-2016), Superior General of the Society of Jesus. Education is pertinent or relevant when it develops critical thinking capable of transforming the structures of injustice. The cultivation of this type of knowledge must

always ask “for whose benefit and for what purpose”. A decisive criterion for the evaluation of Jesuit universities is that students are transformed in the face of the sufferings of the world, learning to “perceive, think, judge, choose and act for the rights of others.”

It is a pedagogical approach that leads to the formation of the “whole person” in his or her “being in solidarity”. The injustice suffered with others touches the heart and, therefore, manages to change the mind, catalysing solidarity, essential in all relevant intellectual research and moral reflection. This is where the “social responsibility of the university” finds its roots, through which it can contribute to the transformation of reality intelligently and effectively. People are “whole” when they are carriers of “well-informed solidarity.”

This implies an active and experiential pedagogy. Professors and students are invited to “come out of themselves” to “meet the other” in the exchange of knowledge, experiences and opportunities. This pedagogy carries out such formative process in five typically Ignatian moments: context, experience, reflective participation, action and evaluation. The service-learning methodology is also based on experiential education, where the objectives of curricular learning are confronted with the challenges of the context, to “resignifying” them through systematic and intentional reflection.

The different coincidences between the purpose of the *educational project* of the Xaverian University and the modalities of service-learning allow students to be effectively trained to be future political subjects, defenders of justice and agents for the improvement of the quality of life for all.

The charisma of *Opus Dei* and training for work that serves and bonds

The second contribution is from Isabel Egaña, a professor in pedagogy oriented towards social solidarity at Universidad Austral in Argentina. In her text, the author explores the topic that bonds “the mission of the university and the charisma of *Opus Dei*”. Egaña bases her reflection on the legacy of the holy founder of the *Opus Dei*, Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer (1902-1975), canonized in 2002. From the very first words, theologically loaded terms emerge in the stream of thought, such as “divine initiative”, “sanctification of human reality”, “love God” and “love the world”. Just as in the case of Saint Ignatius, also in the much more recent thought of Saint Josemaría, these terms/values are presented in close relation to the concrete human world. The immediate specificity of this charisma associates them with a dimension that is at the centre of the reflection: it is “a job well done,” with an explicit attitude of service towards others.

At the centre of the reflection is precisely the “professional work”. This is the aim of the educational activity, oriented towards the “materialisation” of the Gospel message for the common good of the whole of humanity. A job well done has a soul of its own. Its supernatural transcendence makes it a means of union with God and transformation of society, through charity.

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of society, through charity. This vision is related to the Eucharistic experience of St. Josemaría (1931), in which Christ “draws everyone to [him]self” (cf. John, 12:32), particularly humans in their activities and the whole humanity in all social relations. Christians, as “other Christs”, become —precisely through work— light and leaven in their living environments and transform them. And they do this with the same energy of Christ: He is the “pinnacle of all human activity”, therefore, we find Him amid the things of the world.

In this sense, an embodiment of *Opus Dei*’s charisma is Universidad Austral, a corporate initiative at the service of society. The inspirational force of the charisma, since the birth of the “first-born” University of Navarra (1952), makes it possible to articulate the university service by uniting the search for truth, the development and transmission of knowledge, with the formation of people in the wake of their “transcendent destiny” and with the complement of the corresponding virtues. This leads to intellectual, professional, social and public *leadership*, unthinkable without the help of education measured on the Gospel and “warmed” with the same love of Christ.

We are at the heart of the matter: service to society through the professional preparation and comprehensive training of the members of the academic community. They must be able to guide social, scientific and technological changes, with ever more up-to-date instruments, but always in tune with the “Christian worldview” and synergistic collaboration with other paralleled service institutions.

Finally, the contribution shows the two sides of the same coin: university education must aim at excellence in *professional preparation*, but this objective cannot be achieved without considering *service* as a true and proper *mission*. The measure of this necessary and not always easy synthesis is identified with the capacity to give real impulses towards a “University Social Responsibility”, present in each unit and potentially well defined. This

can be expressed in initiatives such as “Acción Universitaria”, or in programs such as “Puna Solidaria Austral”, where professors, students and volunteers can carry out several service-learning projects, coordinated and articulated in an interdisciplinary way, with didactic, pedagogical, health, administrative and even recreational relevance, according to local needs. In this sense, service-learning, with its approaches and programmes, has also become a must in the curricula of the different university proposals and the specific training of teaching staff.

Also in the case of the founding charisma of *Opus Dei*, because it flows from a single trans-historical source, this is extremely in line with service-learning. This educational modality is recognized as an opportunity to “materialise the love of God and humanity” through the transformation of the world using “a job well done”, addressing the real human needs of today, manifested in the communities. A conclusive strong point: students take the lead in bringing about change *in primis*.

The charisma of de La Salle: collaborating with God in education

The third contribution, written by Br. Michael Valenzuela, FSC, from De La Salle-College of St. Benilde (Benildus Romançon) is intended to bring together “Lasallian spirituality and service-learning”, as is common practice in this institution of the Brothers of the Christian schools in the Philippines. As in the preceding cases, the university activity of these Lasallians is connected with their charismatic source: Saint John Baptist de La Salle (1651-1719). The saintly French educator formed an association of lay teachers dedicated to the Christian education of poor and abandoned children and youth. In the years that followed, De La Salle and the Brothers of the Christian Schools gave the poor access to quality education and Christian formation, with educational innovations basic to modern education. Teaching became a true and proper Christian vocation. De La Salle, canonised in 1900, was declared the patron saint of teachers and educators in 1950. His works, known as Brothers of the Christian Schools, continues to develop the educational mission, sharing the Lasallian spirituality and charism with more than 70,000 educators in almost eighty countries.

Lasallian spirituality is born as a call to two contemplative perspectives: the inclusive love of God, who continues to redeem his children, and the hunger of young people to live life with dignity and meaning. From this double gaze present in the hearts of educators, a compassion is born that shares in the *pathos* of the Heavenly Father for his most vulnerable children. St. John de La Salle sees in the Father such *zeal* and *affection* that motivate the sending of the Son, the form and measure of all educational zeal of the Brothers. The Lasallian project starts from “feeling as God feels” to offer opportunities for full hu-

Faced with the progressive alienation of religion from concrete life, the Lasallian proposal tries to integrate, starting from faith and not outside it, professional excellence and social responsibility, but also the search for holiness which connects with the creative and redeeming work of God in the world. Here service-learning is an important strategy to achieve this “integral goal.”

manisation to those who are deprived of it, even at the cost of the cross. For educators in the Lasallian tradition, fidelity to God demands fidelity to young people whatever their situation. This vision contributes to a remarkable synthesis of faith and work, of spiritual life and professional commitment, bringing everyone into communion through fraternal solidarity. This is possible

when challenges, burdens and graces are shared, serving through education the cause of humanisation and the spiritual liberation of all.

De La Salle College of St. Benilde is a good testimony to this. Since its inception in 1980, the College has continued to offer professional, innovative and pioneering vocational courses promoting inclusion in higher education, opening up avenues into the future for the creative industries. Since the encyclical *Laborem Exercens* of St. John Paul II (1981), “the essential key to the whole social question” is work. Lasallian schools are inspired by it and try to integrate practical education with Christian formation. Faced with the progressive alienation of religion from concrete life, the Lasallian proposal tries to integrate, starting from faith and not outside it, professional excellence and social responsibility, but also the search for holiness which connects with the creative and redeeming work of God in the world. Here service-learning is an important strategy to achieve this “integral goal.”

For Pope Francis, too, work remains the key to the social question, as the exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) testifies. Faced with a human family that inhabits an “endangered planet”, harmed by exploitation that maximises profit alone, the adoption of service-learning from 2018-2019 involves all degree programmes. Students are asked to engage in at least two collaborative projects consistent with the school’s mission and aimed at sustainable development objectives.

Towards the end of this important contribution, Valenzuela lists seven specific ways in which a Lasallian-inspired spirituality sustains and deepens learning linked to service. These are elements worthy of a close study for their inspiring force. Only in the perspective of God (spiritual hunger), can the suffering wounds of the world find answers that go beyond the mere law of profit and lead to the dignity of all. The Lasallian “double contem-

plative gaze” (God is situated in the cry of human pain) helps young people to pay attention to the concrete details of life, to the rigour of the analysis of crucial problems and the search for possibilities of life in difficult situations. The innate dignity of people, discovered from the experience of relationship with God’s love, leads the students to give priority to people in every project and to treat each one with unconditional respect.

This develops social empathy, a strong point of service-learning, with which to contrast any instrumentalisation. Professional excellence of the Lasallian type is animated by a zeal for the well-being of the people it serves. In this work, thus open to transcendence, constant improvement is both a spiritual and a professional requirement. The Lasallian emphasis on fraternal collaboration and solidarity in the common mission favours the construction of similar relationships in the same society and brings about the expected inter-human and economic transfiguration. Such integration of spiritual life, professional commitment, and social responsibility is therapeutic in a world where —by exiling moral and spiritual values— dehumanisation and serious damage to society and the environment are taking place. Finally, service-learning based on spirituality helps students to deal with the possible cynicism that can always arise from disenchantment in the face of serious and seemingly unsolvable social problems. Discovering God in these crises can offer a new synthesis of realism and hope, both in the study and professional productivity. Every charitable effort, even if imperfect, is precious for the building of the Kingdom of God and instils confidence amid difficulties.

The charisma of Saint Francis: prophets of solidarity

This last contribution is offered by Daniel P. Horan, OFM, of the Catholic Theological Union in Chicago. The author proposes to offer a Franciscan perspective on the link between prophecy and solidarity. This time, the focus is on an education imbued with the Franciscan charisma, opening it up to a pedagogy based on service-learning, integrated with typically Franciscan aims and main curricular objectives.

The academic community is such if it is engaged. It is a programmatic effort to introduce students to a new way of living the educational experience, going beyond “the classroom” into local and global communities. Classical educational content led to the “text”. In contrast, the experience of academic community engagement provides students and educators themselves with a new way of learning. The “academic community engagement” then becomes a “new text”, a new “lesson plan”. Community engagement here becomes synonymous with service-learning, where new spaces for creative teaching open up and instructional experiences become holistic.

Here, Horan offers two suggestions. The first concerns the “pedagogical grammar of the academic community engagement”, where conceptions of civic responsibility, even charity, can be reflected in favour of a more transparent solidarity. Solidarity carries in itself the possibility of defining one’s position in the world. Intentional submission, presented in the life and rules of Francis of Assisi, provides a model for an authentically Christian attitude, also understood as the *evangelical life*. Today there is no lack of proposals aimed at educating by instilling the values of civic responsibility, philanthropic interest or community building in today’s young adults. The Franciscan approach provides—for the *academic community engagement*— a non-generic ability to influence, helping to improve the ways of life of Christian discipleship, according to the example of Francis and Clare of Assisi.

The second suggestion stems from solidarity, understood as a constitutive element of the Franciscan tradition, whose assumptions allow us to present today’s Millennials with a fundamental challenge for the horizon of meaning. It is a question of recognizing that the increasingly common social norms sustain, in fact, the fragmented desire for social mobility and the accumulation of wealth. The Franciscan inspiration denounces this materialistic teleology and offers an ever more integrated sense of the prophetic call to live as Christian disciples. Thanks to this, Millennial students can be trained to discern and work under this “prophetic” inspiration. There is no lack of sources: Saint Bonaventure offers a useful theology of prophecy in his *Legenda Major*, related to the life of Francis himself.

*The academic community engagement that seeks to form “prophetic graduates”, so that their *modus vivendi* in the world may be concretely in solidarity, shows how deeply intrinsic this is to the founding charisma of Francis and the long Franciscan tradition in the world.*

Solidarity, as modelling the academic community engagement and the promotion of graduates of Franciscan higher institutions as prophets, is achievable based on a rich “latent tradition” among the members of the AFCU (Association of Franciscan Colleges and Universities).

The academic community engagement that seeks to form “prophetic graduates”, so that their *modus vivendi* in the world may be concretely in solidarity, shows how deeply intrinsic this is to the founding charisma of Francis and the long Franciscan tradition in the world.

In this way, solidarity service becomes an implicit action in any engagement rooted in faith and its values. Becoming prophetic persons, born of the Word of God, does not happen automatically; the programmes would have to provide new conditions to make

such a “prophetic conversion” possible. The Franciscan tradition took on this chance that leads to a holistic education for today’s young adults, moving from service to solidarity. “Service to the community” —a component of integrated learning— helps contrast the laws of profit and social “ascent”, to position oneself in solidarity, where the truth studied and experienced liberates people prophetically, anticipating the novelty of the Gospel incarnated in the times ahead.

The shift in discourse from service to solidarity and the challenge of being contemporary Christian prophets —Horan concludes— is a precious objective of the Franciscan institutions of higher education. This implies a continuous rediscovery of educational dynamics better suited to form the next generations of young adults as integrated members of the Christian and global community.

Four charismas in tune, to transfigure the global world

With these four contributions, it is possible to perceive how the divine interacts with the human in the history of humanity, out of love and for the redemption of the latter. People trained in integrity, commit themselves to justice (Ignatius), work with responsible professionalism in favour of others (Escrivá de Balaguer), teach by serving as collaborators of God (de La Salle) and generate “prophets” of solidarity, in gratuity and not for profit (Francis of Assisi).

Claudia Mora Motta, from the Xaverian University of Cali, shows how the charisma and mission of the Society of Jesus are transformed “charismatically” into a service to faith, fully connected to the promotion of justice. The latter is perceived by the Jesuits themselves as “an absolute requirement”, proper to the Ignatian tradition, which today includes caring for creation, standing up for the excluded and the marginalised, challenging unjust social structures.

Service-learning harmonises well with the Ignatian charisma, which “seeks God in all things”. The experience of God in the Ignatian sense leads to encountering him on the path of love, also in everyday life: at work and in the most ordinary things in life. A living God is the one who is present in all living beings, found in everyday life. People formed in integrity become “conscious, competent, compassionate and committed subjects”. The humanistic spirit that “generates people” (Nicolás, 2008)¹⁶, makes personal growth happen in the integration between a solid “reflection on transcendence” and “knowledge at the service of others, to build fair societies”.

16 To consult the bibliographical reference, see the chapter by Claudia Mora Motta in this volume.

Reading Mora's contribution shows how the various aspects of the Ignatian charisma and those of service-learning are intertwined in the university environment. It is always direct and real experience, about the formation of the whole-person, the preferential option for the poor, the critical reading of the context, "letting oneself be impacted", recognize the tensions of life, discernment and action in favour of others, to contribute to the transformation of iniquitous structures in society. The spirit of Saint Ignatius is certain in this: "Love is shown more in deeds than in words."

Isabel Egaña, from the Austral University, also unites "the mission of the university and the charisma of *Opus Dei*". Drawing from her charismatic source—Saint Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer—Egaña recovers the expressions full of "classical" spirituality to propose them in new clothes, in close connection with university life. Here, the horizon of life is to know how to "love the world passionately, daring to seek creative solutions to its problems, in collaboration with others". Inspired by this, the university can and must become an environment where authentic faith becomes "tangible in all its manifestations." This is vital to face—as an institution—the uncertainties and concerns of society, not with immediate solutions, but rather by awakening hearts and minds towards a more just citizenship, by studying problems with critical honesty and scientific depth, and by proposing consolidated paradigms of development.

If the reading is not mistaken, the role of professional work—done with dedication and mastery—becomes the master path for social transfiguration. However, service is its hidden "soul" (as attitude), and at the same time, its most immediate incarnation (as realisation), in the progressive manifestation of the world willed by God and dreamed of by humanity. It would be one of the cases of the circularity between the *sacrum* and the *profanum*: the sacred is the soul of the profane, and one without the other they dilute into nothingness. Similarly, work and service are in the circularity that, through service marked by gratuitousness, saves work from its purely productive and selfish materiality, while work done with love and dedication manifests a "unitive" dimension that goes beyond the visible and creates transcendent bonds.

In this sense, for work to have a soul and manage to inform the human reality with the divine, Egaña draws attention to the need for an appropriate education aimed at professional work of this kind. Labour creativity can contribute to the common good, but it must be capable of mediating the multidimensional encounter in charity with what transcends mere calculation. Only in this way can the work carried out by Christians be taken up by Christ himself and contribute effectively to transfiguring the social, economic or political reality, according to the aspirations of the generations to come.

Here the charisma contributes to the formation of a *service mentality*, combining a healthy “concern for the other”, with personal generosity towards the effective care of the other, freeing people from the limits of a “small private world” and directing them towards the joyful construction of a world of solidarity and co-responsibility.

Continuing with the contributions, the third one, proposed by Michael Valenzuela from the Lasallian College “St. Benilde” in the Philippines, is special. It highlights a charisma that places Christian education on the same level of participation in the salvific work of God. This charisma is educational at its root. To educate is its “reason to be”: it is to collaborate in the concrete and historical manifestation of the very mystery of God, who continually “leads human beings out of spiritual alienation and into the communion of love”. In this way, the Christian educator becomes a “collaborator of God”, an “ambassador of Christ”, a “mediator” and “minister of reconciliation” between God and young people.

The educational work of charismatic origin entails the cultivation of an abiding awareness of God’s presence in people and in everyday events to respond to God’s continuous invitations to love, to serve, to grow and to make others grow. Such a spirituality will make no distinction between the search for one’s salvation and the fulfilment of professional duties, as we have already seen in St. Ignatius of Loyola and St. Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer. St. John de La Salle is convinced that “the service of guides and leaders of souls” is played out before God and at the same time carries out His project and the sanctification of educators together with the students.

Lasallian spirituality is recognised as foundational not only for the educational mission itself but also for service-learning as it has been adopted in its programmes and inserted in the mission-vision on the fundamental values that lead students to regard their future professions as means to promote human dignity and the common good, according to the “feeling of God.”

The historical response to human needs is a characteristic of every God’s charisma who becomes flesh. This responsiveness is a particular distinctive characteristic of Lasallian spirituality, which frames education as participation in God’s salvific work in the world. The service-learning programme, under such a charismatic inspiration, can help not only to bridge the gap between faith and professional life but also to react to local and global threats to *humanun* itself in a truly meaningful way.

The symphony of the four charismas reaches a final crescendo with the Franciscan voice of Daniel P. Horan of the Catholic Theological Union of Chicago. He stresses that service-learning is not specifically Franciscan, since it does not belong to religious congregations or traditions which, in any case, always stress the importance of community

service as a constitutive element of contemporary education. This does not diminish the importance of service-learning in today's integrated educational programs. On the contrary: service-learning has potentialities that can make the original expressions of a more genuine charisma, in this case making the educational trajectories inspired by the Saint of Assisi "more Franciscan."

The author is convinced that *academic community engagement*, as a face of service-learning, offers a unique opportunity for colleges and universities of Franciscan origin or inspiration. This makes it possible to better integrate the explicitly Franciscan dimensions of the founding charisma of the various institutions into the educational experience of their students. The aim is to better expose the values inherent in the Franciscan intellectual and spiritual tradition so that AFCU institutions can integrate their programmes in a truly "Franciscan" way.

Francis's conversion to a life of solidarity with the poor of all kinds represents the model of lifestyle we most desire for the next generation of college graduates. It is about service (not philanthropy or gratification) capable of identifying the injustice that demands protest and commitment.

Therefore, student-prophets through a life of solidarity. The challenge is in the semantic game between "profit" and "prophet," close in assonance and very distant in meaning. Millennials who finished their first or last year as teenagers during the 2000s (but also the "Generation Z" that follows them) are invited to transcend the restrictions imposed by the culture of profit to enter a community of a different meaning, as offered by Christianity, certifying it in particular models of life, such as that of Francis of Assisi.

Four saints who lived in different times, four charismas with different embodiments, four proposals for academic education to educate the new man, recreated in Christ, historically manifested first in Europe, to later expand to the other continents, wherever the human being raises the cry in need of concrete redemption in personal, social and structural wounds of all kinds.

Four saints who lived in different times, four charismas with different embodiments, four proposals for academic education to educate the new man, recreated in Christ, historically manifested first in Europe, to later expand to the other continents, wherever the human being raises the cry in need of concrete redemption in personal, social and structural wounds of all kinds...

Without education, history does not evolve. Without solidary service, humanity does not learn to be loved beyond all imagination and to be able—in turn—to love in this way.

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5. THE IGNATIAN CHARISM, THE UNIVERSITY AND SERVICE-LEARNING

Claudia Mora Motta

Pontificia Universidad Javeriana Cali

Presentation

In recent months I have been challenged by Pope Francis's text, *Let us Dream. The Path to a Better Future* (2020). His invitation to decenter and transcend pinpoints the position of the academy and of each of us in these times of crisis.

His proposal for moving from the comfort area in order to go out of oneself to meet the other implies—necessarily—“an exercise of opening doors, opening windows, going further” (p. 139); broadening the perspective to be in contact with reality, analyzing its different corners and taking the risk of changing ways of thinking and acting.

I find it impossible to abstract my reflection from the present moment. The health, social and political crisis we are experiencing has demonstrated the multiple fractures that our societies have generated: extreme poverty, inequity of health and educational systems, an unlimited desire for accumulation and the insatiable manner in which we relate to nature, our Common Home.

However, in this context: What new meanings should universities assume, regarding their social engagement? How should they implement experiential methodologies that will succeed in developing an attitude of co-responsibility and service? How can they achieve a pertinent and transformative education that touches the head, the heart and the hands?

I thank my colleagues and friends from the Latin American Center for Service-Learning in Solidarity (CLAYSS) for the invitation to share this reflection in my condition as a lay person, educator and supporter of service-learning at the Universidad Javeriana Cali for over a decade.

I have posed some key questions so that the reflections that follow may contribute to formulate possible answers, taking into consideration the perspective of the Ignatian charism and its relationship to service-learning.

Justice and its Role in the University of the Society of Jesus

In the universities of the Society of Jesus different key ideas can be established that are considered a call to the academy, so that they accomplish their mission of forming men and women for the service of others, God's greatest glory. Understood as the Magis, the search for the greatest good, the most universal in a perspective of excellence. In the university context, it implies the purpose of the intellectual apostolate, that is, its social commitment to put knowledge and science to the service of others.

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the service of others.

This reflection on university social engagement is structured upon three ideas:

► The university inserted in reality

Around 1989, a group of Jesuit martyrs (Ignacio Ellacuría, Ignacio Martín Baró, Segundo Montes, Armando López, Juan Ramón Moreno) were in charge of the José Simeón Cañas University in El Salvador, promoting a university perspective of Christian and Ignatian inspiration, centered on the analysis of a social, economic and political reality in which all human beings are respected in their human dignity. Thus, the entire strength of the University, from its teaching, research and social outreach invigorated a movement of liberation, greater awareness and transformation (Sols, 2016).

The conception of a University embedded in the social dynamics of the country and the region marked a clear commitment of the academy in the definition of a political and cultural project in favor of the poorest.

► The relevance of the university

In his address at the Santa Clara University, in the United States, Father Kolvenbach (2000) urged the universities of the Society of Jesus to achieve a relevant education, articulated in the social, economic and cultural dynamics; and to develop critical thinking, capable of transforming the structures of injustice. His statement is expressed in the following paragraph: *"I want to affirm that all the knowledge acquired at the university is valuable for its own sake, but it is also knowledge that should ask itself who and what it is in favor of"* (p. 9).

Furthermore, in his speech Kolvenbach updates a university perspective framed in times, places and people. Thus, he points out that, even though university education is subject to the pressure imposed by competition and individualism, which marks one way of understanding success, *"the actual criterion of evaluation of our Jesuit universities lies in what our students become"* (p. 8). That is to say,

...students throughout their formation must let the disturbing reality of this world into their lives so they can learn to feel it, think about it critically, respond to its suffering and commit to it constructively. They should learn to perceive, think, judge, choose and act in favor of the rights of others, particularly the least privileged and the oppressed. (p. 8)

A pedagogical approach that involves the relevance of the educational proposal and the formation of the "whole person in solidarity" in which the direct experience, together with reflection and critical analysis, succeed in transforming the perspective of life, the professional exercise and the sense of collective construction, where the poor find a dignified place.

In other words, Kolvenbach (2000) favors a pedagogical approach that involves the relevance of the educational proposal and the formation of the *"whole person in solidarity"* (p. 8), in which the direct experience, together with reflection and critical analysis, succeed in transforming the perspective of life, the professional exercise and the sense

of collective construction, where the poor find a dignified place. In an inspiring manner, he reflects:

When direct experience touches the heart, the mind may feel challenged to change. Personal involvement in innocent suffering, in the injustice suffered by others, is the catalyst for the solidarity that opens the path to intellectual inquiry and moral reflection. (p. 8)

For its part, the pertinence of university belongs to a project of nation that pursues a dignified life for all. Remolina (2007) proposes it as the social responsibility of university, which integrates the entire academic work with the intentionality of integrally forming men and

women who will provide qualified service to society, founded on ethical principles. In addition, he mentions research capable of achieving a social transference of knowledge, which makes a better quality of life possible. From this standpoint, *“the University must go to extremes in the search for and constitution of pertinent sciences and techniques, that is, sciences that touch the reality of the country in order to help transform it in an intelligent and efficient way”* (p. 164).

► The formation of the whole person

Since its constitution, Jesuit education has promoted integral formation, educating “the whole person”, the “complete person”,

intellectually and professionally, psychologically, morally and spiritually. But in this emerging, globalized world, with its immense possibilities and profound contradictions, the ‘whole person’ is understood differently from the way it was understood during the Counter Reformation, the Industrial Revolution or the 20th Century. And tomorrow’s ‘whole person’ cannot be ‘whole’ without an educated awareness of society and culture, with which to contribute, generously, in the real world. Tomorrow’s ‘whole person’ must have, in short, a well-educated solidarity. (Kolvenbach, 2000, p. 8)

Following this line, Adolfo Nicolás S.J. (2008), former General of the Society of Jesus, pointed out that *“in fact, the humanist spirit creates persons who are conscious, competent, compassionate and committed”* (p. 10) to their personal growth, which integrates a solid reflection for transcendence and knowledge at the service of others to build just societies.

The three key ideas presented above have a common denominator in the statement of the mission of the Society of Jesus, identified as the service of faith and the promotion of justice, for, as it says, *“the mission of the Society of Jesus today is the service of faith, of which the promotion of justice constitutes an absolute requirement”* (Society of Jesus, 1974, General Congregation XXXII, d.4.n.2). As can be established, there is a clear relationship with Pope Francis’s approach (2020), when he makes a call to decenter oneself and transcend to find the place of action for others.

In the following General Congregations (the last one was N° XXXVI), the sense of this statement was confirmed and deepened, emphasizing that

...the justice mentioned is a justice rooted in the Gospel and lived within the Ignatian tradition...the need to modify socio-cultural structures... Today, the promotion of justice includes the commitment to take care of creation...defend the excluded, stand alongside

the marginalized and challenge the unjust social structures. (Social Justice and Ecology Secretariat, 2014, pp. 11-12 n. 1.2)

Service-Learning and Ignatian Charism

Finding God in all things is a way of placing God in the center of life. In the Ignatian charism, the own, deep quality is the experience that God is love. In a secular and contemporary perspective, this means integrating the spiritual dimension in everyday, ordinary tasks, according to a living God, present in every living being on a daily basis. That is, (...) *“to ask for an inner knowledge of so much good received, so that I, fully recognizing it, may serve his Divine Majesty”* (St. Ignatius of Loyola, EE 230-233). However, integrating this perspective in the university world and, specifically, in terms of the integral formation of students, of the whole person, leads us to identify a series of possibilities of active and experiential teaching that motivate faculty and young university students to go out of themselves to meet the other in an exchange of knowledge, experiences and opportunities.

From Ignatian pedagogy, the formative process is articulated around five moments: context, experience, reflective involvement, action and evaluation. This is why it may be related to the methodological proposal of service-learning, which is founded on experiential education and achieves the articulation of curricular learning objectives with challenges of the context that are re-signified in a systematic and intentional reflection process.

In this sense, in reference to students' integral formation, Mora and Torres (2018) focus on several coincidences between the purpose of the Educational Project of the Universidad Javeriana and the ways of fulfilling service-learning:

...the importance that university formation should contribute to increase the awareness of freedom and social responsibility that allows students to become political subjects, advocates of justice and agents of the improvement of the quality of life for all...the recognition that the different knowledge, arranged in curricular proposals, must facilitate, for both faculty and students, the acknowledgment of the reality of the country and its connection to processes that seek to solve concrete problems. (p. 48)

Moreover, Mora and Torres continue (2018),

...The transition from pedagogical models centered on contents and on the active presence of the professor to other models in which the dialogue of knowledge with the realities of the context is fundamental, and in which the active presence of students in their own formative process is a long-term task... (p. 49)

The key elements of the Ignatian pedagogy and the methodology of service-learning coincide, particularly because their spirit results in inter-subjective relationships, in the acknowledgment of the other, in the transformation of the person in all their dimensions based on the critical analysis of reality, in educating for a greater good, to help and promote justice, peace and other values.

Thus, the key elements of the Ignatian pedagogy and the methodology of service-learning coincide, particularly because their spirit results in inter-subjective relationships, in the acknowledgment of the other, in the transformation of the person in all their dimensions based on the critical analysis of reality, in educating for a greater good, to help and

promote justice, peace and other values.

In this context, university has a great potential to contribute to what students become in that perspective of decentering, acting and transcending. Additionally, it is capable of creating new ways of interaction, from its teaching, research and extension, with the different social partners, to advance towards an adequate and decisive social and political commitment.

In conclusion, there are multiple aspects of the Ignatian charism and service-learning that are interwoven in the university environment: direct and real experience, the formation of the whole person, the preferential option for the poor, the critical interpretation of the context, the possibility of allowing oneself to be affected, the discernment and action in favor of others in order to influence the transformation of the structures of injustice and inequity in society. For, as St. Ignatius points out, *“love should be put more in deeds than in words”* (E.E. 230).

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6. THE MISSION OF THE UNIVERSITY AND THE CHARISM OF OPUS DEI

Isabel Egaña

Austral University, Argentina

Introduction

Fruit of divine initiative and addressed to every man and woman of all times, *Opus Dei* promotes the sanctification of all human realities—passionately loving God and the world—through work well done with an attitude of service to others.

There are many initiatives that collect this message through education. The Austral University—together with other universities and *Opus Dei* corporate works—promote service-learning activities¹⁷ as the appropriate way to materialize the message of service and love for everyone, delivered to St. Josemaría Escrivá for the good of humankind.

As an example, I would like to mention some of the initiatives we have been carrying out at Austral University with the aim of making University Social Responsibility not only a reality in the statement of the institution, but a lived and palpable reality in all dimensions of university educational activity.

Humanize society through work carried out with a service attitude.

When Josemaría Escrivá de Balaguer—a young 26-year-old Spanish priest—saw *Opus Dei* in 1928, he understood that God wanted to remind the world of the supernatural transcendence of work done out of love for God, as a matter of personal sanctification, and as a means to sanctify the world.

Professional work is the means God needs to illuminate and permeate the environment where the Christian carry out his work. On 7th August, 1931, while celebrating the Holy Mass, at the moment of raising the Host, within him, he heard the Lord who told him the phrase of the Scriptures that says: “when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself” (John 12:32). Understanding that the Lord meant:

“I say it to you meaning that you should put me at the pinnacle of all human activities, so that in every place in the world there will be Christians with a dedication that

¹⁷ Service-learning hereafter will be cited as SL.

is personal and totally free— Christians who will be other Christs” (Vázquez de Prada, p. 326).

On another occasion, he explained:

I understood that it will be the men and women of God who will raise the Cross, with the teachings of Christ, to the pinnacle of all human activity... And I saw the Lord triumphing, drawing all things to Himself (Hermida, 2020, p. 43).¹⁸

God led St. Josemaría to believe that the search for holiness in the world included performing the professional work with the highest possible human and supernatural perfection. Through work, the Christian floods society with the values of the Gospel; in this way he humanizes and Christianizes it, proposing work and professional models that ensure the common good of people.

God led St. Josemaría to believe that the search for holiness in the world included performing the professional work with the highest possible human and supernatural perfection. Work is Christian’s powerful resource available for incarnating the message of the Gospel in his life, making his own all the traits and ways of a man in love with Christ. It is about being like

“Christ is passing by” in the midst of the world.

However, Christians are not a single verse in the poem of society, but part of the social fabric in which their life unfolds and they are called to radiate the evangelical message in that environment.

Among those around you—apostolic soul—you are the stone fallen into the lake. With your word and your example, you produce a first circle... and it another... and another, and another... Wider each time. Do you now understand the greatness of your mission? (Escrivá de Balaguer, 1996, n. 831).

Through work, the Christian floods society with the values of the Gospel; in this way he humanizes and Christianizes it, proposing work and professional models that ensure the common good of people.

As the motto of his work, St. Josemaría summed up the style of service that Christians are called to incarnate: “If you want to be useful, serve.” He explained that to serve others we have to be useful and, therefore, educate ourselves.

18 English version retrieved from: <https://bit.ly/3qOwoVV>

Those who do a job that is useful to others require good professional training. For this reason, he called to consider service as a “great and beautiful mission,” which must permeate all work, giving it supernatural and human meaning. Especially in these times when so many are reluctant to serve and are frightened, due to selfishness and pride:

And so, as the motto of your work, I can give you this one: If you want to be useful, serve. For, in the first place, in order to do things properly, you must know how to do them. I cannot see the integrity of a person who does not strive to attain professional skills and to carry out properly the task entrusted to his care. It is not enough to want to do good, but to know how to do it. And, if our desire is real, it will show itself in the effort we make to use the right methods, finishing things well, achieving human perfection.

But human service and technique, our knowledge of our job, should have a feature (...) the spirit of service, the desire to contribute to the well-being of other people (Escrivá de Balaguer, 2001, pp.116-117).¹⁹

Loving the world passionately, daring to seek creative solutions to their problems, in collaboration with others

In the context of the University of Navarra, Saint Josemaría called on his children to be present in all human activities, to sanctify them from within, in collaboration with others:

Your ordinary contact with God takes place where your fellow men, your yearnings, your work and your affections are. There you have your daily encounter with Christ. It is in the midst of the most material things of the earth that we must sanctify ourselves, serving God and all mankind (Escrivá de Balaguer, 2012, pp. 485-486).²⁰

With these words, he encouraged his children to be present in the full range of human activities, discovering the divine hidden in the most common situations of life.

It is about acquiring a solid professional preparation that contains Christian values to be able to provide comprehensive solutions to the complex and constantly changing world.

It is about acquiring a solid professional preparation that contains Christian values to be able to provide comprehensive solutions to the complex and constantly changing world.

Your task as a Christian citizen is to help see Christ's love and freedom preside over all the aspects of modern life: culture

¹⁹ English version retrieved from: : <https://opusdei.org/en/dailytext/if-you-want-to-be-useful-serve/>

²⁰ Own translation.

and the economy, work and rest, family life and social relations (Escrivá de Balaguer, 1993, n.302).²¹

He proposed to bring the joy, solidarity, desire for unity and peace, etc., that permeate the Christian life, to the small and large world that each one of us has before us. The path to bring the world to God begins by loving him, to be in a position to propose—together with other citizens—wise ways of improvement and growth, as well as to promote peaceful coexistence.

The University of Christian inspiration, a place where faith becomes tangible in all its manifestations

Along with a vast range of apostolic initiatives in the world, *Opus Dei* promotes and cares for the formation provided in scattered Universities on the five continents.

Escrivá's words spoken at the University of Navarra—the first of the universities run by *Opus Dei*—just three years before his departure for heaven are a good summary of his feelings:

The university does not live with its back turned to any uncertainty, to any concern, to any of mankind's need. It is not its mission to offer immediate solutions. But in studying these problems with scientific depth, it must also move hearts, fight passivity, awaken sleeping forces, and form citizens desirous of constructing a more just society. In this way it will contribute with its universal work to lowering the barriers that prevent mutual understanding among men, to alleviating fear of an uncertain future, to fostering, by its love for truth, justice and freedom, authentic peace and concord among peoples and nations (as cited by Mora, 2012).²²

The universities of Christian inspiration are called to mobilize their members to seriously study the issues, generating learnings that have a significant impact on society and on the life of each of its citizens, seeking and creating the conditions to find harmony between reason and faith in all areas of knowledge.

In other words, the universities of Christian inspiration are called to mobilize their members to seriously study the issues, generating learnings that have a significant impact on society and on the life of each of its citizens, seeking and creating the conditions to find harmony be-

tween reason and faith in all areas of knowledge.

21 English version retrieved from: <https://opusdei.org/en/dailytext/the-kingdom-of-god-has-reached-your-heart/>

22 English version retrieved from: <https://en.romana.org/54/a-study/universities-inspired-by-catholicism-identity-cult/>

The Austral University, an Opus Dei corporate initiative at the service of society.

I give way to Saint Josemaría himself who in 1967, on the University campus, explained what the corporate works of *Opus Dei* are:

They are not ecclesiastical activities—they do not in any way represent the hierarchy of the Church. They are the fruit of human, cultural and social initiatives of ordinary citizens who try to make them reflect the light of the Gospel and to bring them the warmth of Christ's love (Escrivá de Balaguer, 2012, p. 499).²³

The Austral university, as a corporate work of *Opus Dei*, is built on these tenets that are specified in its institutional mission:

Universidad Austral intends to serve society by pursuing truth, creating and disseminating knowledge, educating on virtues, and catering to every individual's transcendent destiny, providing intellectual, professional, social and public leadership. (Austral, n.d.)

In its principles, the foundational features are detailed, among which I highlight those that are directly related to the topic that concerns us today: to carry out a service to society through the professional preparation and comprehensive training of its members; to orient social, scientific and technological changes towards the full development of the individual, seeking appropriate solutions to their problems; to optimise the quality of teaching, research and extension to transform things and society—in accordance with a Christian worldview—and to nourish university extension activity with a close relationship with other institutions in the environment (private and state) as a proposal to society through a sensitive and active attitude towards the major problems that affect the common good.

Although the tenets outlined in the previous paragraph could be statements made by any other university, without explicit reference to service-learning, the words I quote below focus us on the approach to the activities carried out by the Austral University. In an interview on the University at the service of today's society, Saint Josemaría says:

The University needs to train students in a service mentality: service to society, promoting the common good through their professional work and civic action. University students need to be responsible, to have a healthy concern for the problems of others and a generous spirit that leads them to confront their problems, and to try to find the best solution... the University... must train its students so that their future professional work will be at the service of all. (...) The ideal is, above all, the reality of work well done, the adequate scientific preparation during the university years. (...) The University should not train men who then selfishly consume the benefits of their studies; it should prepare them for a task of generous help to others, of Christian fraternity. I measure solidarity by works of service,

23 English version retrieved from: <https://stjosemaria.org/passionately-loving-the-world-3/>

and I know of thousands of cases of students (...) who have given up building their own little private world, giving themselves to others through professional work, which they try

The University needs to train students in a service mentality: service to society, promoting the common good through their professional work and civic action.

to do with human perfection, in works of teaching, assistance, social work, etc. With a spirit that is always young and full of joy (Escrivá de Balaguer, 2012, pp. 362-364).²⁴

The mission of service and professional preparation of excellence: two sides of university education

In response to Universidad Austral's Mission and to the different needs of students and society, in recent years the University has been carrying out various service-learning activities.

In order to determine the current state of Social Responsibility at the University, the Centre for Sustainable Development (CADS in its acronym in Spanish) at Universidad Austral (Martino S., 2011), has carried out a survey of the different proposals made to promote University Social Responsibility in each academic unit, together with a proposal to define an institutional policy in this regard.

In response to this report and the recommendations of the National Commission of Evaluation and University Accreditation (CONEAU in its acronym in Spanish), the Standing Committee of the High Council of Universidad Austral, in its communication No. 145/2014, created the "University Action" area, which has a person dedicated to coordinating and managing the collaboration of students, faculty and volunteer staff. Reporting to the Department of Studies, it aims at promoting and channelling service-learning and voluntary-service activities developed by the different units.

As part of my work at the Universidad Austral, I have been promoting service-learning over the past decade: from the Institutional Assessment Office —under the Rector's Office—, by coordinating the "Puna Solidaria Austral" social projects, a topic I have developed in previous publications (Bosch, T & Egaña, I, 2012). From the School of Education, as Coordinator of the University Teacher Training Course for Secondary and Higher Education —a course aimed at teacher training for young professionals—offering service-learning workshops for students. For the entire teaching community at Universidad Austral, CLAYSS coordinates Service-learning Conferences.

²⁴ Own translation

The “Puna Solidaria Austral” programme started in 2011 and 2012, when a group of lecturers and students from the Faculty of Business Studies (Rosario Campus), motivated by a strong social commitment and with the desire to contribute to the development of the area of Jujuy, bordering Bolivia, undertook eight trips of voluntary social work (between 2004 and 2007). The “Puna Solidaria Austral” programme consisted of two subsequent trips to northern Argentina to undertake interdisciplinary activities - previously planned together with the local population - involving students and professors from various academic units at Universidad Austral, in order to work on the needs detected in the communities.

Training was provided to teachers and directors of towns and neighbouring areas, in which anthropological, pedagogical and didactic topics related to language and mathematics were addressed. Onsite training for the Abra Colorada School was also provided—after analysing documents and conducting personal interviews—; in coordination with a local health worker, nurses and medical students conducted workshops for parents on health issues and hygiene care. In addition, various recreational and playful activities were carried out with the children of the schools we visited. The Business Science students exchanged experiences and knowledge with the artisans of the communities, providing them with guidance on the professionalization of the micro-enterprises they carry out and learning about the craft business and the distribution route of the products that reach the cities. In this way, the university students who participated in the programme were enriched by the intercultural dialogue and the coexistence with the Puna communities.

As part of the Teacher-Training Course, in the Integration Workshops for students—throughout the degree course—, different aspects related to service-learning were addressed, where students designed projects that they put into practice in different educa-

tional institutions in which they work. At present, these classes have been replaced by a service-learning conference so that students can learn about this methodology and propose actions to be carried out in their teaching practice.

The founding charism of Opus Dei, embodied in universities of Christian inspiration, finds in service-learning an opportunity to materialise love for God and mankind, through the transformation of the world by means of a well-done job, addressing real needs—and perceived as such—of the target communities with students taking the lead role in bringing about change.

The SL Conferences, open to Universidad Austral professors, consisted of courses delivered by María Nieves Tapia,

Isabel Hevia and Enrique Ochoa—specialists in the subject—to raise awareness and guide faculty members on how to apply the methodology in their respective disciplinary areas. From then on, the School of Business Sciences (Buenos Aires campus) began to include service-learning activities in its course curriculum.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize that the founding charism of *Opus Dei*, embodied in universities of Christian inspiration, such as Universidad Austral, finds in service-learning an opportunity to materialise love for God and mankind, through the transformation of the world by means of a well-done job, addressing real needs—and perceived as such—of the target communities with students taking the lead role in bringing about change.

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7. BECOMING CO-WORKERS WITH GOD: LASALLIAN SPIRITUALITY AND SERVICE-LEARNING

Michael Valenzuela, FSC

De La Salle College of Saint Benilde

Lasallian Spirituality: A Précis

Born into a wealthy family of Rheims in 1651 and ordained at the age of 26, John Baptist de La Salle seemed destined for a steady rise within the ecclesiastical hierarchy when he abandoned fortune and social privilege to form an association of lay schoolmasters dedicated to the Christian education of poor and abandoned children. In the years that followed, De La Salle and the Brothers of the Christian Schools made quality education and Christian formation accessible to the poor, introducing significant educational reforms and innovations that laid the groundwork for modern education. Through their pioneering efforts in the training and formation of teachers, they brought dignity to a disparaged profession, making of it a genuine Christian vocation. De La Salle was canonized in 1900 by Pope Leo XIII and was named patron saint of teachers 1950. There are nearly 4000 Brothers of the Christian Schools today sharing the educational mission, spirituality and charism with more than 70,000 educators in nearly 80 countries.

What we today call Lasallian spirituality grew out of the lived experience of this community of schoolmasters who came to understand themselves as called by God to participate in the integral salvation of poor and abandoned youth.

What we today call Lasallian spirituality grew out of the lived experience of this community of schoolmasters who came to understand themselves as called by God to participate in the integral salvation of poor and abandoned youth. It is not the product of irenic contem-

plation but emerges from the internal disruption born of a confrontation between faith in a loving God who wills that all be saved and an encounter with the suffering and spiritual alienation of young people unable to live fully human lives. It is a praxis-oriented spirituality driving a continuing process of engagement and discernment in response to the needs of young people, particularly those lacking opportunities for integral human development.

Lasallian spirituality is rooted in a double contemplation – of God's inclusive and redemptive love on the one hand, and on the other, the hunger of youth-at-risk for a life

lived with dignity and meaning. (Salm, 2017). The overturning of complacency and the profound compassion such contemplation awakens in the hearts of teachers, echoes, however faintly, the ardent love and pathos of the Father for his most vulnerable children. In one meditation, De La Salle writes:

You must in this imitate God to some extent, for he so loved the souls he created that when he saw them involved in sin and unable to be freed from sin by themselves, the zeal and affection that he had for their salvation led him to send his own Son to rescue them from their miserable condition. This is what made Jesus Christ say that God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in him may not die but may have eternal life. What must you not do for them in your ministry if you have zeal for their salvation! (De La Salle, 2007, p. 453)

For those who feel as God feels and who are open to grace and risk, such contemplation moves one to unite oneself to God for the liberation and salvation of those deprived of dignity and opportunities for full humanization. The fundamental spiritual experience that animates the Lasallian educational project is the ardent and unshakeable love of God that stays faithful to sinful, suffering and vulnerable young people even unto the cross. For educators in the Lasallian tradition, fidelity to God demands fidelity to young people whatever their situation.

Christian education is a participation in the “work of God” in the Pauline sense – it is a concrete, historical manifestation of the ongoing mystery by which God draws human beings out of spiritual alienation and into loving communion. Thus, the Christian educator is a “co-worker with God”, an “ambassador of Christ”, a “mediator” and “minister of reconciliation” between God and young people. The teacher who represents Christ to the young contemplates the master’s words and deeds in order to arrive at an inward conformity to Christ in his virtues, attitudes, and intentions. Teachers are to imitate especially Christ’s love and zeal to save those damaged and broken by life, by the gratuity and generosity of their care and concern, by their abandonment to God from whom they receive the grace needed for their work, and by bearing difficulties and sacrifices they face as a participation in the paschal mystery.

The work of God unfolds in and through the medium of human relationships. The tender and disinterested concern of teachers for their students awakens the latter to their innate dignity, builds trust, and makes them more open to learning, mentoring, and correction. Such relationships often have a sacramental depth for both student and teacher: for students because the teacher’s disinterested concern incarnates God’s saving love, and for teachers, because through their concern for their students, God invites them to transcend egoism and move towards the integrity and unselfish love that constitutes spiritual freedom and holiness.

Such cooperation with God entails cultivating an abiding awareness of God's presence in people and in everyday events with a view to responding to God's continual invitations to love, serve, and grow. Teachers who see their work as ministry must be poised to embrace God's will as it presents itself to them in their daily responsibilities and in the unmet needs of young people, trusting in God to make their efforts bear fruit. Such spirituality makes no distinction between pursuing one's own salvation and fulfilling one's professional duties.

As De La Salle writes,

When they carry out well the service of guides and leaders of the souls entrusted to them, they fulfill at the same time their own duties before God. God will fill them with so much grace that they will be made holy while they are contributing as far as they are able to the salvation of others. (De La Salle, 2007, p. 463)

Efforts at personal sanctification and all spiritual exercises must be directed to ensuring the human and spiritual welfare of those entrusted to one's care. This outlook contributes to a remarkable synthesis of faith and work, of spiritual life and professional engagement.

Mission generates communion. Fraternal solidarity is built as teachers share challenges, burdens and blessings together. This fraternal communion, which Lasallians call "association for mission", makes mutual support and accompaniment possible and facilitates collaboration in creating educational initiatives that serve the cause of humanization and spiritual liberation. Ultimately, both mission and fraternity find their source in the Triune God who draws all humanity into a communion of life and love.

Service Learning at De La Salle-College of Saint Benilde

The De La Salle College of Saint Benilde is a professional school in the Lasallian tradition, which in the words of its mission-statement, is "*committed to building a just and humane society by being at the forefront innovative education that is accessible to the poor and diversely-gifted learners*". Since its beginnings as a night college in 1980, Benilde has gained a reputation for its innovative professional courses, its pioneering efforts at promoting inclusion in tertiary education, its leadership in tertiary deaf education and advocacy, its programs for continuing professional education, and as a seedbed for the creative industries. Making education more accessible to underserved sectors (the economically disadvantaged, those with special learning needs, persons with disabilities) and challenging students and faculty to innovate in response to social needs were formally adopted as strategic directions for the school in 2013.

The late St. John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem Exercens* pointed out that “*Human work is a key, probably the essential key to the whole social question*”. (John Paul II, 1981, LE, 3) This has relevance for Lasallian schools tasked with integrating practical education with Christian formation in order to prepare young people for the world of work. This task has become increasingly daunting in contexts where religion is either met with disaffection or else largely privatized. Today, many who profess religious belief turn out to be “secularizers” for whom faith plays no role in professional life and business or else “spiritualizers” for whom pious intentions fail to translate into more just and humane directions, policies and

The Lasallian intuition is that professional excellence, social responsibility, and the quest for holiness become integrated when undertaken in faith as part of God’s creative and redemptive work in the world. This integration is what the De La Salle College of Saint Benilde proposes to its students and service learning is one important strategy in helping to accomplish this.

practices. (Alford & Naughton, 2001, pp. 10-15). In contrast, the Lasallian intuition is that professional excellence, social responsibility, and the quest for holiness become integrated when undertaken in faith as part of God’s creative and redemptive work in the world. This integration is what the De La Salle College of Saint Benilde proposes to its students and service learning is one important strategy in helping to accomplish this.

In *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis excoriates the idolatry of wealth that engenders an economy of exclusion and a “throwaway culture” in which even human beings are mere resources to be exploited and discarded (Francis I, 2013, EG, 52-67). If work is indeed the key to the social question, there is a need to propose a more humanizing vision of work as well as a spirituality that can help us deal with the problems that face us as members of one human family bound together on a planet *in extremis*. Perpetuating a vision of work and business narrowly focused on maximizing profits will not do. For this reason, a good number of Benildean educators were already engaging students in projects that brought them in contact with the concrete challenges of inclusive and sustainable development prior to the formal implementation of service learning in 2018-19.²⁵ The adoption of service

25 For example, in 2018 Benilde students redesigned and renovated four community day care centers catering to low-income families based on dialogues with the clientele, with community leaders and student research on principles of early childhood learning and development. They also raised the funds to complete the project and provide added learning resources. Architecture students seeking to address garbage-dumping in a public waterway worked with the local community to create a floating community center that would provide the local community with incentive to take responsibility for keeping the waterways clean.

learning in all degree programs and requiring students to engage in at least two collaborative projects consistent with the school's mission and addressing sustainable development goals gives institutional recognition, intentionality, and sustainability to a ferment already underway.²⁶

Benilde's service-learning framework acknowledges Lasallian spirituality as being foundational to the college's service-learning program and the very mission of the college itself:

At the core of DLS-CSB's service-learning program framework is Lasallian spirituality that influences and inspires the vision-mission of DLS-CSB and the Benildean expressions of the Lasallian core values. This core is what guides and drives the implementation of the Service-Learning program. (Anicete et al., 2015)

Service learning at Benilde invites students to regard their prospective professions as means of promoting human dignity and the common good in keeping with the College of St. Benilde's vision-mission, its commitments to innovation and inclusion, Benildean expressions of Lasallian core values (which link God-centeredness with respect for persons in their uniqueness, social responsibility, solidarity with the poor, and professional excellence), and the college's social development framework.

Lasallian Spirituality and Service Learning

Despite being a spirituality particular to educators, elements of Lasallian spirituality have relevance for anyone seeking to integrate faith, social responsibility and professional life – an important function of Catholic tertiary-level institutions and in particular, for a professional school like the De La Salle-College of St. Benilde. Here are some ways in which a Lasallian-inspired spirituality supports and deepens service learning:

1. Framing professional life as a participation in the creative and redemptive work of God in the world challenges young people to regard their prospective professions as means for addressing the pain-points of a world *in extremis*. In so doing, students are invited to pursue an integrative vocational orientation over the conventional profit-orientation that has led to many of the social and environmental problems we see today. Reimagining the purpose of work in this way puts service

26 Some examples of onsite service learning projects include fashion design students providing training on textile design to Gawang Kamay a people's livelihood organization while multimedia arts students designed and created the organization's marketing collaterals. Hotel and restaurant management students conducted waste management surveys in urban poor communities to provide baseline data for local government's urban waste management program. Since the pandemic, service learning has shifted to an online platform.

to the common good and the promotion of human dignity as intrinsic to the nature and purpose of work in keeping with Catholic social teaching. This feeds the spiritual hunger for meaning and purpose which is often a casualty of looking at work merely as a means to earning a living.

2. Engaging in the double-contemplation that stirs one to compassionate engagement and solidarity has merit in broader contexts when the cries one attends to belong to those whom society neglects, or even victims of oppressive social, cultural, economic, and political forces. Recognizing that God is at work in one's particular circumstances moving one to make life-giving choices helps young people become attentive to existential, social, political and cultural realities, to attend to concrete details, to bring rigor to their analysis of problems, and to be on the lookout for life-giving possibilities in difficult situations.
3. This same double-contemplation and the strongly relational character of Lasallian spirituality underscores the innate dignity of persons as objects of God's covenant love. It invites students to prioritize persons in every project, to treat each one – no matter their circumstances- with unconditional respect. It encourages students to build relationships that favor collaboration, to empathize as they listen to their clients' views, experiences and stories, to be genuinely concerned for their welfare- an important check to the tendency in service learning to instrumentalize client-communities.
4. Lasallian spirituality links professional excellence, innovation, accountability, and consciousness of craft to zeal for the welfare of those served. Students acquire a deeper appreciation for their craft when they realize its potential for contributing to the common good and improving a client-community's quality of life. This links work to higher purpose – a key factor in intrinsic motivation. Thus, mastery and continual self-improvement become a spiritual-vocational exigency.
5. The Lasallian emphasis on fraternal collaboration and solidarity in the fulfillment of a common mission favors the building of such relations among team members as well as members of the client-community in order to assure a project's success and sustainability over time. It challenges students to move beyond paternalism to the genuine friendship and mutuality that humanizes them even as it dignifies the client.
6. A Lasallian-inspired spirituality favors the integration of spiritual life, professional commitment, and social responsibility – an integration much needed in a world

where the exile of moral and spiritual values from professional life and business has led to disengagement, dehumanization, and damage to society and the environment.

7. Such a spirituality helps students deal with the anxiety, frustration and cynicism that can arise from realizing the depth and intractability of the more serious social problems they encounter. Abandoning oneself to God knowing that the results are in God's hands provides a much-needed blend of realism and hope. What God requires is that one do one's best without being overly-anxious about what lies beyond one's control. No charitable effort is ever wasted for God makes even our

By adapting Lasallian spirituality to encompass all professions which promote human dignity and the common good, a Lasallian-inspired program of service learning can make a meaningful contribution to helping persons of faith bridge the gap between faith and professional life as well as challenge them to respond as professionals to local and global threats to the humanum.

flawed contributions fruitful for ourselves and for the building of God's Kingdom. Such trust in God sustains fortitude in the face of difficulties.

Responsiveness to needs, a defining characteristic of Lasallian education, is rooted in a spirituality that frames the work of education as a participation in God's saving work in the world. By adapting Lasallian spirituality to encompass

all professions which promote human dignity and the common good, a Lasallian-inspired program of service learning can make a meaningful contribution to helping persons of faith bridge the gap between faith and professional life as well as challenge them to respond as professionals to local and global threats to the *humanum*. Given the seriousness of the problems we face locally and globally, this is not an insignificant contribution.

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8. PROPHECY AND SOLIDARIETY: A FRANCISCAN PERSPECTIVE²⁷

Daniel Horan, OFM

Catholic Theological Union

Introduction

What is it that we offer our students when we offer them a Franciscan education? Recently the trend has been to respond to that question with an eye toward integration of service-learning based pedagogy with core curricular goals and objectives.²⁸ This, in itself, is an admirable and important component to a well-rounded undergraduate education and should be supported and encouraged. However, service learning, as such, is not Franciscan.²⁹ Many colleges and universities associated with varying religious congregations or traditions emphasize the importance of service to the community as a constitutive element of a contemporary liberal arts education. To suggest that service is a core pillar of Franciscan education is to posit a false monopoly in the market of effective undergraduate curricula.³⁰ The suggestion that service learning is not exclusively Franciscan is not to undermine the significance of its role in today's integrated educational programs. Rather, the question raised in noting this observation is: What about service-learning as it is done at explicitly Franciscan schools - member institutions of the AFCU, for example - makes it Franciscan? Or, to put it yet another way, and perhaps more realistically: What can be done to make such programs more Franciscan?

Academic community engagement: from service to solidarity

Academic community engagement, a phrase I prefer to service-learning, denotes a programmatic effort to introduce students to a new way of conceptualizing the educational experience that moves them beyond the classroom and into local and global com-

27 This paper is an extract from: Daniel P. Horan (2011). Profit or Prophet? A Franciscan Challenge to Millennials in Higher Education. *The AFCU Journal*, 8, 59-73.

28 Past several volumes of the AFCU Journal offer perspectives along these lines. For a sampling, see: Godfrey & Cockrum (2006, 2007, 2008, 2010); Coughlin (2010); Sills & Johnson (2010); Coate & Palmer (2008); Spies (2007).

29 For an overview of early adaptation and development of so-called 'service-learning' programs at a variety of undergraduate institutions, see Astin, Sax & Avalos (1999); and, while specifically geared toward undergraduate education majors, the following study provides insightful commentary on general community-engagement and service curricula: Vickers, Harris & McCarthy (2004).

30 One study (see Reed-Bouley, 2008) suggests service as a means for effectively introducing students to Catholic Social Teaching, thereby transcending charismatic delimitations in an effort to highlight the more genus-like mission and identity of all Catholic institutions of higher education. Likewise, Paulli's article in the NCEA journal suggests that what distinguishes service-learning at so-called secular institutions from that of Catholic ones is precisely the Catholicity present within the founding tradition of the school (see Paulli, 2010).

munities. In so doing, students are introduced to a new medium of educational content. Whereas educational content is largely associated with text in most liberal arts curricula, the experience of academic community engagement provides students (and instructors) with a new form of learning. As such, academic community engagement becomes a new text, a new lesson plan. In considering community engagement, or service learning, as text, traditionally conceived content-based emphases are de-centered to open a space for creative learning and holistic experiences of education.

By refocusing the curriculum to more comprehensively shape academic community engagement to exhibit the values inherent in the Franciscan intellectual and spiritual tradition, AFCU institutions might better distinguish their programs as “Franciscan.”

I believe that academic community engagement provides a unique opportunity for Franciscan colleges and universities to integrate the explicitly Franciscan dimensions of the various institutions’ founding charism into the educational experience

of their undergraduates. By refocusing the curriculum to more comprehensively shape academic community engagement to exhibit the values inherent in the Franciscan intellectual and spiritual tradition, AFCU institutions might better distinguish their programs as “Franciscan.” This can be done in a number of ways, but I will offer two suggestions for consideration. The first is the challenge of changing the pedagogical grammar of academic community engagement from conceptions resembling civic responsibility, charity, service, and so on, to a more exclusive notion of solidarity. As it will be presented below, solidarity provides the framework for reconsidering one’s stance in the world. The intentional self-subordination exhibited in the life and rules (*regula*) of Francis of Assisi provides a model for an authentically Christian posture or *vita evangelica*. While institutions representing religious traditions of all sorts and even secular or state universities can provide programs and curricula aimed at instilling civic responsibility, philanthropic interest and community building values in today’s young adults, the Franciscan approach to academic community engagement should be less generic in its charge, moving more toward modeling and encouraging lives of Christian discipleship after the example of Francis and Clare of Assisi.

The second suggestion flows from this first consideration of solidarity as a constitutive element of the Franciscan tradition. Namely, one challenge that the Franciscan tradition should pose to Millennials in higher education is whether these students want to appropriate the increasingly common social norms that support ungoverned desire for social mobility and the accumulation of wealth or do they want to stand apart from such mate-

rialistic teleology, instead working toward an ever more integrated sense of prophetic call to live as Christian disciples according to the Franciscan tradition. The meaning of prophecy can vary largely from one authority to the next; therefore, it seems fitting to look within the Franciscan tradition for guidance in explicating its meaning. St. Bonaventure provides us with a helpful theology of prophecy in his *Legenda Major*, in which he draws on the life of Francis to serve as the hagiographical context from within which Bonaventure presents his understanding.

A generation of young people committed to service, not out of a sense of philanthropy or condescending self-gratification, but out of identification of injustice in the world that calls for protest and committed engagement. That our students become prophets, living the Word of God in such a way that they see the world anew and speak the truth to power, is both what follows from a life of solidarity and sustains Christian living.

These two suggestions, the emphasis on solidarity in shaping academic community engagement opportunities and the promotion of graduates of Franciscan institutions of higher education as prophets according to the theology of Bonaventure, draw on the call to reach into the rich tradition latent in the very establishment of the AFCU-member colleges and universities (for a good overview of this task, see Carney, 2005). To di-

rect academic community engagement in a manner that seeks to form prophetic graduates whose stance in the world is one of solidarity is not extrinsic to the founding charism, but instead flows from the Franciscan tradition.

Francis's conversion to a life of solidarity with the poor, marginalized and abused exemplifies the type of lifestyle we most desire for the next generation of college graduates. A generation of young people committed to service, not out of a sense of philanthropy or condescending self-gratification, but out of identification of injustice in the world that calls for protest and committed engagement. That our students become prophets, living the Word of God in such a way that they see the world anew and speak the truth to power, is both what follows from a life of solidarity and sustains Christian living. When we offer Millennials the challenge of "profit or prophet?" we invite the next generation to transcend the limited and self-centered strictures of a profit-driven culture to enter a community of meaning rooted in the narrative of Christianity modeled in the particular life of Francis of Assisi.³¹

31 For more on the formation of a moral and ethical decision-making in light of the Christian narrative, see

Final remarks

Service in a generic sense, admirable as it may be, is but an action extrinsic to any faith commitment or exclusively Christian understanding of valued living. While one cannot expect all students to accept the challenge, live in solidarity and become people of scripture and therefore prophets, the issue for us to consider is whether or not the curriculum even provides the condition for the possibility of such conversion. The Franciscan tradition that serves as the founding charism of the AFCU institutions of higher education offers a timely and unique approach to holistic education for today's young adults. Already predisposed to service as they are, Millennials are particularly positioned to be formed in a tradition that moves beyond the concept of service toward a posture of solidarity. Encouraging community service as a component of integrated learning is not the challenge Millennials need, especially from Franciscan colleges and universities. Instead, Millennials should be challenged to move toward stepping outside the systemic structures of injustice motivated so often by profit and upward social mobility and instead position themselves in a place of solidarity. Keeping in mind that evangelical poverty is not the same as abject poverty, today's young adults should be encouraged to look at the model of Francis of Assisi and re-appropriate his way of life for contemporary living. To sustain this way of Christian living and to learn to see the world anew, Millennials should be open to the Word of God and live it in such a way as to speak the truth that comes with the call of the prophet.

Students may respond to this notion with varying degrees of enthusiasm (see Horan, 2010), but the condition for the possibility of some response - namely the shift in administrative discourse of service to solidarity and the challenge to be contemporary Christian prophets - should be a goal of Franciscan institutions of higher education. To integrate programs whose aim is precisely this might better enable AFCU institutions to offer a particularly

The ongoing evaluation and (re)development of curricula and educational programs is nothing foreign to the Franciscan tradition. For Francis himself, shortly before his death, is remembered to have said, "Let us begin, brothers, to serve the Lord God, for up until now we have done little or nothing".

Franciscan education to their students. The ongoing evaluation and (re)development of curricula and educational programs is nothing foreign to the Franciscan tradition. For Francis himself, shortly before his death, is remembered to have said, "Let us begin, brothers,

Hauerwas (1981). What I have envisioned here is a particularly Franciscan-Christian notion of ethical formation rooted in a curriculum and educational environment shaped by explicit reflection on the life and influence of Francis of Assisi and the subsequent Franciscan tradition.

to serve the Lord God, for up until now we have done little or nothing" (from Thomas of Celano, Ch. VI, v. 103). Hopefully a renewed emphasis on solidarity and prophecy as constitutive elements of a Franciscan education might contribute to the shaping of the next generation of young adults into integrated members of the Christian and global community.

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9. A CRITICAL REFLECTION ON HOW SPIRITUALITY ANIMATES SERVICE-LEARNING IN THE NORTH AMERICAN CATHOLIC HIGHER EDUCATION CONTEXT

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Abstract

Service-learning has emerged as a powerful pedagogy in the last three decades, especially as a specific form of experiential teaching and learning, which engages students with community priorities and immerses them in the community. As students encounter different communities and engage with complex social issues, they learn about the topic of study (their course and academic content), but they also develop in other areas, such as personal development, civic development, socio-emotional development, and spiritual development. The faith formation that emerges from service-learning experiences varies across the context of North American Higher Education institutions. The context matters, as the charisms of the institution and its approach to service-learning animate the spiritual development approach.

Through a dialogue with scholar-practitioners at four different Catholic Higher Education institutions across North America, this reflective essay will interrogate our practice through the lens of three reflective questions: (1) How does the context of your Catholic institution (mission, identity, approach to, and practice of community engagement) animate service-learning? (2) What distinguishes this approach from other Catholic institutions? (3) How does this practice connect to faith formation and/or spiritual development?

Through the lens of critical reflection, this essay provides an overview of practitioner's approaches to service-learning considering a variety of contexts across Catholic Higher Education institutions. This critical inquiry approach to practice provides an opportunity for scholar-practitioners to reflect on their practice and articulate their approach to service-learning at the intersection of faith and community engagement. In essence, this exploratory approach deepens the understanding of service-learning practice, while raising new questions around the relationship between faith, service-learning practice, and the faith-based institutional context of service-learning.

Introduction

Service-learning, often referred to as community-based learning, has emerged as a powerful pedagogy in the last three decades, especially as a specific form of experiential teaching and learning which engages students with complex, real world issues related to community priorities and immerses them in the community. As students encounter different communities and engage with social issues as wicked problems, they learn about the topic of study (their course and academic content), but they also develop in other areas, such as personal development, civic development, socio-emotional development, and spiritual development (Eyler et al., 2001). The benefits of service-learning have been recorded through the literature on student outcomes for the past two decades, but recent studies have indicated that spiritual development is a significant potential learning outcome (Sterk Barrett, 2015). With about 1,000 religiously-affiliated, or faith-based institutions, spiritual development and faith formation have been explicitly connected to service-learning and community engagement (Green et al., 2020; Mann, 2021). The relationship between them has often been positioned as spiritual development (learning outcome) emerges from service-learning (learning activity). Yet, if we re-frame this relationship, can the reverse be stated? In other words, how is service-learning animated by faith and spirituality?

The faith formation that emerges from service-learning experiences undoubtedly varies across the context of North American Higher Education faith-based institutions. In “Mission animation: Christian higher education, the common good, and community engagement”, Mann (2021) positioned Christian Higher Education through the lens of evangelical Christian and Roman Catholic faith-based institutions, and explains the philosophical foundations of each impact community engagement:

Similar to evangelical Christian higher education, Catholic higher education has its own unique identity and mission, while still providing space for each individual institution to have its own culture. (...) Catholic institutions are dedicated to a set of values. (...) These values serve to connect programming and curriculum to the Catholic faith and the Catholic intellectual tradition on Catholic university and college campuses. (Mann, 2021, pp. 11-12)

The context of the Catholic institution, then, matters, as the charisms of the institution and its approach to faith/spiritual development animate service-learning programming and delivery. How does this actually work, though, in practice?

Practitioner-Scholar Inquiry Approach

As practitioners of service-learning and community engagement and drawing from a practitioner-scholar framework, our inquiry here is rooted in our practice at Catholic universities across North America. How does faith and spirituality animate service-learning and community engagement? What elements of our practice are enhanced by faith, and what aspects need enhancement? For example, the relationship between faith and service-learning and community engagement is often connected to outcomes of equity,

The relationship between faith and service-learning and community engagement is often connected to outcomes of equity, justice, and access. Recent studies suggest that community engagement in Christian higher education connects to institutional mission and identity, often leading to community partnerships addressing local problems to address justice-related outcomes.

ty, justice, and access. Rine and Quiñones (2021) suggest that community engagement in Christian higher education connects to institutional mission and identity, often leading to community partnerships addressing local problems to address justice-related outcomes. Do the outcomes of service-learning relate to faith? Are they animated by the context of faith or spirituality? Mann (2021, p.

7) further suggests that faith and spirituality is a “driving motivator for service and engagement and that religiously affiliated institutions of higher learning often mobilize their institutional missions and visions through the pursuit of social justice, philanthropy, and service”. The concept of justice, or a derivative, thereof, plays a central role in this inquiry as well.

At the June 2021 Justice Conference sponsored by the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU), Fr. Tom Smolich, S.J., International Director of Jesuit Refugee Services, in his presentation on “Spirituality and Justice in Jesuit Higher Education”, challenged us to consider two essential questions: “what a justice rooted in faith could mean for us today?” as well as “what does the service of faith mean in 2021?”. Fr. Smolich intentionally and critically frames service as deeply connected with faith:

The Catholic intellectual tradition, the foundation of our higher education project, and of much progress in the world, is at risk of secularism and fundamentalism if we do not wrestle with the questions around faith. And as well, if our justice efforts are untethered to faith, they will fall in the endless circle of whose justice are we talking about? (Smolich, 2021)

He indicated that *“Wrestling with the faith question is critical (...). The service of faith is the driver of our promotion of justice”* (Smolich, 2021). This begs the questions: is faith / spirituality the driver of service-learning and community engagement, and if so, in what ways?

To wrestle with such questions, we draw from professional practices of community engagement through an inquiry stance (Ravitch, 2014). In addition, community engagement and service-learning require continuous reflection to foster learning, and we seek to model this as reflective-practitioners (Dostilio, 2017). Exploring community engagement practice related through the lens of professionals, we draw upon the reflections of practitioner-scholars who facilitate community engagement programs at four Catholic higher education institutions. Each of the institutions varies in the Catholic lens (Jesuit³², Marianist³³, Vincentian³⁴, and Catholic³⁵). This critical inquiry approach to practice provides an opportunity for scholar-practitioners to reflect on their practice and articulate their approach to service-learning at the intersection of faith and community engagement. Through a dialogue with these scholar-practitioners working at four different Catholic Higher Education institutions across North America, this reflective essay interrogates our practice through the lens of three reflective questions:

- ▶ How does the context of your Catholic institution (mission, identity, approach to, and practice of community engagement) animate service-learning?
- ▶ What distinguishes this approach from other Catholic institutions?
- ▶ How does this practice connect to faith formation and/or spiritual development?

Through this lens of critical reflection, this essay will explore the practitioner’s approaches to service-learning considering a variety of contexts across Catholic Higher Education institutions. This exploratory approach seeks to deepen the understanding of service-learning practice, while uncovering opportunities to strengthen the relationship between faith, service-learning practice, and the faith-based institutional context of service-learning.

Context Matters

Upon reflection of the context of their institution, each of the professionals indicated the importance of the University’s mission to inform service-learning. In other words, the

32 Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, USA.

33 University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, USA.

34 DePaul University, Chicago, IL, USA.

35 University of San Diego, San Diego, CA, USA (this academic institution was born from an agreement between the Diocese of San Diego and the Society of the Sacred Heart of Jesus).

The context of the University's unique faith-based mission and identity informed how they facilitated service-learning. For example, some practitioner-scholars emphasized that many public schools have service-learning programs, but the Catholic identity and mission informs the delivery of service-learning through the lens of their faith-based tradition.

context of the University's unique faith-based mission and identity informed how they facilitated service-learning. For example, some practitioner-scholars emphasized that many public schools have service-learning programs, but the Catholic identity and mission informs the delivery of service-learning through the lens of their faith-based

tradition. They specified the emphases of their programs, stemming from the distinct context of their faith-based program:

Our Catholic identity and mission is really what kind of stands behind service learning and reinforces it and gives it wings to fly. . . . That identity calls us to give preference to the poor, to be responsive to our neighbors especially the stranger, to be involved in the fight for justice, to develop relationships in kinship with our community members especially those who are marginalized, to live our faith in service to and with others, and to live in the reflection of Christ. So, when you join together the mission related goals of our Jesuit Catholic institution, with a highly impactful and effective pedagogy, it results in transformation for our students, faculty, and our community. (Kim Jensen Bohat, Director of Service-Learning, Marquette University, Milwaukee, Wisconsin, USA)

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DePaul identifies as Catholic, Vincentian, and urban and strives to model curricular and co-curricular programs and university policies after the work of the seventeenth-century priest Vincent de Paul. In particular, faculty and staff support the promotion of service-learning as an effort to integrate Vincentian values of service directly into the curriculum throughout all disciplines, departments, schools, and colleges. Service learning is therefore seen as a direct reflection of the Vincentian mission. Service-learning at DePaul was developed during the 1990s. As a faith-based, mission-driven university, DePaul was naturally drawn to support structures that aligned with the university's longstanding teacher-scholar model. In 1998 the university established the Office for Community-based Service Learning to primarily support new curriculum for delivering experiential learning opportunities to all undergraduates. The Experiential Learning Requirement was established as part of the DePaul's undergraduate Liberal Studies Program. Course that integrates service-learning pedagogy and 25 hours of service during the term were one option for completing this requirement. This approach was seen as infusing the Vincentian,

Catholic and Urban identity of the university into the core curriculum as the primary way that students fulfill a graduation requirement. (Howard Rosing, Executive Director, Steans Center for Community-based Service Learning and Community Services Studies, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois, USA)

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The University of San Diego (USD) has historically been dedicated to public service and the development of civically engaged individuals. Since its founding in 1949, USD has embraced socially responsible action that improves the human condition, promotes deep reflection and empathy, and cultivates an ecosystem that generates knowledge for the good of society, all of which reflect the institution's focus on the liberal arts education, its commitment to social justice, and its faith-based identity in relation to the Catholic intellectual tradition. Its mission statement identifies USD as "a Roman Catholic institution committed to advancing academic excellence, expanding liberal and professional knowledge, creating a diverse and inclusive community, and preparing leaders dedicated to ethical conduct and compassionate service". Having a mission and core values that align with Catholic social teaching has been important at the university, historically for laying the foundation upon which to build programming in conjunction with community partnerships and to foster civic engagement opportunities. Parting from this initial faith-based foundation, USD has integrated several developments through the years that reflect the institution's commitment to the public good and also align with broader, national tendencies; these include the expansion of community engagement, the incorporation of social innovation, and the articulation of an anchor institution discourse. The evolution of these developments has doubtlessly contributed to the overall work of social justice in the San Diego community and beyond. (Chris Nayve, Associate Vice President of Community Engagement, Karen & Tom Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action, University of San Diego, San Diego, CA, USA)

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University of Dayton was founded by the Society of Mary and is a Marianist institution; our Marian library is the largest collection on Mary in the world. UD attracts people who want to do good in the world, who want to make a positive impact, and who genuinely believe in the power of community and the Common Good (University for the Common Good is our university 'motto'/identity). Many of our students work with community partners who serve the poor and marginalized; many students across a variety of majors, from business to engineering and human rights studies have a role in designing ideas and applied projects that have direct impacts in the community. (Karen Lovett, Director of Experiential Learning, University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, USA)

Each of the professionals noted that the emphasis of their faith-based mission and institutional identity influenced the priorities of the service-learning program and delivery. This

Each of the professionals noted that the emphasis of their faith-based mission and institutional identity influenced the priorities of the service-learning program and delivery.

is clearly apparent in the community partnerships they develop, the program outcomes they articulate, and the emphases (e.g., social justice) connected to the mission.

Distinct Approaches

The service-learning practices were unique at each of these four institutions, shaped by the emphases and priorities associated with the faith mission. Upon reflection on what distinguished their approach, each of the professionals were able to identify aspects of the mission related to that Catholic heritage and resources related to that Catholic tradition.

I would say that the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm is what really distinguishes how we approach service learning compared to other Catholic Schools. Service Learning is an active model of this paradigm. The critical reflection models we use are modeled after the Examen, and to other forms of Jesuit reflection such as the Spiritual Exercises. (K. Bohat)

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In 2001, DePaul received an endowment to create the Irwin W. Steans Center for Community-based Service Learning and Community Service Studies to further expand service learning into curriculum across all of its 10 college and schools and into both undergraduate and graduate programs. In its day-to-day work, the Center's maintains a critique of elite institutional structures that have led to many of the problems faced by those communities that the Center seeks to support. As Vincentian priest, Anthony Dosen, C.M., notes, "Vincentian administrators must challenge their collaborators not merely to be good at their respective task. He argues, "the task of Vincentian administrators is not merely to provide professional development to their colleagues, but the possibility for personal transformation". Therefore, the Center seeks to manage its affairs, including both staff development and its approach to interactions with various constituents (students, faculty, community) in a manner that is aligned with such values. This approach is aligned closely with Asset-based Community Development which as an approach centers on the gifts and talents of individuals as the primary assets in communities. This framework aligns well with the value of Vincentian personalism at the core of the Vincentian approach to serve those who are most in need, while still valuing that those being served have important assets to be recognized and uplifted. (H. Rosing)

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The Marianist characteristic that I think most closely resonates with service learning (community engaged learning is the term we use at UD) is "educate for service, justice, and peace" particularly where it speaks about attending to the poor and marginalized.

We have a Human Rights Center (the first of its kind) that also embodies this Marianist spirit of educating for service, justice, and peace. (K. Lovett)

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Integration of social innovation, civic/community engagement, place-based community engagement, with an anchor mission best describes our approach. The introduction of the “changemaker” discourse at USD reflects broader tendencies. The creation of the Changemaker Hub at USD was an important development that followed the initial Ashoka designation more immediately. Instead of founding a new center or institute, the hub was conceptualized to act as an umbrella entity where individuals, the curriculum, and different organizations would converge in the diverse and multifaceted work of changemaking. Rather than seeking organizational autonomy, the focus has been on the shared “ownership” of the hub across campus. Many years after its creation, the hub continues to strive to encourage collaboration among academic units on campus, helping to expand the reach and capacity of the university to engage the community and promote social entrepreneurial and innovative projects. In terms of faculty engagement, the hub revised its previous Changemaker Faculty Champions program and created a Changemaker Faculty Fellows Development Program in 2017–2018. While the former requested deans to nominate faculty as “changemaker champions”, the Faculty Fellows initiative allows individuals to self-nominate through an application process. The result has been that the hub is able to collaborate with faculty who have a genuine interest in changemaking and social innovation. Moreover, the focus is shifted to a developmental approach and continuing the work into the future. The fellows meet routinely for a series of workshops on how to implement changemaking and social innovation into their teaching, research, and service commitments. This transformation of the program has proved worthwhile; the current cohort of faculty has demonstrated not only a deeper understanding of USD’s changemaking initiative but also enthusiasm to continue collaborating with the hub during the next academic year. Through collaborations with other units on campus such as the Mulvaney Center for Community, Awareness and Social Action; the Center for Inclusion and Diversity; the Center for Educational Excellence; and University Ministry, the hub has created a number of initiatives to support the practice of changemaking. For example, the Social Change Corps (SCC) is a co-curricular program that provides students, working in groups of two to five, with the opportunity to learn about social issues that matter to them and to suggest ways to address these issues. The SCC encourages students to think creatively about issues that exist both on and off campus and to engage with community in ways that are meaningful, sustainable, and reciprocal.

Finally, the tensions produced around the ambiguous notion of changemaking also led a group of faculty and staff at USD, sponsored by the Center for Educational Excellence, to design a “model of change” in an effort to develop a more inclusive and holistic framework for positive social change (Guerrieri & Sgoutas-Emch, 2016). This model has se-

veral guiding principles, including the imperative to work in ethical solidarity with others in an attempt to build more equitable, reciprocal, and democratic partnerships, which also means focusing on community assets while simultaneously deepening one's understanding of the complexity of issues through the exploration of historical, political, social, cultural, and other key aspects. Rising above the parameters and limitations of any single approach to working for the common good, ultimately, this group of faculty and staff attempted to disentangle broader questions of change and sought a more open and malleable framework that could help examine, enrich, and interconnect multiple modalities of engagement. Development, discussion, and implementation of the model became one of the ways that the university continues to work toward the integration of different entities and initiatives on campus. (C. Nayve).

The distinctive elements of each faith-based institution (i.e., Jesuit, Marianist, Vincentian, or Catholic) impact the delivery of service-learning and community engagement programs. From how reflection is facilitated to the content discussed and outcomes emphasized in the community engagement experience (e.g., human rights), each professional identified distinct elements related to their Catholic tradition and institutional mission.

Service-Learning Practice and Faith Formation

When each of the professionals reflected upon how their practice relates to faith formation and spiritual development, responses varied as to the degree to which this was an explicit outcome. Many North American institutions have other departments, such as Campus Ministry, which emphasize and explicitly promote faith formation programs and spiritual development outcomes. The reflections indicated outcomes that serve, or lead to, faith and spiritual development while also separating from these explicit outcomes. Reflecting on community engagement practices also demonstrated that the method of service-learning (partnering and related to community, anchor institution work) may serve, or lead to, faith and spiritual development as well.

One of our primary learning objectives in our service learning program is vocational formation, and while that is somewhat different from faith or spiritual formation, they are also very connected. During and after the service learning experience we ask our students, who do they feel called to be? How did what they learn from this experience shape the way they see the world, their faith, and their understanding of their place in this universe? How did the experience affirm or negate their values around religion and spirituality? Every three semesters we also host a reflection session that specifically deals with service and faith. I think through our reflection series and this pedagogy we are teaching

students techniques, strategies, and pathways to think more deeply about tough questions, and this includes thinking about their faith and spirituality. (K. Bohat)

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The Steans Center does not directly engage in faith formation and/or spiritual development, though the Center collaborates with the Office of Mission and Ministry which is directly charged with this goal. The Center sees the importance of relationship building both internally and externally as centrally important to contributing the larger mission of the university. In other words, how Center staff relate to one another, and the outside world can directly impact how individuals develop their own sense of faith or spirituality. Successful service learning engaged with community organizations in a way that honestly recognizes the damaging effect of past academic approaches can, for example, go a long way toward building authentic partnerships, making people feel connected in a deeper spiritual sense. Acknowledging organizations as practical and intellectual assets in their communities and that the university is not there to appropriate knowledge is not only highly compatible with the university's mission but helps model for students a way to apply their faith or spiritual in action. (H. Rosing)

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I would have to say that after interviewing dozens of students at UD about their experiential learning experiences, I have never been in a place where students are more concerned about doing good and "giving back", and using their UD education to make a real impact. The students are passionate and driven about community engaged learning. Many come from religious backgrounds and the Marianist/Catholic demographic is definitely a majority. I also think our faculty and staff tend to identify with our Marianist charism, and it definitely bonds employees at the university. It inspires the way we relate to each other and to our students. It influences advising and mentoring at the university. Students have overwhelmingly remarked that they felt supported at the university and I do think that much of that is due to our history and identity as a Marianist institution. (K. Lovett)

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With regard to the type of community collaboration realized through the years, USD's community engagement framework has operated in parallel with or been integrated into a wide range of community-centered activities that could be understood as anchor practices, such as providing landlord/tenant dispute resolution services, offering health screenings, staffing community health clinics, providing childhood development classes for parents, as well as economic development and marketing training to small business owners. (...) Furthermore, the sustainability and adaptability of these partnerships is questionable. When a project is completed, what happens to the partnership? What resources or structures are in place to ensure the maintenance and growth of a particular program? One approach to address these gaps, introduced by USD's new administration,

consists of understanding the university as an anchor institution within the community. (...) Anchor institutions are universities, schools, nonprofits, hospitals, and other organizations that are considered to be permanently located in a city or region. Being rooted in their local communities and oftentimes controlling or overseeing considerable resources, they have the potential to bring crucial and measurable benefits to their neighbors. Ultimately, USD seeks to continue building long-term, interdependent, and sustainable partnerships with the surrounding community, and the partner organizations are seen as co-creators guiding the direction of social change. In this sense, the creation of the Linda Vista Anchor Institution Advisory Board—comprising leaders, residents, and practitioners committed to increasing the economic, cultural, and social health of the community—exemplifies the fact that the university is only one of many anchors in the community, and the critical points of collaboration are constituted by community-identified issues such as public health, education, food security, and economic development. The goal is for deep integration. (C. Nayve)

Each of the practitioner-scholars identified ways in which the practice of service-learning and community engagement serves larger outcomes of faith formation, or may lead to spiritual development, but they also differentiated their programmatic work from these goals explicitly. Their responses indicated that, in practice, faith was not necessarily the driver of service-learning and community engagement activities, but it was a key contributor and influence on such activities. In other words, faith development was not identified

Each of the practitioner-scholars' responses indicated that, in practice, faith was not necessarily the driver of service-learning and community engagement activities, but it was a key contributor and influence on such activities.

explicitly as a goal of service-learning at these Catholic institutions, although it was recognized that service-learning may lead to growth in this area. It is significant to note, however, that faith shapes and influences service-learning across institutions.

Implications

Reflecting on community engagement practice is a powerful tool to help organize themes, or concepts, that emerge across the context of Catholic higher education institutions. From the perspective of this thematic analysis, the reflections of our four practitioner-scholars at different institutions reveal that institutional, faith-based context and the distinct elements of that Catholic faith tradition impact service-learning program de-

livery. In addition, service-learning programs may offer a gateway to faith formation and spiritual development, although these outcomes may not be explicitly articulated or promoted in the delivery of such programs. As a fellow practitioner-scholar in the community engagement field, this corresponds and deeply resonates with my own professional practice, as well as program and practice at Loyola University Chicago. My own reflections on my professional practice mirror these themes emerging from these practitioner-scholar dialogues.

If the context and distinct faith-based elements of our service-learning programs at each of our institutions shapes and informs our delivery and creates a gateway potentially leading to faith formation and spiritual development, is there an opportunity to more intentionally design service-learning to connect to these outcomes? Emerging from these reflections are some key concepts that formulate a framework for service-learning practice in the Catholic faith-based setting.

Through deliberation and dialogue with community engagement professionals at four different Catholic higher education institutions, a conceptual framework emerges that may inform a deeper connection to the faith-based context with an intentional design of service-learning. A conceptual framework historically is defined as a structure for organizing ideas and an iteration of a researcher's inquiry that may evolve as the inquiry evolves (Leshem & Trafford, 2007). Punch (2000) suggests that conceptual frameworks represent the conceptual status of the topics at hand and their relationship to each other.

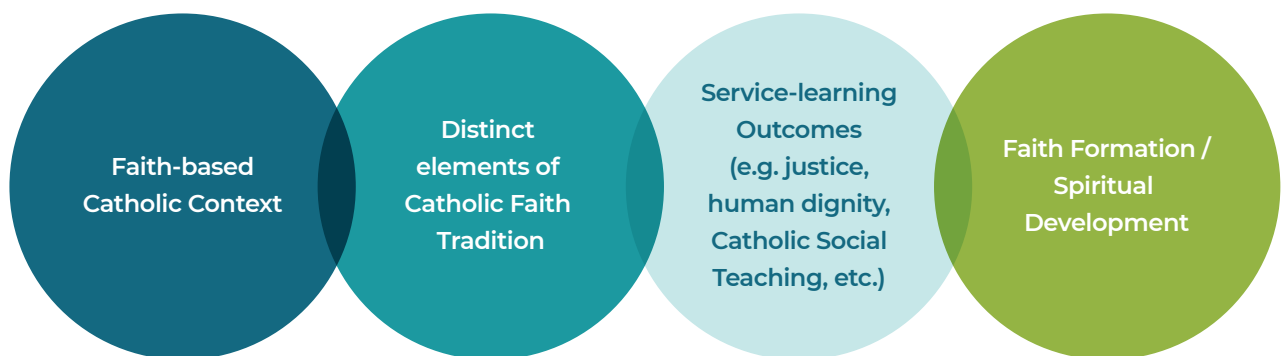


FIGURE 1. Intentional Design of Service-learning at Faith-Based Institutions

As indicated from our reflection on practice, the faith-based context and the distinct elements of that Catholic faith tradition shape the service-learning and community engagement program, which then develop a gateway through a variety of integrated outcomes that potentially lead to faith formation and spiritual development. Through intentional design of service-learning experiences that recognized and articulates the context, distinct faith-based tradition, outcomes, and pathways connecting to faith formation (Figure

1), practitioners have the opportunity to deepen the connection between service-learning and the Catholic mission of our institutions.

There is also an opportunity for further study, exploring specifically *how* the values associated with the different Catholic traditions influence, or shape and define, service-learning outcomes, experiences, and partnerships. In addition, what learning design approaches elevate the values and institutional mission as a significant aspect of the course? Is learning shaped differently because of this impact on service-learning and community engagement, and if so, how? Further research on the connection between service-learning and faith is essential. This reflective inquiry on practice indicates distinct connections that require more exploration in regard to how Catholic values and approaches influence, shape, and define service-learning

Further research on the connection between service-learning and faith is essential. This reflective inquiry on practice indicates distinct connections that require more exploration in regard to how Catholic values and approaches influence, shape, and define service-learning and lead to faith development.

ing and lead to faith development. These new lines of inquiry also reflect a call to action for practitioners at faith-based institutions to be more explicit with the connections between Catholic values and service-learning, leveraging specific values emerging from Catholic Social Teaching, as well as various forms of justice.

Reflections on Practice: A Call to Celebrate Faith-based Approaches in Service-Learning as Instrumental in Social Change

Reviewing Figure 1, there is an opportunity for practitioners of service-learning and community engagement at Catholic institutions to pause and reflect on their practice. Such reflection may allow practitioners to work toward intentional design of service-learning through the lens of their Catholic context, values, explicit outcomes related to service-learning, and faith/spiritual development. Sample reflection questions include:

Context

1. What is the Catholic context of your institution?
2. How does the mission articulate this identity?

Values

1. What values are expressed and emphasized to represent your Catholic identity and mission?
2. Where do you see these values articulated and demonstrated?

Service-Learning Outcomes

1. What outcomes related to justice best connect with your service-learning program?
2. What outcomes associated with Social Catholic Teaching are best represented through your service-learning program?
3. How are community partnerships represented and developed with these outcomes in mind?

Faith / Spiritual Development

1. How does service-learning serve as a pathway for faith/spiritual development at your institution?
2. What pathways are made available to students who seek to grow in this area?
3. How can you design the service-learning program (e.g., course, activity, resources) to articulate opportunities to grow in this area?

Emerging from this reflective inquiry, there is a clear call for action: it is time to celebrate our faith-based context within Catholic higher education institutions. The North American context, historically shaped by a separation of Church and state, has long approached the work of community engagement under the domain of this policy. Yet, it is clear that our faith-based context at Catholic institutions, along with our faith tra-

Emerging from this reflective inquiry, there is a clear call for action: it is time to celebrate our faith-based context within Catholic higher education institutions. (...) Yet, it is clear that our faith-based context at Catholic institutions, along with our faith traditions, elevate the work of service-learning by shaping program delivery and outcomes.

ditions, elevate the work of service-learning by shaping program delivery and outcomes. If we design community engagement programs intentionally and unapologetically to connect with our faith-based context, traditions, and goals, we educate with faith formation at the forefront, rather than at the margins.

As Mitchell (2008) encouraged practitioners to apply critical service-learning principles to address power and privilege, foster authentic relationships within our communities, and promote a social change (justice) orientation, it is time for all Catholic institutions of higher education to explicitly connect justice outcomes (social, economic, racial, and environmental justice) to their service-learning programs and activities. The faith-based values associated with justice clearly animate and shape service-learning in practice, program delivery, and partnership approaches. It is essential to mirror this practice with articulated priorities within our faith-based, Catholic context, given the potential for engaging students in justice-related work has potential pathways to faith formation and spiritual development. Drawing from the Catholic social teaching tradition, let Catholic universities and colleges be leaders in social change and advocates of social justice through service-learning, providing models for other institutions of higher education on how values-based education leads in *practice* and in *faith*.

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Acknowledgements

I would like to thank my four colleagues who graciously shared their perspectives as practitioner-scholars, reflecting on this topic with me to support this critical reflection essay. The work and scholarship of these four professionals is a significant contribution to this essay, as well as beyond it:

Kimberly Jensen Bohat, Director of the Service Learning Program, Center for Teaching and Learning, Marquette University, Milwaukee, WI, USA

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SECOND PART

**Higher Education and Youth Leadership:
Reflections on Positive, Socially
Responsible Leadership**



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10. SERVICE-LEARNING, CHARACTER EDUCATION AND SPIRITUALITY IN A CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY

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Abstract

Service-learning should aim to form people so they can live well in a world worth living in. The Christian faith conviction that we as humans have a common telos, that there is an ultimate common good, or highest good, that is God, is central to any Catholic concept of service. The practice of the virtues, through service, is the road to this spiritual end. When students engage in meaningful acts of service, there is a “double benefit”: a contribution to the common good of society and the building of one’s own character. Service to others is, therefore, an important virtue to cultivate in students. In this chapter we adopt a character education lens to describe how service and service-learning might be understood in terms of spirituality and the role of Catholic universities. We will describe how Catholic universities traditionally have many features that make them well placed to cultivate the civic virtue of service – required for engaged and responsible citizenship. We will also show how service-learning programmes might be enhanced by focussing on five key-findings from character education research and how these contribute to young people developing habits of service.

Introduction

This chapter is written in two parts. The first part offers a theology of service learning for Catholic universities. It explores how we are made for relationship with God and with each other. Service-learning should aim to form people so they can live well in a world worth living in. The second part provides some recent research on service-learning and discusses the practical implications of this for Catholic universities. When students engage in meaningful acts of service, there is a “double benefit”: a contribution to the common good of society and the building of one’s own character. Service to others is, therefore, an important virtue to cultivate in students. Throughout this chapter we adopt a character education lens to describe how service and service-learning might be understood in terms

When students engage in meaningful acts of service, there is a “double benefit”: a contribution to the common good of society and the building of one’s own character. Service to others is, therefore, an important virtue to cultivate in students.

of spirituality and the role of Catholic universities. We will describe how Catholic universities traditionally have many features that make them well placed to cultivate the civic virtue of service – required for engaged and responsible citizenship. We will also show

how service-learning programmes might be enhanced by focussing on research related to character education and how this contributes to young people developing habits of service.

The Theological Foundations of Service-Learning

In a Catholic university, service is conceived as having a definite theological and philosophical purpose. Without a doctrinal foundation the Catholic notion of service-learning has no meaning. Christian theology is the wisdom which explains, defends, judges, and guides the process of service-learning. Christian theology commits the educator to a number of claims: the existence of God; belief in the afterlife; belief in a *telos* for humanity; belief in the Holy Spirit and in the Christian claims about Jesus Christ. These all have an impact on our idea and practice of service, and without such claims becoming personal beliefs, there cannot be authentic Christian service-learning. Beliefs make a difference to what we do and to what we teach. However, these claims are not necessarily realised in a merely nominal Christian context: (that is, in an institution that calls itself “Christian”, through education by teachers who are Christian or education received by students who are Christian). As Max Bonilla (2018, p. 26) observes:

A key point to recognize is that a Catholic university is not Catholic because it has crucifixes in its classrooms, because it has an active office of pastoral ministry, and because the sacraments are frequented by students and professors. It is, furthermore, not Catholic because it can claim a percentage, however important, of subjects in its curriculum that deal with philosophy, theology, or the Church’s social doctrine. Rather, what makes a university Catholic is primarily the specific way in which it uses reason in all facets of university life and, therefore, in the way it seeks truth and love. In other words, a vision of the human person is required where reason is used in a particular way that is coherent with the Catholic nature of the university. This is a countercultural approach, counter to a secular culture that has for the last several centuries existed in university life. It is an approach that can only be successful if it is based on a solid and mature understanding

of what it means to be human. This is the task that appears to be essential because, if not, Catholic universities will continue to run into insurmountable obstacles related to an increased secular vision of life.

There are many Catholic universities which appear to adopt a secular justification for service-learning and lack an explicit Christian theology of service. Yet if service-learning is not theologically grounded then it can easily collapse into politically motivated programmes and hence undermine the unique Catholic view of service-learning.

There are indeed many Catholic universities which appear to adopt a secular justification for service-learning and lack an explicit Christian theology of service. Yet if service-learning is not theologically grounded then it can easily collapse into politically motivated programmes and hence undermine the unique Catholic view of service-learning.

As is commonly expressed in their mission statements Catholic institutions claim that service-learning is an indispensable element of their Catholic identity. However, both secular and faith-based Universities use the term, “service-learning”, and both have outstanding examples of service-learning programmes that appear very similar. Catholic institutions have no monopoly in programmes that serve the poor and marginalised. Therefore, should students and graduates in a Catholic college or university have a greater commitment to service-learning than those in secular institutions? If so, can they explain why this should be so and what the Catholic difference is? Is it not the case that all education is ultimately used in the service of others? Is it also not the case that the Catholic view of service-learning is radically different from the secular because it has a different anthropology and hence a different notion of human development?

Service-learning should aim to form people so they can live well in a world worth living in. The Christian faith conviction that we as humans have a common *telos* (purpose), that there is an ultimate common good, or highest good, that is God, - is central to any Catholic concept of service-learning. The practice of the virtues of sharing, caring and cooperation, through their integration into service-learning, is the road to this essentially spiritual end. It grounds service and the virtues in relation to a person's creation in the image of God that accepts that we are each unique unities of body and soul, endowed with intellect, will, instinct, and emotion. We are human beings because we are made in the image of God (*Genesis*: 1: 26-28) and this is central to the Christian understanding of service. *Imago Dei* is the basis for our relational capacity with one another and God. It is therefore by good acts

that human beings contribute to the formation and understanding of their service-learning, and each person must decide whether they wish God's image to be reflected in them by co-operating with God's grace. This is because there is a wide gap between *knowing* and *doing*. Service to others is not secured through an intellectual education alone, but requires prayer, communal worship and a certain sacrifice on behalf of the student. Human beings need more than *information* – they need *motivation*, which faith can provide. The living out of a life of service consists in the exercise of the moral virtues, and this is ordinarily dependent on understanding and prudence. However, the Christian moral life must always constitute a personal encounter with God – an intimate relationship with the Divine through Christ and the Holy Spirit. Garcia-Contreras (2011, pp. 284-285) sums up the purpose of one Catholic university's service-learning programme:

Service-learning programs at the University of St. Thomas are, in essence, a concrete effort to promote solidarity, to foster human dignity, and to cultivate love. Solidarity is manifested through the very nature of the program. Program participants' lives are enriched by the shared experience of working with one another. Human dignity is fostered by the program's ability to recognize everyone involved as human beings with similar fears, goals, and aspirations. The program is, moreover, capable of transforming anyone's life regardless of the limitations of his/her own circumstances.

This approach reminds us that transformation through service-learning also involves spiritual formation.

Service-learning is indeed a concrete way of putting Gospel values into action, but it is also a spiritual exercise guided by Catholic social teaching. This can only be achieved through prayer and spiritual renewal that allow the Holy Spirit to work within us so that we can pray in solidarity with those who are vulnerable. We need to prayerfully discern and identify the actions to be taken. We need to make our theology practical. Consequently, we can gain a special knowledge, a kind of instinctive moral understanding, which is gifted to us by the Holy Spirit who potentially enters into the soul of every human being and transforms their actions. Christian wisdom goes beyond acquired knowledge; its capacity extends to the *correct application of knowledge so that*

Ultimately, worship aids our thinking and acting in the right ways in order that our spiritual growth becomes an outcome of participation in service-learning.

we can possess good sense and good judgement. Ultimately, worship aids our thinking and acting in the right ways in order that our spiritual growth becomes an outcome of participation in service-learning.

Christians are called by God “to be conformed to the image of his Son” (*Romans* 8:29-30), to “put on Christ”, to “follow Christ”, and to “be transformed into the likeness of Christ”. Christ is ‘the way, and the truth and the life’ (*John* 14: 6). The human person can be seen as: (a) bodily, (b) rational, (c) volitional, (d) relational, (e) substantially one, (f) created by God in his image, (g) weakened by sin, and (h) invited to become a member of the body of Christ through baptism. We are human beings, with a spiritual and immortal soul, gifted with intelligence and free will and made in the image and likeness of God. If we love God then we must love other humans whom God has created as each is an expression of His nature, an *imago dei*. Service thus flows from having experienced the love of God ourselves. Service must therefore be motivated to share God’s love with others which makes service-learning a religious act. The reason prayer is integral to service-learning is because it is a means of expressing God’s love and of seeking God’s help in the service of others. Each person bears the dignity of being made in the Image of God, and this dignity is promoted when, aided by grace, we choose to perform good human acts. However, sin alienates us from God, we cannot reach perfection in this life or even proceed towards it without God’s grace. It is also sin that disrupts our relationships with one another. Sin darkens our sight, unsettles our desires and weakens our will. Sin and its effects can be diminished and ultimately overcome through Jesus who invites us into a relationship with God. Yet although the ability to act virtuously comes principally through grace, it is not without co-operation and effort on our part.

Human beings have a natural inclination to follow and pursue the good; in other words, we have a natural capacity to discern between good and evil. Good is done when a person acts in a way that is authentically human, and a good life makes flourishing possible. It follows therefore, that the mind that is illuminated by God’s grace and guided by reason will grow in the service of others. This transformative process is ongoing and life-long and requires an openness, willingness, and commitment to be so transformed. As humans, we are always in a state of God-given potentiality, and the acquisition of virtues transforms us, not simply through gaining philosophical wisdom, but by becoming more Christlike. Since the good life for Catholics is holiness, it is to that end service-learning is truly directed: becoming what God wants us to be. God gives us unique capacities and is delighted when they are used well.

Catholic social teaching shows us that we can shape the social order around us and therefore we have moral responsibilities to do so. We bear religious responsibilities for the kind of “Kingdom” we build on earth. These responsibilities are this-worldly, but they are also transcendent and focused upon the salvation of our soul. There is a necessary connection between *metaphysics* (who I am as a rational social animal) *ethics* (achievement of happiness through living the virtues) *politics* (promotion of the common good) and re-

ligion (God as the beginning and end of all reality). Catholic social teaching informs us that the vision we have of service is something we strive towards as it is never fully realised. Our intellect is limited and can prevent us from living-up to the vision we set out to achieve, but to a much greater extent human sinfulness is by far the biggest barrier to us achieving our vision. Nevertheless, if we encounter something unjust, we must, as Christians, seek to set it right. The notion of Christian service transcends the temporal, the material, and the secular and points towards the eternal, the spiritual, and the religious. It is not simply about what ought I to do, but also what ought I to *be* and *become*. Christians are called by God to serve, and Catholic universities promote an “integral human development” that seeks the all-round flourishing of every person and community.

In summary, the Christian notion and practice of service is unique because its source is our restoration in Christ. It is about modelling Christ-like character virtues, particularly His servanthood, and is motivated by God’s love. Service-learning is understood in the light of Christ and the Catholic faith which transforms us. It is not “do-goodism”, as it must be an expression of God’s love for us and our love for Christ combined with our fidelity to the Church. Christian service learning must lead to practical acts of faith in action and must be a fundamental component of every Catholic college and university. Service-learning is a form of Christian witness and evangelisation. Graduates of Catholic institutions are expected to have a commitment to Christ’s command to serve in a just, love-affirming, liber-

Service-learning programmes in Catholic universities must have theological underpinnings that serve a spiritual purpose.

ating and life-giving way. Service-learning programmes in Catholic universities must have theological underpinnings that serve a spiritual purpose.

We now turn to the second part of this chapter to explore some recent research we, the authors, have undertaken on service that we believe may offer some useful insights for Catholic institutions.

A Habit of Service

Between 2015 and 2017 we in the Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues in the University of Birmingham undertook a study in the UK to find out what factors make it more or less likely that young people will develop a habit of service (Arthur et al., 2017). Over four and half thousand 16–20-year-olds participated in the research, making it the largest study of its kind in the world. In the study we defined a habit as a behaviour that has been

performed frequently in the past and is likely to be performed again in the future (Astin et al., 1998; Lally et al., 2010; Marta et al., 2014). We wanted to know what factors encourage or hinder young people to engage in habitual acts of service. Our findings provide evidence as to where Catholic universities might target their activities when initiating or developing their service-learning offer to students.

One of the most interesting findings from our research was that children who first get involved in service under the age of 10 were found to be more than two times more likely to have formed a habit of service than if they started aged 16–18 years old. Clearly, this means that students who arrive at university and have been exposed to service-learning experiences from a younger age are more likely to be predisposed to take part in service-learning activities whilst on campus. Given that Catholic universities are attractive to students of a Catholic faith, which promotes the virtue of service, many incoming students might have already formed a habit of service. Furthermore, research conducted in the UK shows that 10–20-year-olds who are involved in meaningful social action are slightly more likely to be religious (Pye & Michelmores, 2017). This is reinforced by a study which showed that young people who see religion as important to them are more likely to be involved in service than those who do not see religion as important (Youniss, McLellan and Yates, 1999, pp. 247-248).

Our research provides an indication of the areas on which Catholic universities should focus if they hope to ensure their service-learning offer cultivates a habit of service in their students, particularly those not already predisposed to the virtues. Five important findings show how these might inform the features of a successful campus-based service-learning programme. Those five findings identify that those who have made a habit of service are more likely than those who have not, to recognise the double benefit, attend an educational establishment where service is embedded in its culture and ethos, identify with civic and moral exemplars, believe they have the times skills and opportunities to undertake acts of service, and had an opportunity to critically reflect on their act of service. These five findings can be related to the following features on which Catholic universities should focus:

- ▶ **Recognise the double benefit:** Catholic universities should support students to take part in service that develops character whilst also making a meaningful difference to others and society more broadly.
- ▶ **Attend an educational establishment where service is embedded in its culture and ethos:** Catholic universities should ensure their service-learning programmes are well planned and clearly communicated so that all students and staff know about them.

- ▶ **Identify with civic and moral exemplars:** Catholic universities should expose students to exemplars of civic and moral virtues and help students to develop their own virtue identity.
- ▶ **Believe they have the time, skills and opportunities to undertake acts of service:** Catholic universities should take steps to remove any perceived or actual barriers to service-learning.
- ▶ **Had an opportunity to critically reflect on their act of service:** Catholic universities should build in opportunities to reflect into their service learning programmes.

Recognise the double benefit of service

When young people engage in meaningful acts of service, there is a “double benefit”: a contribution to the common good of society and the formation of one’s own character (Arthur et al., 2017). Our Habits of Service research showed that when young people believe their activities are socially impactful, whilst also developing their character, they are more likely to continue to serve. It is therefore important that university students undertaking service-learning programmes are both aware of the double benefit and more importantly take part in volunteering opportunities that are both meaningful and character building.

Catholic universities should help their students engage in authentic experiences that have a clear benefit to an individual, group or cause. These activities might be formally arranged by the university or signposted to students through regular communications. It is important that universities work with local community organisations, charities and other non-profits to identify projects and activities that tackle a social issue. Once identified the activities should be audited to see how students, taking into account their knowledge, skills and availability, are able to contribute positively and meaningfully. In our research we found that it was more important for those engaged in acts of service to see the impact of their activities on others, than measuring the scale of this impact. The onus is on universities to find activities that will enable most students to experience the “warm glow” (Andreoni, 1990) that comes from contributing to the common good.

The other side of the double benefit is character formation. Undertaking service, particularly structured activities, can be a great way for students to develop new skills, competencies and knowledge. It can also be a great way for them to develop character – to cultivate virtues, including compassion, courage, and justice, from undertaking meaningful acts of service. The cultivating and honing of moral, civic and intellectual virtues should be viewed as core to service-learning as it both empowers students to have a clearer sense

of their place in their world as well as helping them to evaluate the purpose of their own lives. It can also increase their sense of belonging to and connection with the university and its local community.

When a virtue becomes a habit, there is an element of rational, autonomous and critical thinking required to respond to different situations. (...) Service-learning is an effective way to help students to form character qualities during their time at Catholic universities. Through real-life experiential learning, they develop not only character virtues, but also the critical capacities to know when an act of service will be meaningful and benefit others.

It is important to stress at this point that to possess a habit of service or another virtue cannot be a form of automated behaviour, just as service-learning cannot be a form of rote learning. In *Metaphysics*, Aristotle contends that “‘habit’ means a disposition according to which that which is disposed is either well or ill disposed, and either in itself or with reference to something else” (Aristotle, 2007, V, 20).

Here Aristotle reminds us that

there is a situational and therefore cognitive element to any habit of virtue we might develop. When a virtue becomes a habit, there is an element of rational, autonomous and critical thinking required to respond to different situations. This is why Aristotle made such a large play of the so-called meta virtue of *phronesis*. *Phronesis*, commonly translated as practical wisdom, has experienced a renaissance in recent years (see, for example, Grossmann et al., 2020; Darnell et al., 2019). Classified as an intellectual virtue, it is also more than an intellectual virtue (Jubilee Centre, 2017). It is the overall quality of knowing what to do and what not to do when the demands of two or more qualities clash. It is the quality of knowing how to hit the so-called “sweet spot” of any particular virtue to ensure there is not a deficiency or excess. It is the quality of knowing the acceptable course of action in any given online situation. It requires that we possess intellectual character virtues including discernment, critical reasoning, and good judgement, while also knowing how to apply these in online interactions. So, *phronesis* will help students understand what acts of service are important, in what situations and in what amount. Calls have been made recently by the Jubilee Centre and the Oxford Character Project for universities to focus on practical wisdom as a key virtue to help students flourish now and in the future (Jubilee and OCP, 2020; Arthur, 2021).

Service-learning is an effective way to help students to form character qualities during their time at Catholic universities. Through real-life experiential learning, they develop not only character virtues, but also the critical capacities to know when an act of service will

be meaningful and benefit others.

Service learning embedded in the University culture and ethos

The #iwill Campaign, managed by Step up to Serve, ran in the UK between 2012 and 2020. The campaign's mission was to increase the number of 10–20-year-olds participating in youth social action – broadly understood as undertaking acts of meaningful service to others. At the heart of the campaign's mission were the 6 quality principles which, it was argued, defined good service-learning programmes. One of the six principles was that service-learning should be embedded into the day to day activities of schools, colleges and universities. Our research showed that when service is embedded into the culture and ethos of educational establishments, young people are more likely to have made a habit of service.

A Catholic university can make the claim that their service-learning programme is embedded when it cuts through everything they do – like the words on a stick of rock. Given that service and charity are central to many religions, including Christianity, it is likely that Catholic universities are predisposed to embedding service-learning programmes that are centrally organised and offered to all students learning on campus or even remotely. As we described in part one of this chapter this cannot be assumed. Over time, approaches to service-learning that are built on tradition alone, can lose focus. This can lead to a situation where a Catholic university assumes they are offering service-learning opportunities to their students, without being fully aware of what these are and where they take place. This is not to say that Catholic universities cannot successfully promote service-learning implicitly through the culture and ethos of the university, just that sometimes it is good to take stock, reflect and if necessary, revise programmes. This would require universities to ask questions such as: how do our students know that we prioritise service-learning? Where can our students find out about service learning? Are our students given time, support and recognition for undertaking service-learning activities? Catholic universities that are intentional, planned and reflective in their endeavours to promote service-learning are more likely to develop habits of service in their students.

To be planned, intentional and reflective requires university leaders to be on board. It is the leaders who will ensure that the universities commitment to service-learning is lived not laminated. By this we mean that it is not just simply mentioned in a university's mission and goals, but that there is an active flourishing service-learning programme of which all staff and students are aware of and in which many on campus take part in. Leaders can ensure that the university's commitment to service-learning are clearly communicated to students (Gaskin, 1998). Of course, leaders can only do so much, and it is the universi-

ty teaching and non-teaching staff who must reflect on what they are doing to embed service-learning opportunities into their work – whether it be research, teaching or other areas such as careers and extracurricular activities. A good sign that service-learning has been embedded is that students know why service-learning matters as well as have an array of service-learning opportunities in which they can take part.

Universities can embed service-learning into the university culture through recognition and reward. Our research showed that recognising and rewarding those who have undertaken acts of service was positively linked to individuals who had made a habit of service. When we probed this finding in interviews with some of the research participants, they told us that recognition and reward were welcome but not expected. They expressed a concern that service should not be driven by extrinsic motivations, for example just so they could add something to their CV or because there was a badge of honour for participation. Also, the interviewees told us that recognition need not be grand and might be a simple act of gratitude such as saying, “thank you”. For most interviewees this was reason enough to continue to be involved. Universities need to think about what level of recognition is suitable for service-learning as they should be mindful of students only signing up to programmes for more instrumental reasons. If recognition and rewards encourage students to get involved initially and sustain their participation, then these might be said to be well targeted.

Identify with moral and civic exemplars

The virtues can be considered the building blocks of character (Jubilee Centre, 2017). The virtues, in themselves, can be further broken down into their component parts. One of the components, in the Jubilee Centre Framework (2017), is virtue identity - defined as understanding oneself as strongly committed to the virtues. For example, those who undertake acts of service are likely to see these acts contributing to their identity. Our research showed that those who identified with exemplars of moral and civic behaviour were more likely to have made a habit of service. Furthermore, they had friends whom they felt would support this self-assessment. Interestingly the association with the virtues was so strong that the respondents with a habit of service were more familiar with all four virtue types – performance and intellectual as well as moral and civic (Jubilee Centre, 2017). Deeper analysis of the data showed that the act of service itself drove the virtue association and embedded a recognition and identification with all of the virtue types (Taylor-Collins et al., 2019).

Our research suggests that Catholic Universities that support their students to participate in service-learning can instigate a virtuous circle. The act of service not only strength-

ens virtue identity and a habit of service, it can also provide exemplars that will inspire others to take part. When students are exposed to exemplars it is more likely that a culture of service-learning will take hold across campus. Wider research on exemplars in volunteering adds some weight to this idea. Exemplars expect to see similar volunteering behaviours in others (Hart and Fegley, 1995); encourage and value volunteering in others (Pancer & Pratt, 1999) and provide practical support for it to occur (Marta & Pozzi, 2008). Just as our research showed that 10–20-year-olds are more likely to have formed a habit of service if their parents and friends also participated in acts of service, students will be inspired by those

It is important that Catholic universities, especially when launching new service-learning programmes, ensure students are exposed to rich and relatable exemplars of moral and civic virtues.

involved in service-learning programmes on campus. It is important that Catholic universities, especially when launching new service-learning programmes, ensure students are exposed to rich and relatable exemplars of moral and civic virtues.

Time, skills, opportunity and confidence

Students' ability to participate in service-learning opportunities is determined both by social structures (Callero et al., 1987, pp. 247-248) and personal circumstances (Pye & Michelmores, 2017). This means that even if students have a desire to participate in volunteering activities, the university must support them to do so – they must feel that it is possible (Ajzen & Driver, 1991). Primarily this requires Catholic universities to attend to practical concerns, including supporting students so they have the time, skills and confidence to feel that they can participate.

A UK study by Pye and Michelmores (2017) found that lack of time was the most common reason given by 10–20-year-olds for not participating in volunteering activities. Although universities can encourage students to undertake service through communications and offering opportunities through student Unions and Guilds, if students do not feel they have the time, then this will be a barrier to service-learning. One way to circumvent the time barrier is to build service-learning into the curriculum. Opportunities that link to the discipline specific curriculum, and are also socially purposeful, should be sought out by lecturers and tutors. These curriculum-based service-learning activities should be challenging, enjoyable and a positive addition to any curriculum as they provide an excellent form of experiential learning. The activities could be a one-off experience or longer – per-

haps students volunteering and learning in the local community over the course of a semester. Course leads need to think carefully about what community-based experiences link with their discipline as well as contend with the logistical and practical challenges linked to initiating such opportunities and safeguarding concerns. Curriculum based service-learning could be linked, in some part, to credits that contribute to a qualification.

Research shows that a reason 16–20-year-olds give for not volunteering is a perceived lack of skills or experience (Low et al., 2007, p. 69). Universities should not expect students to have the confidence or skills to take part in opportunities when they are made available. Some students might want to undertake service-learning but feel that they do not have anything to offer, or the opportunities require skills and expertise that students feel they do not possess. Universities should take such concerns seriously and ensure opportunities that require different levels of skills are on offer. They might also look to provide training and support for students to develop skills that make it possible for them to take part in meaningful service. If students don't feel they are contributing to the common good through their actions, this might actually undermine the service-learning programme as students become disillusioned and drop out.

Reflect on their experience of service

Critical reflection is a key element of moral development and also service-learning. Individuals who are able to think about their behaviour and actions are more likely to cultivate the virtues as well as hone the meta virtue of practical wisdom.

Critical reflection is a key element of moral development (Jubilee Centre, 2017) and also service-learning (Molee et al., 2011). Individuals who are able to think about their behaviour and actions are more likely to cultivate the virtues as well as hone the meta virtue of practical wisdom. Repeated re-

flexive behaviour is seen as contributing to virtue habits in Aristotelian philosophy (Kerr, 2011; Steutel & Spiecker, 2004).

Much research into service-learning emphasises the importance of reflection. In our research we found that inviting young people to tell their stories about the service activities they have been involved in encouraged reflection (Arthur et al., 2017). A multi-site study with undergraduate students in the US found that reflection activities significantly correlated with course quality (Hatcher et al., 2004). Importantly, the study also found

that reflection activities that focussed on personal values independently predicted course quality. Likewise, reflection activities that were a regular part of the course, and reflection activities that were structured with clear guidelines and directions, were also important.

Building on this and other research it is the nature of the reflection itself to which Catholic universities should attend. Opportunities to reflect should be offered to students in advance, during and after they take part in acts of service. Before activities commence, students should be asked to reflect on their expectations for the programme of service-learning and about the character qualities they hope to cultivate by participating in it. During the activity, programme leaders should encourage regular check-ins – these might take the form of reflective written accounts, group discussions or individual conversations. The focus should be on both sides of the double benefit – how do the students feel they are contributing to the service activity and what are they learning about themselves through their participation in it? The post activity reflective check in is also vital as this is a chance for students to reflect on the formative nature of their service-learning. Questions that can provide structure for this reflection might include; did it fulfil their expectations?, how do they feel they have developed?, and, what might they do differently next time?

Conclusion

This chapter argued that Catholic universities are well placed to run service-learning programmes and ensure that they have a double benefit. Such programmes can benefit students in terms of character development, and also bring benefits to the university and its wider community. In the first part of the chapter, we explored the virtue of service from a theological standpoint. We argued that the practice of the virtues, including service, is the road to a spiritual end. In the second part of the chapter, we built on this argument to show, drawing on our recent research, how Catholic universities can help to inculcate a habit of service in their students. We described how service-learning programmes that are embedded, that promote the double benefit, that expose students to moral and civic exemplars, that provide students with the time, skills and confidence to participate and encourage reflective practice, are more likely to be successful.

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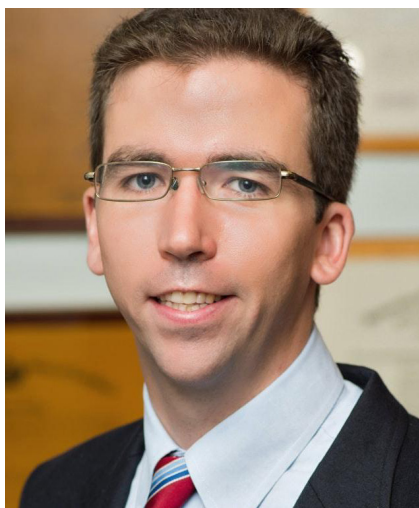
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11. BUILDING SOLIDARITY THROUGH A SPIRITUALITY OF ACTION

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Abstract

Many involved with service learning, especially in Catholic higher educational institutions, will be familiar with the approach to Christian praxis known as the see-judge-act method. For more than sixty years, this method has guided official Catholic social teaching and its implementation in ecclesial movements, organizations and in academic settings. Despite its influence, two elements often get overlooked in considering this method: the nature of this methodology as a spiritual practice known as the Review of Life; and the role of young adults and youth-led movements in the articulation and development of this approach.

The Review of Life methodology is the cornerstone of what a number of international Catholic youth movements describe as the Spirituality of Action. This spirituality complements the move towards a more critical, community-centered approach to service learning by bringing students to a deeper experience and understanding of both solidarity and agency.

This paper explores the Spirituality of Action in three steps. It begins with an overview of the development of this spirituality in the youth movements of specialized Catholic action, with a specific focus on the Young Christian Workers and International Movement of Catholic Students. It then identifies four ways in which this approach can enrich service-learning today. In the final part, the paper offers some more practical suggestions for how this method might be more intentionally incorporated into SL courses and programs.

Introduction: The Need for a Spirituality in Service Learning

The development of community-engaged or service-learning (SL) in higher education is an important element in the formation of holistic and ethical leaders for society and for the church. At its best, SL enhances understanding, engenders genuine solidarity among students and community partners, forms ethical leaders and strengthens the common good.

Service by university students can create a cheap solidarity, an approach that gives the appearance of doing good while reinforcing the status quo. One way to help students avoid the dangers of a cheap or performative solidarity is the Spirituality of Action. At the heart of this spirituality is the methodology and approach to Christian praxis known as the see-judge-act.

Service by university students, as Ivan Illich warned in a provocative 1968 address, is not without risks (Illich, 1990). It can create a cheap solidarity, an approach that gives the appearance of doing good while reinforcing the status quo. In some cases, done incorrectly, it may even cause harm or reinforce unjust distributions of power (Eby, 1998; Santiago-Ortiz, 2019).

One way to help students avoid the dangers of a cheap or performative solidarity is the Spirituality of Action³⁶. At the heart of this spirituality is the methodology and approach to Christian praxis known as the see-judge-act. Many involved with service learning, especially in Catholic higher educational institutions, will be somewhat familiar with this approach, which has long been associated with Catholic social teaching and social organizing (Brigham, 2019). Despite its influence, two elements often get overlooked in considering this method: the nature of this methodology as a spiritual practice known as the Review of Life; and the role of young adults in the articulation and development of this methodology and spirituality.

This spirituality and the related practice of the Review of Life (RoL³⁷) has the potential to bring students to a deeper experience and understanding of both solidarity and agency. This approach complements the move towards a more critical and community-centered approach to SL (Mitchell, 2008; Santiago-Ortiz, 2019). This paper explores the historical development of this spirituality, the ways in which it enriches SL today, and concludes with a practical guide for integrating the RoL in service-related courses and programs.

A Spirituality of, for, and by Young Adults

One of the unique features of the Spirituality of Action is the way it was developed, refined, and disseminated by young adults themselves in the youth and student movements of specialized Catholic action. Not to be confused with the more top-down model

³⁶ Hereinafter Spirituality of Action can be identified by the acronym: SoA

³⁷ Hereinafter Review of Life can be identified by the acronym: RoL

of general Catholic action championed in many Catholic circles before the Second Vatican Council, the “specialized” approach originates in two sources.

The Young Christian Workers: The first source can be traced to a study circle created in 1912 by a group of young women workers from the industrial city of Laaken, Belgium. There, young women were assisted by Joseph Cardijn, a young priest who had earlier pledged his priesthood to serve the working class (Cardijn, 1955).

With these young workers, Cardijn proposed a unique model and spiritual response to the inequities and injustice of the industrial era. Unlike other pastoral approaches, the women, many illiterate and without formal education, were given space to be “*completely responsible for the finances, accounts and secretarial work of their organization*” (De La Bédoyère, 1959, p. 44). This was a major step forward from the paternalistic styles that often marked the church’s efforts for the young and for the working class. Soon, other study circles were created, and a more refined approach emerged.

Following the First World War, there was a renewed effort to transform these worker study circles into an organized movement. A growing number of young workers felt drawn to join. While imprisoned during the war, Cardijn communicated with some of the workers and began to develop a more robust vision of a spirituality, methodology and organization.

This, however, faced a significant obstacle with the top-down model of “general Catholic action” promoted by the church hierarchy, including Cardinal Désiré-Joseph Mercier of Brussels. According to Mercier and the general model, all lay organizing should fall under the centralized official organs of Catholic action set up by the hierarchy. Pius XI famously defined this official approach in 1928 as the “*participation and co-operation of the laity in the hierarchical apostolate*” (Pius XI, 1978, p. 31).

Cardijn, by contrast, sought to establish a “specialized movement” autonomous from the general model, where the direction was in the hands of the young people themselves (Cardijn, 2017, pp. 4-5). For Cardijn, the empowerment of young people to be leaders in their own movements offered an important pedagogical function. The model he envisioned would be one where young people “*form each other, support each other, help each other, help each other, love each other, and together prepare themselves for their future*” (Cardijn, 1955, pp. 64-65)

In 1925, after failing to convince Cardinal Mercier, the young priest made his first trip to Rome to make an appeal to Pope Pius XI directly. In an unscheduled private audience, Cardijn

secured permission for this specialized, autonomous movement. In the following months, the first national congress of the *Jeunesse ouvrière chrétienne* or JOC (YCW in English) was organized with Fernand Tonnet, a young worker, as president (De La Bédoyère, 1959).

Soon, thousands of cell groups were created in Belgium under four different national movements organized by gender and language. By 1939, YCW groups existed in fifty countries and following World War II, they formed the International Young Christian Workers (IYCW) (Hari, 2000). In the 1980s, some YCW national groups disaffiliated from the IYCW and formed a parallel structure, the International Coordination of the Young Christian Workers (ICYCW).

According to the IYCW *Declaration of Principles*, the YCW is fundamentally a “movement of, among, by and for young workers... a movement of education through action. It takes action right where the young workers are, and considers its task of education a priority” (IX. International Council of the IYCW, 1995, no. 6). This task of education is chiefly done through small groups using the Review of Life or see-judge-act method.

As the YCW models spread globally, young people in other milieus, including students, young farmers, and middle-class youth formed their own autonomous movements and each one, in turn, gave rise to adult counterparts. Today, there are YCW groups in over 90 countries as well as sister movements of students, adult workers, young farmers, adult farmers, and children (ICYCW, 2021³⁸; IYCW, 2021³⁹).

International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS): A second source of specialized Catholic action emerged as a response to the First World War. In July of 1921, student leaders from seventeen European Countries, Argentina, the United States and Java convened for a peace conference in Fribourg, Switzerland. The delegates, many of who had recently been fighting on opposite sides of the war, agreed to form an International Confederation of Catholic Students organized with the emblem Pax Romana. For the students involved in this pioneering student-led initiative, there was a profound sense of responsibility to take action in society (de Weck, 1946). This mission compelled them to develop relief programs, engage in advocacy with the League of Nations, and organize trainings and conferences on the responsibility of the student in the face of social themes.

Following the Second World War, Pax Romana reorganized into two autonomous movements. The International Movement of Catholic Students (IMCS) for university students

38 ICYCW (2021). About. International Coordination of Young Christian Workers. Retrieved from <http://www.cijoc.org/node/3>.

39 IYCW (2021). National Movements. JOCI-IYCW. Retrieved from <https://joci.org/en/who-are-we/la-joci-dans-le-monde-2.html>.

and the International Catholic Movement for Intellectual and Cultural Affairs (ICMICA) for graduates and professionals. The student movement spread quickly organizing regional programs and secretariats in the Americas, Asia, Africa, and Europe. In many places, particularly in Iberian Peninsula and Latin America, IMCS adopted the YCW cell-based, Review of Life model. This was especially the case where IMCS included the Young Catholic Students (YCS), a sister movement modeled more explicitly on the YCW and see-judge-act method (Pelegri, 1979). In other places, particularly in Asia, IMCS groups lived the Spirituality of Action and Review of Life through an action-reflection-action approach. Today, there are IMCS groups in more than 75 countries and YCS groups in more than 80 (IMCS Pax Romana, 2021⁴⁰; IYCS, 2016⁴¹).

Like the YCW, IMCS emphasizes the autonomy and responsibility of students themselves. Among its core aims, the *IMCS Statutes* identifies the promotion of “*the student apostolate among students in higher education stressing their responsibility in life, Church’s mission and in the world*” and “*to encourage pedagogies of action which help students integrate their Christian faith in their efforts to build a more just society*” (IMCS Pax Romana, 2007⁴²).

These are not efforts by the church for young people, but rather, movements *of, for, and by* young people themselves (Ahern, 2015). Despite their age and status, young people in this model are encouraged to take responsibility and action here and now. This has been described by some as reflecting a “jocist mystique”, a style of learning and working with young people that allows them to organize themselves and evangelize their peers.

The vision and inductive methodology adopted by YCW, IMCS and others had a notable impact on church teaching over the past century. In *Mater et Magistra*, Pope St. John XXIII endorsed the see-judge-act method developed by the YCW and popularized by the other movements as the approach for the church’s social analysis (Cimperman, 2015; Wijzen et al., 2005).

There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: look, judge, act. (John XXIII, 1961, MM, 236).

40 IMCS Pax Romana (2021). Who We Are? The International Movement of Catholic Students. Retrieved from <https://www.imcs-miec.org/who-we-are-2>

41 IYCS (2016). Who We Are. International Young Catholic Students. Retrieved from <https://iycs-jeci.org/who-we-are>.

42 IMCS Pax Romana (2007). International Statutes. International Movement of Catholic Students. Retrieved from <https://www.imcs-miec.org/statutes/>.

Subsequently, nearly all official documents of Catholic social doctrine follow the see-judge-act pattern.

During Vatican II and after, the spirituality of IMCS, YCS and YCW helped move sectors of the church to rethink the meaning of the lay apostolate and help to reorient the church towards liberation and praxis. Several former leaders of these movements were selected to be among the small group of lay auditors at the council and Pope Paul VI, himself a former chaplain to the IMCS group in Italy, named Cardijn a bishop and cardinal just before the last session of Vatican II (Goldie, 1974). Many of the pioneering liberation theologians, including Gustavo Gutiérrez, Tissa Balasuriya, and Albert Nolan were deeply engaged in these movements. *“It was from both the practice and theory of these groups”,* as Enrique Dussel points out, *“that the most important theological break in Latin American history was to emerge”* (Dussel, 1992, p. 392; Bidegaín, 1985).

Three Truths: The specialized model embraced by the YCW, IMCS, and YCS is grounded in what the movements describe as a Spirituality of Action. In his accompaniment of the YCW movements, Cardijn framed this spirituality according to what he described as “three truths”, the truths of life, faith, and action (Cardijn, 1935).

The truth of life speaks to the beginning point of the Spirituality of Action, the lived experience of human beings and their communities. This spirituality, like its Review of Life method, in other words, is rooted in experience rather than abstract theory. As a Christian spirituality that takes the Incarnation seriously, the Spirituality of Action prioritizes in a special way the experience of the poor and the excluded rather than the privileged and politically powerful. This is a key feature shared with many SL programs.

While many students will come into service-learning knowing full well the experience of suffering and injustice, others especially those from middle class comfortable backgrounds might

Like the critical approach to service-learning, the Review of Life and Spirituality of Action more broadly, seek to move past the soap bubbles that reinforce the status quo and mask the inequalities of power and privilege. By attending to experience, by taking life seriously, the Spirituality of Action helps to pop the bubbles of illusion and indifference.

find discovering this truth disturbing and eye-opening. In his visit to the Mediterranean island of Lampedusa following the drowning of many migrants nearby, Pope Francis decried the temptation to ignore what is really happening around us by retreating into “soap bubbles... In this world of globalization we have fallen into a globalization

of indifference. We are accustomed to the suffering of others, it doesn't concern us, it's none of our business" (Francis, 2013).

Like the critical approach to service-learning (Mitchell, 2008), the RoL and Spirituality of Action more broadly, seek to move past the soap bubbles that reinforce the status quo and mask the inequalities of power and privilege. By attending to experience, by taking life seriously, the Spirituality of Action helps to pop the bubbles of illusion and indifference.

While looking at reality reveals many positive dimensions of life—from the joy of friendship to the beauty of the natural world—experience, particularly when viewed from the perspective of the poor and marginalized, illuminates the stark reality of sin, of suffering, of the crucifixion. For far too many people this means dehumanizing working conditions, war, inequality, racial discrimination, ecological destruction, human rights abuses, and marginalization. As Pope Francis summarizes, for far too many people *"it is a struggle to live and, often, to live with precious little dignity"* (Francis, 2013, EG, 52).

The truth of life finds itself in contradiction with a second truth, the truth of faith. This truth points to the fullness of God's Kingdom preached and initiated by Jesus Christ. This is the ground of all Christian life, belief in a good creator God, a God of life and love who is capable of making "all things new" (*Revelation* 21:5). The Biblical tradition offers many inspiring metaphors of this reality, from the peaceable kingdom in the *Book of Isaiah* (11:1-9) to the many images of the heavenly banquet in the *Gospel of Matthew*. This vision of God's Kingdom is about wholeness and holiness, resurrection and healing. Michael Deeb, a South African Dominican and former IMCS and YCS chaplain, puts it this way:

the truth of faith...assures us that we are all created in God's image. Hence, as children of God, we believe that all people are called to be co-creators in building a world that God intended, a world of love, joy, freedom, justice, peace, sharing, solidarity and service—the reign or kingdom of God. It is a world that, in our deepest being, we all really desire. (Deeb, 2018, pp. 199-200).

What can be done in the face of this contradiction or dialectic between a reality too often marked by suffering and the vision of the Reign of God offered by the gospel? Between the truth of life and the truth of faith?

One response involves retreating into the comfort of one's soap bubbles, looking away from the suffering of others and overlooking how one might be complicit in structural injustice. This happens in a number of ways and is supported by social structures that benefit from the status quo including patriarchy, clericalism, consumerism, and racism.

A somewhat opposing response dismisses the truth of faith by rejecting the core of the Christian message as an unrealistic utopic dream. One version of this response is to relegate the Gospel to another plane of existence. Yes, Jesus proclaimed and initiated the Kingdom of God, but this is something for the afterlife, for some spiritual realm detached from the realities of the world, or at best it is the job of saints, priests and nuns.

The Spirituality of Action, however, offers another response to the dialect. The spirituality of action is not content with the status quo and the continued existence of suffering and injustice. In the face of the contradiction between faith and life, Cardijn points to a third truth, the “truth of action”. What is needed to confront this contradiction, he insisted, is organized action on the part of young people at the local, national and international level:

Leaders and members learning to see, judge, and act; to see the problem of their temporal and eternal destiny to judge the present situation, the problems, the contradiction...; to act with a view to the conquest of their temporal and eternal destiny. To act individually and collectively, in a team, in a local section, in a regional federation, in a national movement, in meetings, in achievement, in life and in their environment, forming a single front... (Cardijn, 1935).

Action has long been a central element in the Christian moral life. In the *Gospel of Matthew*, for instance, Jesus laments those who fail to take action as being like the foolish who build their houses on sand (7:24-27). In a similar vein, in what is likely the most famous part of his epistle, St. James decries those who claim to have faith but who fail to take action for the poor. “*Faith without action*”, he teaches “*is dead*” (James 2:17).

Fifty years ago in 1971, two texts embody the Spirituality of Action. In *Octogesima Adveniens*, St. Pope Paul VI calls all Christians to examine what they have done and what they have failed to do in regard to the social questions. Like St. James, Pope Paul stresses that words alone are insufficient: “*It is not enough to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustice and utter prophetic denunciations; these words will lack real weight unless they are accompanied for each individual by a livelier awareness of personal responsibility and by effective action*” (Paul VI, 1971, OA, 48). Echoing St. John XXIII, Pope Paul affirms the see-judge-act method as a way for local Christian communities to respond to social questions (Paul VI, 1971, OA, 4).

Several months later, *Justicia in Mundo*, the final statement of the 1971 Synod of Bishops, makes clear the need to put faith into action “*Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world*”, as the Synod famously states in its introduction, “*fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel*” (Synod of Bishops, 1971/2010).

Deepening Spirituality and Solidarity in Service Learning

How might this spirituality and the distinctive approach offered by specialized Catholic action enrich and inform service and community-engaged learning today? Recovering this spirituality which frames the see-judge-act approach has the potential to enrich SL in at least four ways.

i. First, the Spirituality of Action draws attention to the value of experience as a starting point for personal and social transformation. In the Review of Life methods, the foundation of social engagement (the see stage) is always reality. Given the nature of service-learning, this commitment to the lived reality of people and community organizations is likely a value most programs already possess. At its best, SL, like the movements of specialized Catholic action, acknowledges that much can be learned in the direct engagement with people who are poor and marginalized.

For example, in the All India Catholic University Federation (AICUF), the Indian affiliate of IMCS, opening university students to the lived realities of the marginalized has been a central part of their pedagogical approach since the 1950s. Marina D'Costa, a former national leader in AICUF comments on the importance of "exposure" in her own formation:

In my formative years in AICUF I explored villages in South, West, and North India that gave me a picture of what India really looks like. By offering an alternative approach to education, rather than the traditional classroom learning, AICUF pushes students into uncomfortable zones that lead them to awaken their inner selves and raise critical questions. (D'Costa, 2018, p. 64)

Seeing experience through a compassionate lens is a foundational value in the Spirituality of Action. But it is only a first step. By itself, experience, even when it facilitates compassion, is insufficient and can even be harmful to community partners. This leads to a second dimension of the Spirituality of Action critical analysis.

and more lasting our compassion becomes" (Nolan, 2009, p. 38).

For the South African Dominican theologian Albert Nolan, who has long worked the specialized Catholic action, exposure, when done correctly, is an important element in developing compassion. "The more we are exposed to the suffering of the poor", he writes, "the deeper

From the Christian point of view, getting out of one's bubble and becoming exposed to the realities of those around us, particularly the poor, can be transformative. The Chris-

tian looks to experience, not because it is “interesting”, “tweetable”, or because it will look good on a resume. The Christian looks to experience because it is a source of revelation, along with scripture, tradition, and reason. Christians look to experience because they can discover God at work in our midst. Taking time to consider the beauty of creation, for example, illuminates the work of God, the creator. “*The entire material universe*”, as Pope Francis points out in *Laudato Si’*, “*speaks of God’s love, his boundless affection for us. Soil, water, mountains: everything is, as it were, a caress of God*” (Francis, 2015, LS, 84).

In the *Gospel of Matthew*, Jesus tells us that he is present whenever two or three people are gathered in his name (18:20) and in a special way in the hungry, the thirsty, the stranger, the naked, the sick, and the imprisoned (25:31-46). And in the *Acts of the Apostles* and writings of St. Paul, we are assured that the Holy Spirit is at work in the world, including through the animating gifts of Grace.

Seeing experience through a compassionate lens is a foundational value in the Spirituality of Action. But it is only a first step. By itself, experience, even when it facilitates compassion, is insufficient and can even be harmful to community partners. This leads to a second dimension of the SoA critical analysis.

ii. Second, the SoA affirms the need for critical social analysis. Without going deeper, exposure programs risk becoming self-referential, experiences of service-tourism, and charity programs that reinforce the status quo. To avoid this, the Spirituality of Action emphasizes the need for critical analysis and prayerful discernment on experience and reality. The Review of Life methodologies of the see-judge-act, action-reflection-action, and pastoral spiral are all aimed at this task. Theologian Maria Cimperman offers a helpful guide to address six “key areas of social analysis”, namely sociological, economic, political, cultural, environmental and religious analysis (Cimperman, 2015, p. 85).

In the Christian tradition, wisdom, study, analysis, and discernment have long been recognized as important elements. St. Paul, for example, calls upon believers to not accept the status quo by discerning God’s will and determining what is good (*Romans* 12:2, 1 *Thessalonians* 5:19). Like experience, the Christian tradition understands reason to be a source of revelation. Created in the image and likeness of God (*Genesis* 1:27) human beings, endowed with intelligence and reason, even those without university degrees or formal education, are called to put this intelligence in the service of God.

In the Review of Life methods, special attention is paid to this prayerful discernment to uncover and investigate the root causes and structural dynamics behind the suffering, injustice, and power inequalities experienced by community partners. Too often, the suf-

fering experienced by community partners are symptoms of deeper socio-economic and cultural problems that must be uncovered.

As Nolan points out, *“poverty in the world today is not simply misfortune, bad luck, or inevitable – the result of laziness ignorance or a lack of development. Poverty in the world today is the direct result of the political and economic policies”* (Nolan, 2009, p. 40). This same thing can be said for the suffering caused by war, climate change, racial and gender-based discrimination. The Spirituality of Action demands analysis of the root causes and structural violence that cause harm *“as a result of unequal distribution of power and privilege”* (Moe-Lobeda, 2013, p. 72).

College and university students by their nature have the time, resources and arguably a vocational responsibility to engage in the social analysis and praxis necessary to uncover these structures. Critical SL offers a unique opportunity to help students better understand the complexities of the reality, power distributions, and the intersectionality with other social problems and social structures (Mitchell, 2008; Santiago-Ortiz, 2019). For example, if community partners are experiencing homelessness or a lack of access to decent affordable housing, service-learning might invite students to study the roots of the crisis by examining housing policies and the relationship between housing and deeper social sins, such as racism, sexism, classism, and ecological destruction.

As students engage in social analysis, they may discover that they unwillingly benefit from or perpetrate the unjust dehumanizing social structures that harm community partners. This can be challenging. Coming to terms with unjust social realities, their deeper structural roots, and the complicity of many of us awakens what the Brazilian educational theorist Paulo Freire describes as “consciousness-raising” or conscientization (Freire, 1970). From the perspective of Christian theology, this may even reflect a type of conversion experience. For some students, this can be as jarring and sudden as the experience of St Paul on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-19).

Done well, this analysis will, as Albert Nolan suggests, break open a desire to *“want to engage in certain activities that are calculated to bring about social and political change”* (Nolan, 2009, p. 42). Channeling this desire into effective and long-term strategies for change, however, cannot happen in isolation and this illuminates a third value of the Spirituality of Action: community.

iii. The Spirituality of Action is profoundly communal. “Jesus’s followers”, as Gustavo Gutiérrez points out, *“should live their faith in the God of life in community”* (Gutierrez, 2011, p. 76). For the movements of specialized Catholic action, this often takes shape in

small groups or clubs that meet regularly according to the Review of Life method. These clubs or local communities then link up with one another in national and international movements.

In the context of service-learning, community can be facilitated in a number of ways. Within classroom settings, small groups can be cultivated among students throughout the academic term. In immersion programs where a group of students may travel for service, building a sense of community before, during and after the trip are important elements.

At Manhattan College in New York, for example, a number of students are involved in the Lasallian Outreach Volunteer Experience or LOVE program where they visit partners at a number of sites in the United States and beyond. As the program has developed, campus leaders have recognized the importance of facilitating a community experience. *“Preparation and critical reflection in teams and small groups is essential”* according to Lois Harr and Jennifer Robinson. Weekly meetings of the students, before, during, and after trips, *“challenge students to examine their own assumptions, to recognize their own perspectives, and to begin to imagine from the perspective of another. Notions of charity and justice come into play, helping students uncover systemic injustice as they face the challenges of the immediate charitable responses and the need for long term, just solutions”* (Harr & Robinson, 2018, pp. 147-148).

Being a part of a community, including small groups in classrooms, can help students to support one another and to discover a fourth dimension of the Spirituality of Action: agency for social transformation.

iv. Fourth, the ultimate goal of the Spirituality of Action is to mobilize agency for personal and social transformation. In societies marked by patriarchal ageism, consumerism, and clericalism, young adults are often told they do not have agency. They are told that they are the future, but not the present.

The *Spirituality of Action*, by contrast, affirms the agency and social responsibility of young people in the world here and now. Young people are not just the future but the present. In his 2019 exhortation *Christus Vivit*, Pope Francis captures call to action well. After affirming the role of young people in taking to the streets for social justice, he urges them to become “protagonists of change”:

“...Continue to fight apathy and to offer a Christian response to the social and political troubles emerging in different parts of the world...do not be bystanders in life. Get involved! Jesus was not a bystander. He got involved. Don't stand aloof, but immerse yourself-

ves in the reality of life, as Jesus did". Above all, in one way or another, fight for the common good, serve the poor, be protagonists of the revolution of charity and service, capable of resisting the pathologies of consumerism and superficial individualism (Francis, 2019, CV, 174).

Discovering one's agency as protagonists of change is something many young people find with the Spirituality of Action and this can have a lasting impact on a young person's sense of vocation. Writing on her experience in IMCS groups in Mali, Afou Chantal Bengaly speaks about this. *"Through my involvement in the local community, I felt called to serve the students of my country, not just my university. I felt called by God to work for social justice in my country...to be an agent in correcting the injustices of this world"* (Bengaly, 2018).

In an SL setting, helping young people engender a sense of agency as protagonists may not always be easy but it is, as Tania Mitchell (2008) point out, an important part of the critical service-learning approach. Power and agency in traditional classrooms, after all, are often in the hands of professors and university administrators. Finding ways to give students some agency and responsibility in determining the design of the course and implementation of projects would be an important challenge offered by this Spirituality of Action.

Moreover, the Spirituality of Action challenges SL to move from analysis and activities to action. Among the movements of specialized Catholic action an important distinction is often made between actions and activities. Activities are those things that we do without much reflection or analysis. These can be very necessary: reminding students about the time and location of the next meeting; advertising upcoming speakers; organizing travel to the community partner.

Actions, by contrast, are those things done that flow from the other three values, the critical analysis on experience done in community. Actions do not always mean doing more. Sometimes actions may even call us to do less, but in a more intentional way. Actions go beyond the "clicktivism" and shallow self-gratifying behavior we find on social media. Simply liking a page, joining a group or sharing a story are not actions.

The Review of Life in Service-Learning: A Brief Guide

The main RoL methodology, commonly known as the see-judge-act, offers a practical way to help move students to action. This methodology can be incorporated into SL courses in at least three ways.

First, the Review of Life can serve as a framework for designing SL courses and programs. Second, the Review of Life can be incorporated into SL courses through thematic modules. A third way to bring in the Review of Life into service our name would be to use the see-judge-act method as the basis of debriefing sessions following student service experiences and exposures.

First, the RoL can serve as a framework for designing SL courses and programs. For traditional courses with experiential components, the syllabus can be designed to roughly follow the see-judge-act pattern, beginning with the experience of the community partners, analyzing that experience in light of course themes, and exploring possible responses.

For example, an SL course with a focus on ecological justice can begin with introducing students to the realities of climate change in their communities with students visiting local partners affected by or working on these issues. The students can then reflect on these experiences through scientific and ethical texts, including scholarly articles on the roots of the climate crisis and Pope Francis' ecological and encyclical *Laudato Si'*. The course would be directed towards student assignments that explore, evaluate and proposed lines of action based on the experience of the community partners. Students would be encouraged to propose lines of action that they could actually act upon and to do so in consultation with community partners.

Second, the Review of Life can be incorporated into SL courses through thematic modules. The IMCS and IYCS chaplain, Buenaventura Pelegri, describes this as a "planned Review of life" (Pelegri, 1979, p. 176). This would invite students to engage experience through the lens of specific themes related to the course topic, Catholic social teaching, key human rights, sustainable development goals, or other thematic groupings. In her book, *See, Judge, Act: Catholic Social Teaching and Service Learning*, Erin Brigham (2019) offers helpful resources to engage key themes Related to Catholic social teaching using the seed judge act method. These suggested resources can serve as modules to assist students in understanding the connections between the experiences of community partners and the insights of Catholic social teaching. These thematic modules can be adapted for students involved in a short term or semester-long community engagement.

A third way to bring in the Review of Life into service our name would be to use the see-judge-act method as the basis of debriefing sessions following student service experienc-

es and exposures. This small group approach would be most consistent with the model as it originally developed in the YCW, YCS and IMCS movements.

In semester-long courses where students engage the community throughout the term, these debriefings can be built into the weekly rhythm of the course. Organizing this with groups of six to ten students would be valuable. For example, half of the weekly class sessions could be devoted to small group reflection using the see-judge-act model.

For more intensive short-term exposure programs, such as a weeklong visit to a site over university holidays, this group debriefing could happen every evening. In either case, the following guide might be helpful as a basis for unpacking the experience.

Opening prayer: Many, but not all, Review of Life groups begin and end with prayer. Small groups following the see-judge-act approach are ideal places to bring in more explicit prayer and spirituality into the SL experience. Depending on the context and the comfort of students this can be done in a variety of ways from beginning each session with the gospel reading of that Sunday to sharing poetry or music.

Reviewing past actions (if applicable): Before taking up a new experience, the community should review any previous commitments decided from the last gathering.

i. Have we followed up on the commitments we made?

ii. If yes, what results did we see? If no, why not?

This need not take a lot of time. And if the action needs more thought and reflection, the group may decide to focus on this for the rest of the meeting.

See: The first stage in the review of life process is sharing experience. Some SL programs utilize journaling as a way to encourage self-reflection among students and advisors. Unpacking one's experience in the community in such reflective ways can help students better prepare to share that experience with others.

In the tradition of the Review of Life, these experiences are often called "facts". Sometimes community settings can be spaces for emotional and cathartic relief this can be useful, but the review of life is not intended as group therapy it is fundamentally a process for personal and social transformation.

i. Brief check-in: What have you seen with your community engagement over the past day/week? What has moved you and why?

ii. Identifying a “fact:” after the common sharing, the group can decide to pick one or more experience, a fact, to examine more deeply. This should be specific and not simply a vague impression. As a group they seek to get more clarity on the fact:

- a.* What do the community partners feel about this?
- b.* Who is involved? Who benefits? Who suffers? Who is indifferent?
- c.* What are some of the deeper power dynamics or structures of sin/violence that are at play?
- d.* How are we implicated in this experience? Have we contributed to or benefited from this situation in any way?

Judge: The second stage of the review of life opens the door to think more critically in a discerning way. Faculty and advisors can help students by preparing/assigning as readings some of the texts from Catholic social teaching, the work of Catholic social organizations, and scripture that relate directly to the course focus. In this space, students, including those who do not identify as Catholic or Christian, can be invited to build on the first stage to “*define what is good and right, which can be drawn from any number of sources—religious doctrine, scriptures, cultural mores, philosophical perspectives, the teachings of inspirational figures*” (Brigham, 2019, p. 24). Guiding questions include:

- i.* How does this experience relate to course readings?
- ii.* How does this experience relate to the teachings of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of God that he preached (the truth of faith)?
- iii.* How does it relate to other religious traditions and other moral-ethical frameworks (e.g., human rights, civil rights, ecojustice)?

Act: The third stage opens up the space for students to engage the realities facing the community partners with a goal towards personal and collective transformation. Here, the group is invited to identify concrete actions that can be taken with community partners. These actions should be both practical and prophetic. In other words, they should be able to be accomplished but also be challenging and transformative. For example, “we will end homelessness” is not an achievable goal for a group of students in an SL course, but finding a room on campus for a specific family or setting up a meeting with a government official to discuss housing policy could be. Careful attention, as Brigham points out, should be paid to

distinguish between actions aimed at addressing immediate needs (charity) and longer-term actions aimed at addressing the deeper roots causes (justice): “*distinguishing between charity and justice can be a helpful reminder that each aim is important and incomplete without the other*” (Brigham, 2019, p. 25). Key guiding questions in this stage include:

i. What actions are needed to address both the immediate needs (charity) and deeper structural issues (justice)?

ii. What do community partners believe we should do with them?

iii. What impact can we have as students? As a university community?

iv. Can we partner with existing movements and organizations already working on this issue?

How will we make sure that community partners remain active agents in the design, implementation and evaluation of our actions?

It is important to note here that this guide for integrating the Spirituality of Action into service-learning through the Review of Life should not be understood in a formulaic or rigid way. The see-judge-act method is not meant as a type of checklist, like the detailed

While it emerged in the context of movements of, for and by young adults, the Spirituality of Action strengthens and supports the critical approach to SL by drawing attention to several values, including experience, critical analysis, community, and goal of personal and social transformation. This spirituality, and its method of the Review of Life, can enrich service-learning by engendering solidarity through agency.

instructions on how to put together a new piece of Scandinavian furniture. Instead, the review of life proposes a style or way of approaching social questions that can and should be adapted to different realities the rhythm often becomes clear after participants engage in it several times. soon many students will discover that the review of life becomes a way of seeing the world and helps to shape their response to social injustice.

Conclusion

In his 2015 address to popular movements, Pope Francis concluded with a call to action: *“the future of humanity does not lie solely in the hands of great leaders, the great powers and the elites. It is fundamentally in the hands of peoples and in their ability to organize”* (Francis, 2015). At its core, the Spirituality of Action is about mobilizing people, particularly young people to be as agents for change in the community.

While it emerged in the context of movements of, for and by young adults, the Spirituality of Action strengthens and supports the critical approach to SL by drawing attention to several values, including experience, critical analysis, community, and goal of personal and social transformation. This spirituality, and its method of the RoL, can enrich service-learning by engendering solidarity through agency.

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12. THE ROLE OF EDUCATIONAL ACCOMPANIMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SERVICE-LEARNING PROJECTS

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Abstract

The integral development of the capacities of university students, directed towards building a more just society for all persons, is part of the Mission and Identity of Catholic Institutions of Higher Education. This is reflected in the foundational documents of the institutions and the Magisterium of the Church on Catholic education.

Based on this purpose, the contribution of the faculty in the process of accompanying students who carry out service-learning projects constitutes a privileged space which can favor the opening of the self to the community and, from the encounter with others, the opening to transcendence.

This chapter addresses the role of accompaniment which the faculty can adopt, materialized through the outline of an educational itinerary to train in humanity. The proposal is based on Frances Torralba's processes of cultivating spiritual intelligence, Teilhard de Chardin's three classic personalization phases and Nieves Tapia's reflection activities.

Introduction

In the social Encyclical *Laudato Si'* (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 114) and in the Apostolic Constitution *Veritatis Gaudium* (Pope Francis, 2017, VG, proem.3) on ecclesiastical universities and colleges, the Supreme Pontiff calls for a cultural revolution which is authentic and bold, a true process of conversion for all educational agents. Faced with the signs of collapse of our world, the Pope warns us that those special dimensions of the person which have remained hidden by the prevailing paradigms of progress, of an economic and

rational nature, run the risk of becoming invisible. Nobody doubts that we are not living an era of change, but a change of era (Pope Francis, 2013, EG, 52), which requires a courageous and hopeful perspective from Catholic educators.

Crises can, nonetheless, also represent an opportunity and, thus, following Pope Francis, we need to build leadership that can open new paths and establish global development models in order to enable a new humanism, fraternal and supportive, to emerge.

Crises can, nonetheless, also represent an opportunity and, thus, following Pope Francis, we need to *build leadership that can open new paths* (Pope Francis, 2015, VG, proem.3) and establish global development models in order to enable a new humanism,

fraternal and supportive, to emerge. Education and research, especially when promoted by Catholic Institutions of Higher Education, constitute a privileged space to contribute to this necessary humanization of education, seed and principle of fraternity (CEC, 2017, 10).

This call was already announced by Benedict XVI, who, taking up what previous encyclical letters had pointed out in the Council of Gaudium et Spes and—more specifically—the Encyclical *Gravissimum Educationis*, described the situation as an “educational emergency”. Pope John Paul II had previously mentioned this in his Apostolic Constitution *Ex Corde Ecclesiae*, when he urged Catholic universities to serve humanity, knowledge and truth. Pope Francis, persuaded that this cultural revolution requires the transformation of education, promotes—within the framework of the plenary assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education—the Global Compact on Education as an interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, integral and inclusive educational alliance for a humanity that is more fraternal and in solidarity.

In all of them there is a latent call to create spaces of solidarity and mutual help, as Pope Francis invites us to do in his Encyclical *Frattelli Tutti* (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 114): “As a moral virtue and social attitude, born of personal conversion, it demands the commitment of all those who are responsible for education and formation”. A call for personal and community conversion, from the inside towards an encounter with others, which raises awareness of the present context in which the educational work is inserted.

As Catholic educators, the unique contribution we are called to offer is the Gospel. The pedagogical-spiritual and social accomplishment of this mission finds in service-learning an educational proposal which contributes to that end. Service-learning, as an educational philosophy that links curricular learning with the response to community needs, is a re-

source that fosters *learning by doing for the common good* (Tapia, 2015a, p. 133). It entails opening classrooms to reality in order to understand it, analyze it, go out to the peripheries so that we can engage in them through projects, actions and services performed by students and intentionally articulated with learning contents (Tapia, 2004).

There is extensive scientific production on the educational and transformative potential of service-learning as an educational proposal. The aim of this chapter is to add some notes and reflections in order to enable an itinerary of spiritual accompaniment which favors this process from interiority to fraternal encounter, and from fraternal encounter to Transcendence, taking advantage of the potential provided by the involvement in service-learning projects.

Integral Education and the Development of the Capacities of University Students within the Framework of Catholic Institutions of Higher Education

All educational work aims at the integral development of the human person and the common good, the promotion of the integral formation of all the dimensions, potentialities and capacities that are part of the human personality. It is the ultimate reference that guides our educational work.

The call the Pope makes in his Encyclical *Laudato Si'*⁴³ (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 114) to contribute to an authentic and bold “cultural revolution” entails a true “pro-vocation” to the world of education, teaching and research (Pope Francis, 2017, VG, proem.3), to respond to this mission we have all been called to.

As educators, we are deeply challenged by this call. It questions us about our identity, our vocation and mission, the way we understand existence and our own existence; the way we understand what is human as well as the human being. The art of educating as a truly artisan labor, according to Steiner, quoted by Pereira (2001, p.11), involves rediscovering man. To reflect about the true sense of education situates us before the “mystery” represented by the human being. The University, like all other educational institutions, has always been, and is always called to be, the house where the person seeks their own truth (Pope Benedict XVI, 2011). Our work in the classroom, in research and university extension, finds its ultimate goal and its essence in this search for truth.

In his meeting with young university professors gathered in El Escorial on the occasion of World Youth Day, Pope Benedict XVI called on all faculty members to face the inevitable

43 From this exhortation, reflections compiled in Brotóns (2007, 2008 y 2018) are taken up and reworked.

question of being and the meaning of existence. This compels every educator to confront themselves. There is no such thing as neutral education. We educate “from” and “in” a way of understanding life, the person, society, God. We educate from the meaning we give to our own existence because educating engages us vitally. It is here that the educator becomes a “witness”: a figure in whom the student can find a reference.

Being aware of this space which we educate “from” not only reveals the goal towards which we move, but it also outlines the path to follow in our educational work, whilst it defines us as persons and as an institution (Renau, 1987). We can educate for service and the common good, for the construction of a more just and humane society or, on the contrary, we can educate to respond to the practical, pragmatic schemes of the logic of the market. These options are not equivalent. Those that promote encounters, openness to the surrounding reality, engagement and connection with the identified needs of our environment make us, as educators and as an institution, builders of humanity and seed of fraternity. Undoubtedly, the education promoted in Catholic Institutions of Higher Education should point in this direction, in line with the mission and identity project of each of the institutions to which we belong.

It is the conception of education as a dynamic, community, inclusive, pacifying, and even “ecological”, reality, of which Pope Francis speaks to us (CEC, 2020a), that allows the person to integrate different paths towards openness. Openness towards oneself, openness in solidarity with others, openness to nature and to God, to that Mystery which embraces and envelops us.

It is the horizon of an education “of and for the encounter”, which opens us to people and, from them, to Transcendence, and vice versa. From here, we can genuinely speak of “transcendence”, with all its transformative power.

In this way of understanding education, the core is the person in their integral reality. The aim is to lead the person to self-knowledge as a path towards the discovery of the other, of fraternity, understanding educational work as

an essentially relational task, source of mutual enrichment. It is the horizon of an education “of and for the encounter”, which opens us to people and, from them, to Transcendence, and vice versa. From here, we can genuinely speak of “transcendence”, with all its transformative power.

On the following pages we will delve into the mystery of human beings and the foundational Mystery of love that supports them, in order to identify the most significant notes of

the itinerary of accompaniment we can undertake with our students. When attending to the mystery embodied by each person, we can envisage the “what” and “why” of our educational work, basic conditions that will later enable us to speak about the “how” (González de Cardedal, 2004, p. 12), the way in which the what and why of our work will take shape in our actions. The purpose of this reflection is to bring us closer to the basis and some of the keys of an education that not only intends to open the heart to Transcendence, but is already, in itself, an exercise and experience of transcendence.

We offer this approach humbly. When we refer to education, and when it comes to educating, we place ourselves like Moses in front of the burning bush (cf. Exodus 3:5): standing on holy ground.

The Human Being, Openness to Transcendence

The capacity to “be open to”, to “give ourselves”, to “come out of ourselves” is what defines us as persons. We are, as K. Rahner or Zubiri said, “openness to transcendence”.⁴⁴

Jungmann (1939, p. 20), who described education as the “introduction of man into total reality”, points in at least a three-way direction.

- ▶ On the one hand, he refers to the *integral development* of the person in all their structures and dimensions (head, heart and hands).⁴⁵
- ▶ Secondly, it places human beings in relation to all the aspects of existence, the different dimensions of reality, considering the radical question of the meaning of life and of my life, and the openness to transcendence. Humanity and transcendence, for God has become man. True humanism opens itself to the Absolute (Pope Paul VI, 1967, 42). And the Absolute is found in what is human.
- ▶ Lastly, the reference to education as a *process that accompanies people during their whole life and involves the entire human community*, and as a task that brings together past and future generations. Education aims at the total fulfillment of oneself in relation to the entire reality,⁴⁶ in communion with others.

44 To delve deeper into this aspect, we rely on Rahner (1989, pp. 50-55 y 100-105). Also, on the article by Xavier Zubiri entitled “En torno al problema de Dios”, compiled in Zubiri (1935), as well as his posthumous work (Zubiri, 1984).

45 The idea and use of this metaphor are constant for Pope Francis. An example of this is his address for the closing of the World Educational Congress Scholas Occurrentes (February 5, 2015) or the Speech to participants at the World Congress on “Educating Today and Tomorrow, a Renewed Passion” (November 21, 2015), in which he claims: “There are three languages: the language of the head, the language of the heart and the language of the hands. Education must move along these three paths. Teaching how to think, helping others to feel well and accompanying them to do, that is, the three languages should be in harmony so that the child, the young person, may think what they feel and do, may feel what they think and do, may do what they think and feel”.

46 Prades (2003, pp. 48-49); Giussani (2012, pp. 61-93) and Zani (2015, p. 112) delve into this aspect.

Additionally, our sociocultural context places us before the huge challenge of unity in plurality. The question here is how to conceive, from now on, this “transcendental character” that defines the human being, and up to what extent it conditions and qualifies the “ecological” art of educating.

The Human Being, a Being for Encounter, a Being of Relation

We are not isolated islands. We are immersed, since birth, in the reality that surrounds and precedes us, we know ourselves, we live and grow open to the world around us. We are not defined by self-sufficiency but by our relationship with others, with God.

Full of intentionality and symbolism, the whole reality murmurs, speaks multiple languages and appears before us as “something meaningful” which we learn to relate with, as a universe of possibilities that puts our freedom at stake. We become persons in the dialogue with reality, when we are open to learn from it as God’s creation and respond to the challenges and opportunities it offers us. The education which aims at the integral development of students is a path for this encounter with reality and lets us position ourselves before it from a more profound freedom and personal commitment. The world and the society we are a part of are not just the setting of our life. They form us and we form them. We are the world and, with our personal involvement in it, we transform it.

In addition to the need to be open to reality, the person is shaped, above all, by the “how” and “from where” this relationship is lived. We can face our existence from the perspective of possession and appropriation, or admiration and contemplation, or generosity and gift. The development of and engagement in educational projects that reflect the need to open to reality from this logic of the gift, with the intention of improving, accepting, and loving reality, contribute to the construction of the cultural revolution the Pope encourages us to embrace. In doing so, we contribute to that human, fraternal society in which we believe and for which we live.

The ways of relating to reality that we favor in this work are the following (Pikaza, 1999):

- ▶ A gaze that is directed to the common home, the outer world that shelters us all as humanity. The Pope speaks to us about responsible reciprocity between human beings and nature, urging us to relate with creation in a Trinitarian manner of mutual belonging, respect and responsibility (on this subject, see Cambón 2000).

- ▶ To care for and nurture the basic human relationships in a healthy way, beginning by oneself, given there is no possible transcendence without interiority. Accompanying the students in this process of encountering what is unique and essential in each of us is another purpose of education.
- ▶ Existence based on what is meant “towards others”. Following Mounier (2002, p. 699), “the person does not exist but towards others, they do not recognize themselves but thanks to others, do not find themselves but in others”. Living is, in fact, “living together”, entering into a true dialogue with the “you”, exposing oneself and letting oneself be affected by the other, recognizing that other, even in diversity and in difference, as a travel companion. Recognizing God’s face in each of the gifts.⁴⁷ The “you” as an ever-surprising reality which is disclosed to me and, at the same time, reveals to me and challenges me.

We do not lose sight of the fact that, ultimately, the deepest link to reality, which is present in the paths mentioned above and takes us back to them, leads us and takes place in the community and personal communion with God, who has come out first and definitely to our encounter in Christ. With Him we find ourselves in the depths of reality and in Him we find ourselves/commune in a new way with reality.

The Logic of Gift and the Vocational Meaning of Education

Education should be not only a vehicle of knowledge, but a shared experience of meaning. Education opens us up to the Truth contained in everyday life. In turn, human beings achieve their full meaning, respond to their deepest vocation, when they forget about themselves (Frankl, 2003, pp. 58-59). “*We must learn that it does not really matter what we expect from life, but rather what life expects from us*” (Frankl, 1991, p. 81).⁴⁸ Catholic educators at all stages must be facilitators of experiences and personal encounters that foster experiencing the full meaning we find when we devote ourselves to the other and forget about ourselves. It is a real challenge for all Catholic educators in a setting like the present one, where the prevailing logic is quite different.

⁴⁷ “Today, when the networks and means of human communication have made unprecedented advances, we sense the challenge of finding and sharing a “mystique” of living together [...]. To go out of ourselves and to join others is healthy for us. To be self-enclosed is to taste the bitter poison of immanence, and humanity will be worse for every selfish choice we make”. (Pope Francis, Ap.Exh. Evangelii Gaudium [November 24, 2013], 87)

⁴⁸ In the statement “it does not really matter what we expect from life, but rather what life expects from us”, the italics belong to the author.

The contribution of the dynamics and logic of the gift⁴⁹ as key to existence sheds light on this point. Life is a gift and it is called to be given. We have been created, not only to live among and with others, but also in service of others, of the common good, of that fraternity which makes us one in diversity (CEC, 2020b, 5).

Service-learning projects are a privileged space where gift, communion and fraternity unfold. They open every person to the other and allow them to give themselves in a way that is progressively more generous and selfless, up to the point of self-giving. Accompanying students in service-learning projects so that they can follow this itinerary of openness and donation, progressive and adapted to each reality, makes the transforming, personal, and social power bear fruit.

This call to live from the logic of the gift implies, on the one hand, giving without expecting anything in return. And on the other, it means being willing to receive and “receive oneself”.⁵⁰ We touch here the essence of education. Ultimately, this spirituality of gift and communion defines and sustains us. Service-learning projects are a privileged space where gift, communion and fraternity unfold. They open every person to the other and allow them to give themselves in a way that

is progressively more generous and selfless, up to the point of self-giving. Accompanying students in service-learning projects so that they can follow this itinerary of openness and donation, progressive and adapted to each reality, makes the transforming, personal, and social power bear fruit. It also strengthens the discovery of our own vocation, the configuration of our personal life project. We are faced with an understanding of labor and educational work called to confer identity upon young people. It is not an instrumental end but the essence that shapes the very identity of our role as educators.

Service-learning offers opportunities to delve into this depth that every student needs to explore. The openness to the outside and to others can arise from our own interiority. Service-learning projects provide students with the opportunity to meet those people who suffer and give a generous response to their needs. Challenged by this experience, the students may ask themselves about the profound meaning of what happens in reality as well as about their vital stance before it. Encountering the other becomes an opportunity to encounter Transcendence.

49 Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* [June 29, 2009], 53 and Pope John Paul II, Ap. Letter. *Novo Millennio Ineunte* [January 6, 2001], 43.

50 Derrida (1992); Marion (2008); Torralba (2012); Tejerina (2015) delve into this topic. See also Pope Benedict XVI, *Enc. Letter Caritas in Veritate* [June 29, 2009], 34.

By moving from “what” or “who I am” to “for whom”, existence gains depth and meaning, and turns into the seed of a more humane, just, and fraternal society, to which we are called as Catholic Institutions of Higher Education.

Contribution of Service-Learning to the Mission and Identity of Catholic Institutions of Higher Education

We are relational beings, we are “with others”, “for others”, and we grow as persons in the community. Perhaps, for this reason, we can claim that education constitutes in itself an experience of transcendence, a true exercise of that human capacity to go out of oneself and break all kinds of self-referentiality, without which it is impossible to grow. Teaching, research and social outreach, promoted from Catholic Institutions of Higher Education, must be oriented to this end.

In this process of connection with reality and with others, according to Herder (1959, pp. 259-266), we can consider the intervention of three factors: Tradition, personal responsibility and transcendence.

Tradition, the Village, the Human Community which Shares

The realization of service-learning projects which connect curricular learning and community needs is the materialization—in practice—of the building of that human, fraternal society to which the Pope invites us. It is stated in the *Instrumentum Laboris* in the Global Compact on Education, which stresses the need to connect the educational system with experiences to improve the environment, in an act of “giving love, giving life”, as Pope Francis (2014) emphasizes when defining education.

In this understanding of education as “relationship”, “personal encounter” and “educational encounter”, the figure of the educator occupies a relevant place. It is the educator who knows the way and relates with others who “allow themselves to be led”. It is a relationship of accompaniment oriented in such a way that students can bring out the best of themselves (Cortés, 2015, p. 218), in that process which, in the current educational scenario, is referred to as “student as protagonist” and “professor as guide”. This conception of education is rooted in the spiritual accompaniment of Master Jesus. Within the framework of the Global Educational Project, we can claim that a fruitful education does not depend basically on the professor’s training or on the students’ competencies, but on the quality of the relationship established between them, in a dialogical exchange that overwhelms and surpasses them at the same time (CEC, 2020b, 13).

Together with the figure of the professor, the local community becomes another central educational agent to facilitate this transformative process. It integrates all the agents who contribute to the constitution of the educational act, shared and common, unifying all the visions and contributions through an atmosphere interwoven by values experienced by all.

Service-learning projects unify educational purposes (in the curricular and/or research field) and social and service purposes. Learning becomes meaningful since it contributes to the intervention over those identified needs. By doing so with other community educational agents, ties are established that connect ends in the diversity of approaches and visions.

The Constitution *Ex corde Ecclesiae* takes up this aspect and specifically invites the Catholic University to become an “educational and evangelizing referent, a space of freedom and charity, reciprocal respect, sincere dialogue of defense of the person and their rights, promotion of social justice and service to the Church and to the society they live and act in, and which they are part of” (Pope John Paul II, 1990, ECE). In this service, what deserves special attention is the fruitful dialogue between faith and reason, the Gospel and culture, as well as the concern for all those who suffer inside and out of the academic community. The call to the Mission in the case of the Catholic University is a unique, distinctive quality that should permeate and support the educational, research, and teaching action. Service-learning projects constitute opportunities to realize this mission.

The Responsibility of the Learner

In addition to the faculty’s accompaniment and guidance, the integral formation process requires the active and committed engagement of each student. What was adopted by the European Higher Education Area as a principle of the reform of university education had already been contemplated long before, by making each student responsible for being in charge of their own care and the development of their freedom.

Once again, we find, in the realization of service-learning projects, opportunities for students to grow in their commitment and responsibility, in:

- ▶ The observation and identification of the needs of their immediate environment.
- ▶ The design and implementation of projects which offer answers to the identified needs.

- ▶ The application of curricular learning to respond to those needs.
- ▶ The establishment of synergies and collaborative activities with social organizations and other community agents.
- ▶ Reflection on the causes that provoke the detected need.
- ▶ Evaluation of the process as a whole.

Students, in their involvement in the different stages of the service-learning projects, find an unparalleled opportunity to offer their voice, their word, their hands, heart and head, in an exercise of freedom and commitment which allows them to traverse the work from interiority to exteriority, in a search for deeper relationships of encounter with reality and others.

Service-Learning as an Exercise of Transcendence. Creating Ties-

For Catholic educators, education, in its ultimate meaning and foundation, responds to God's salvific plan. Created in his image and likeness, He becomes the horizon and goal that leads our life and must lead the educational work that is directed towards it.

According to Herder, education is understood as "help" for Providence, by serving God's salvific plan, which seeks the fullness of human beings. Educators are real women and men whose mission is to spread life and lead humanity by guiding every human being to their plenitude. In their educational vocation, every professor is a witness to the mission entrusted to them. They know that it is Another One who inspires their steps and guides their educational actions. Just as we mentioned that personal development is a path from the inside to the outside, to transcendence, as an act of emptying, the act of teaching implies giving up on oneself, moving away from the center, renouncing oneself in order to give oneself to the other. The good educator is well aware that, in their daily work, they are standing on holy ground.

Spiritual Accompaniment in Personal Growth, Social Commitment and Opening to Transcendence

We present here a last level of materialization expressed by the proposal of an itinerary of spiritual accompaniment in service-learning projects. This proposal, rooted on all of the above grounds, brings together contributions from the study of spiritual intelligence as well as from the personalist approach of Teilhard de Chardin. All this is transmitted by means of the reflective processes which run through all the stages of service-learning projects.

Brief Conceptual Approach to Spiritual Intelligence

Ian Marshall, psychiatrist from the London University, and Dahar Zohar, professor at the Oxford University, coined the term spiritual intelligence (Torralba, 2010, p. 46). They defined it on the basis of Howard Gardner's theory of Multiple Intelligences proposed in 1994, which conceived intelligence as a capacity rather than a genetic component. This consideration of intelligence as a capacity opened the possibility for its development through education, overcoming determinism. The term has subsequently been conceptualized through numerous definitions that have emerged in the international context. They all agree on considering that in every human being there is an intimate connection of spiritual intelligence with the other forms of intelligence.

Spiritual Intelligence opens the person to new horizons, so they need to be cultivated and included in the process of integral formation.

In the Hispanic context, it was Francesc Torralba who, through his book "Spiritual Intelligence", contributed to its dissemination.

It was defined as "the intelligence that empowers us to have deep and intimate aspirations, to long for a vision of life and reality that integrates, connects, transcends, and gives meaning to existence" (Torralba, 2010, p. 52). It opens the person to new horizons, so they need to be cultivated and included in the process of integral formation.

The following is a synthesis of some of the characteristics of the spiritual dimension (Torralba, 2010) which can be of help when designing the pedagogical keys which guide our task of spiritual accompaniment of service-learning projects:

- ▶ *What is spiritual occupies, within the unity of human beings, a nuclear and fundamental place.* This spiritual dimension gives character to the whole personality and the authentic individuality, which allows all of the layers to be penetrated by that character. The spiritual experience is not just another experience; it is the backbone and foundation of all the others.
- ▶ *What is spiritual has a dynamic character, of path, of search, of infinite conundrum.* As a dynamic dimension, it is susceptible to change and enhancement. The human being comes and goes between the inside and the outside. It is the vital movement of every being, which constantly oscillates between expansion and a return to the center in order to find in it the Source of Life. It is the centrifugal force that takes the person to exploration and the centripetal force that brings them back to introspection.

- ▶ It is connection, transcendence and conscience: it calls up the connection and ties to other beings. This idea connects us openly with service-learning. It is conscience, that is, we are aware of ourselves as beings with a capacity to transcend our own ego. It connects us with ethical behavior, the concern for the meaning and sense of life, the will to transcend the ephemeral and immediate. The willingness to connect and encounter.

Understanding the spiritual dimension as a capacity makes it a skill that can be developed. Torralba (2010) proposes different processes to cultivate this form of intelligence. Some of these proposals are discussed in the accompaniment itinerary outlined in these pages.

Brief Philosophical Approach to Teilhard de Chardin's Phases

Being a person is, above all, being “competent in humanity”.⁵¹ This, without a doubt, goes beyond the debate on the constructivist or efficiency-based diagram of competencies which prevails in most educational systems. That is the path to every person’s happy life. And it is here that the excellence and quality of our teaching are at stake. This certainly entails a long itinerary in which accompaniment and discernment are essential. Teilhard de Chardin (1997, pp. 82-89) summarized the whole of this training process in humanity into three great moments, closely related among themselves. In order to be ourselves to the fullest and live as such, we, as human beings, must:

- ▶ “Center on ourselves”: The re-encounter with the joy of being.

The Church has always envisaged its educational mission from the integral perspective of the person, forming them according to the model of the new humanity, which is Christ. If we want to know what “being a person” is, it is enough to look at Him. If we follow in his footsteps, said St. Augustine, we shall never get lost.⁵² Experiencing and celebrating the joy of being ourselves, welcoming and celebrating life as a gift in gratitude and gratuitousness, places us before the need to cultivate our inner self and lead a unified life, with direction and meaning.

- ▶ “De-center on ‘the other’”: *The joy of loving.*

Love is, or should be, the first condition for education (Fiorin, 2015). Educating for transcendence, for encounter, may be nothing more than accompanying learning to love. Educating entails, on everybody’s part, assuming responsibility for who I am in the world and for others.

51 Exactly as Italo Fiorin indicated at the UNESCO Forum “Educate Today and Tomorrow. A renewed passion”, celebrated in Paris on July 3, 2015: “Education is challenged, not only to provide solid competencies to the world of today and tomorrow, but also to contribute to the formation of citizens with ethical principles, committed to the construction of peace, in the advocacy for human rights and democratic values.”

52 Augustine, Sermon 92, 3, 3.

To accompany learning to love and serve helps us recover that dimension of solidarity and service which is typical of study and, specifically, of university study and scientific research. Solidarity is a way of understanding and living life, a way of understanding oneself which shapes and affects all aspects and dimensions of the person, and—among them—one's studies. Thus, the paradigm of "service" is imposed as a proposal of attachment and foundation of the educational community to the new generations, providing study with a new meaning, from the firm conviction that working for others is the best way of working for personal growth (Fiorin, 2015). It is, ultimately, about "knowing in order to be" and "knowing in order to serve" (Alom, 2015, p.94). The logic of the Gospel reminds us that the more I give myself, the more I am; that I am not, nor do I understand myself, if I do not exist for others. I live more "centered", the more capable I am of "de-centering" myself, in a double expropriation of myself towards my neighbor and God.

- ▶ *"Over-center" on One who is greater than ourselves: The joy of believing, the joy of adoring.*

Just as we awaken to personal life before our neighbor's reality, our self awakens definitively before God's reality. "In order to be fully ourselves, we are forced to broaden the basis of our being; we are forced to come together with 'the Other'" (Teilhard de Chardin, 1997, p. 76). Open our life above and beyond ourselves. Be, love, worship. This is the great secret of happiness (Teilhard de Chardin, 1997, pp. 78).

Let us be reminded here of the relationship between evangelization, as an explicit announcement of the good news of the Gospel, and education. This mission imbues the being and the performance of the Catholic university, its research, teaching and social outreach mission.⁵³ From the joy of believing emerges inexorably the joy of evangelizing. The task is great and beautiful: it is not in vain that the human being "achieves greatness when they become, through words or silence, a transparent witness of God" (González de Cardedal, 2004, p. 234).

Brief Pedagogical Approach to the Reflective Processes Developed in Service-Learning Projects

There are a growing number of proposals that systematize the development process of service-learning projects (Puig, Martín y Batlle, 2008; RMC, 2009; Berger Kaye, 2010), establishing phases and stages that assist in their design and development.

53 Along these lines we find the contributions by Pope John Paul II, Speech. Catholic Universities Congress [April 25, 1989], 5, Id, Ap.Const. Ex corde Ecclesiae [August 15, 1990], 49. Also, the contribution from the Congregation for Catholic Education - Pontifical Council for Culture. Pontifical Council for the Laity, Presence of the Church in the university and the university culture [May 22, 1994].

Nieves Tapia's (2015b) contribution of a project development scheme is the result of a long process of reflection, shared with various agents in Latin America. This proposal is articulated in five major stages (motivation, diagnosis, planning, execution and closing) and three cross-cutting processes (reflection, systematization and evaluation).

Reflection before, during and after acting is one of the key elements of service-learning projects, which favors the connection between the learning goals and the service goals. Through systematic reflection, an interesting experience can become a decisive opportunity for the learning and integral development of students.

Reflection before, during and after acting is one of the key elements of service-learning projects, which favors the connection between the learning goals and the service goals. Reflection also encourages students to consider new horizons for their commitment to solidarity and citizenship, in that quest for answers which leads them to the depths of the events that occur and their causes.

Reflection enables us to educate our view on reality and on the activity that is being performed, paving the way for students to become aware of what they learn, in a vital breath between interiority and exteriority, what is their own and what is communal. At this point, reflection also encourages students to consider new horizons for their commitment to solidarity and

citizenship, in that quest for answers which leads them to the depths of the events that occur and their causes.

According to Nieves Tapia (2015b, pp. 224-225), reflection in service-learning projects should be:

- ▶ Continuous: present throughout the development stages of the project.
- ▶ Articulating: it connects what is learned in the classroom to what happens in solidarity activities, which renders it meaningful.
- ▶ Challenging: faculty members should encourage students to look inside themselves and express their ideas in a friendly atmosphere, and they should also pose the deepest questions and accompany students in their search for answers.
- ▶ Contextualized: reflection helps situate the local activity in a context of global reality, it offers a more general and profound framework to specific experiences and assists learning in the classroom in finding its broader meaning.

Planning of time and spaces for reflection allows faculty to monitor learning, students' expectations, achievements and problems; it also helps them identify situations which call for modifications or adjustments to the plan, etc.

There are four major central themes which should be present in the reflection during a service-learning project:

- ▶ The social, economic and political contexts on which the service action is centered.
- ▶ The values and human rights involved, which give meaning to the solidarity experience.
- ▶ The group dynamics and connection with the territory, promoting the appreciation of diversity and respect.
- ▶ The learning acquired.

Tapia proposes a series of activities or tools of reflection which are in line with the current proposals for pedagogical innovation. They are the following:

- ▶ Personal or group journals
- ▶ Activity portfolios
- ▶ Case studies
- ▶ Theoretical reflection papers
- ▶ Group discussion Dialogue encounters with the community
- ▶ Multimedia presentations (blog, video, PPT)
- ▶ Creative activities (dramatizations, graphic compositions, musicals)

Proposal for an Educational Itinerary: Training in Humanity

Based on the three personalization phases proposed by Teilhard de Chardin (1997), the following is a proposal of the educational itinerary to train in humanity the students engaged in the development of service-learning projects. He starts from the cultivation of spiritual intelligence and presents six processes (Torralba, 2010). The proposal also includes reference to the reflection activities of Nieves Tapia (2015b), mentioned above.

It intends to be an open, flexible proposal, adjusted to the needs of each project. It will be explored in more detail below.

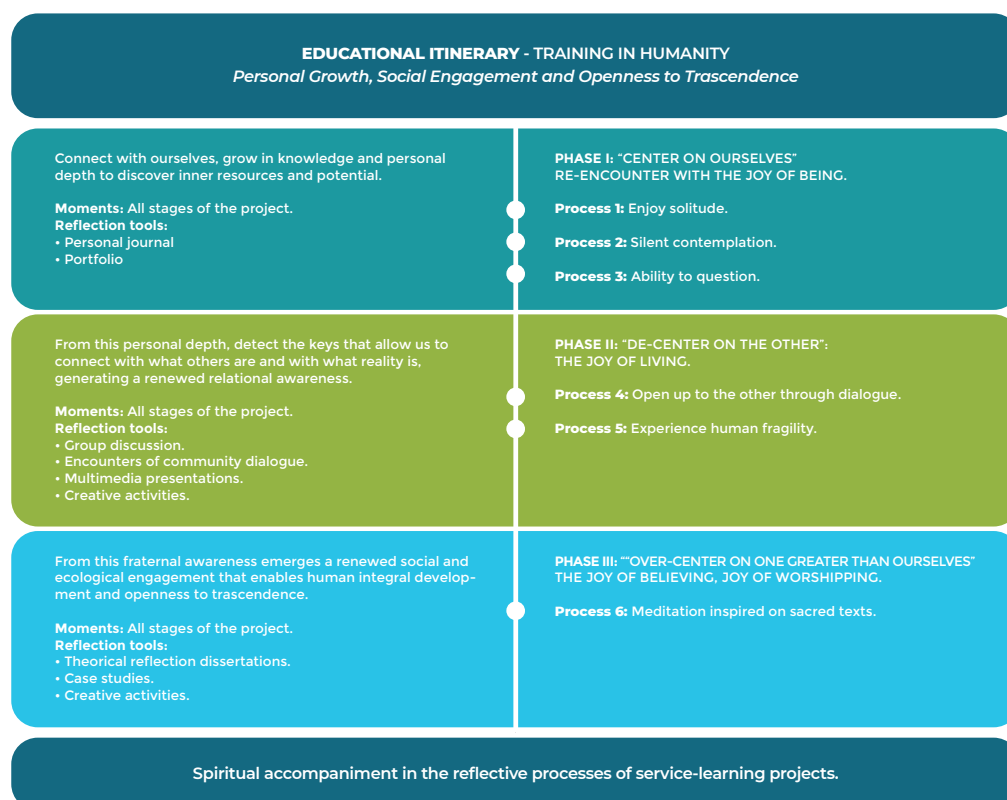


Figure 1: Educational itinerary to train in humanity

Source: Own elaboration based on Teilhard de Chardin's 3 phases of personalization (1997), Francesc Torralba's (2010) processes for the cultivation of spiritual intelligence, and the reflection activities by Nieves Tapia (2015b).

STAGE 1 "Centering on Ourselves": Re-encounter with the Joy of Being.

Process 1. Teaching to enjoy solitude

It is an inner emptiness, the fear of being alone, that drives many people to go to the encounter of others, seeking constant external stimulation and, thus, avoiding being alone with their own conscience. As Torralba (2010, p. 192) puts it, "a fundamental task we should have in mind in educational institutions is to teach the younger generations to enjoy solitude to the full, as it is the source of the development of spiritual life". This sought-after solitude allows the person to discover the treasures of their inner richness.

In order to live a true spiritual discernment and draw the appropriate learning for life, it is necessary to come to a halt, to stop the activity so as to delve into the meaning of our actions, the meaning of life itself. To facilitate this experience for students, it is essential for the educator to have experienced its benefits firsthand, as nobody can give what they do not have.

The personal reflection journal, in service-learning projects, plays a fundamental role in this regard. It is an extraordinary tool that allows students to record the development of their thinking, their discoveries, their doubts and their certainties. Faculty accompaniment can provide the necessary guidance for the students to understand that nurturing their solitude should not be interpreted as an escape from the world. On the contrary, those who retire to reflect on their actions, their life and their being, gain wisdom and richness they can offer others through their relationship. Torralba (2010), quoting Unamuno, points out that solitude fosters a better understanding of human beings. Solitude does not oppose socialization but activates social intelligence.

Process 2. Facilitate silent contemplation

We live in a hyperstimulated society, where communication at all levels has extended exponentially. We have less and less time to take in so much information: “Silence is the great absentee in the educational processes. We do not even consider it an instrument of communication, much less a fundamental human experience. The richness inherent to silence is not taught at school” (Torralba 2001, p.54). Just as the word is necessary to describe the world, silence is essential to contemplate and internalize it. We propose to reclaim the humanizing power of silence and its great formative and shaping value. What role does silence play in the educational sphere? Why is it important to introduce it in university classrooms, in service-learning projects?

The educational act is a communicative act, and as such, silence becomes vital in order to listen to one another and to hold a fruitful dialogue. But the transformative power of silence goes further. Traditionally, we have understood silent contemplation as a preparation for action: first, we contemplate, and that gives us strength and clarity to act and transform the world. From this approach, it seems that it is action, full of contemplation, but action—in short—which transforms reality. We find the proposal set out by Pablo D’Ors (2012) very interesting: he affirms that contemplation in itself transforms reality. There is a true ethics of contemplation; by contemplating we can change ourselves and we can change the world; contemplation is effective. And, for certain situations or problems, it might be the most effective tool there is.

Through service-learning projects students also have the chance to encounter human fragility and suffering. They come across problems which cannot be solved by means of thought and action. Silence, contemplation, in brief, all that inner work so closely related to spiritual intelligence, helps people go through that pain. This is the complicated field of human suffering, where the problem does not lie in suffering itself, but in how we face

it. In this sense, silent contemplation, loving contemplation, can be transformative, for we do not allow suffering to destroy us inside; rather, we embrace that suffering as a path to fullness.

The silent experience is an art that can be learned. Contemplating what we do and think with full attention connects us with silence. Thoughts are what we have, conscience is what we are. Silence starts as a practice and ends up becoming a state.

It is particularly interesting to practice mindfulness in university classrooms: conscious breathing techniques, body awareness, living daily life with full attention, etc. It is about exploring and understanding the meaning that silence has in the formation of the student as a person. We are not referring only to the physical, external silence, but to the inner silence. When we live inner silence fully, we discover our true identity. Silence causes fear because, when distancing from our own reality and subjecting it to evaluation, we doubt our own lifestyle. The experience of silence is an experience of vertigo. This existential quietening ends up being a complete and lucid perception of what we are and what exists.

Contemplation is an activity that has its starting point in the external senses, but transcends to the plane of perception. Practicing contemplation helps capture the heartbeat of internal and external reality, in order to connect with what is hidden inside of it. As Torralba (2010, pp. 201-202) points out, “contemplating is not arguing, nor reflecting, nor talking or replicating. It means opening to reality as a whole, becoming one with reality, surrendering to it. It necessarily requires us to overcome ego”.

Process 3. Fostering the ability to question

Silence is a particularly suitable environment for transcendental questions to arise. Asking oneself questions is a very effective way of stimulating, not only spiritual intelligence but also other forms of intelligence. Fostering the ability to question in the classroom helps students reach a level of self-awareness, a more global vision of the world, an inner peace and freedom.

The reflective processes are one of the basic requirements of service-learning projects. They constitute an essential element which supports, articulates, and gives meaning to each stage of the project. These reflective processes are an excellent opportunity for students to become aware of what they are doing at each moment and to understand their social usefulness. It is about offering time and spaces for personal reflection which allow students to integrate new learning, adapt it to enhance service quality and, above all, help

them overcome paternalist attitudes by being aware of how much they learn from the service they render.

To question oneself is to advance towards a more profound and integral understanding of life and our position in the cosmos. The personal reflective journals or the creation of portfolios constitute valuable activities which contribute to this process of personal interrogation.

Stage II. “De-centering on the Other”: The Joy of Loving.

Process 4. Offering spaces to open up to the other through dialogue

Dialogue is a human phenomenon that demands linguistic, emotional, interpersonal, and especially, spiritual intelligence. Transcendental questions do not always emerge from individual thinking; on many occasions, they are brought about by dialogue. Not every dialogue acquires deep, spiritual dimensions, but, when it does, it becomes an appropriate strategy for its interlocutors to grow and develop their spirituality.

Service-learning projects are an excellent opportunity to open up to the other through dialogue. A dialogue that can occur both in the university classroom (among students and between students and faculty), and in contact with the agents of the environment (those who are served, members of social organizations, public and private institutions, etc.). It is an opportunity to learn to modify behaviors and enrich opinions from a new perspective.

To engage in a dialogue is to listen to the other and to take the risk of discovering that we are not in possession of the truth. Opening up to others enables us to understand ourselves. All spiritual exercises are dialogical to the extent that they involve an authentic exercise of presence.

Knowing people in silence means letting them be what they are instead of what I want them to be. Thus, we enable the person to develop all their potential. This is a major challenge that, as educators, we should respond to in our classrooms. How much silent knowledge we need from one another. We propose that our classrooms be spaces to facilitate the encounter with the other through dialogue, in such a way that each encounter, each lesson, is the birth of that relationship. Always beginning from what is new favors our perception of the other as a revelation, as an epiphany of that alterity which is irreducible to what I am.

Process 5. Opening up to experience human fragility

We have already mentioned that, through service-learning projects, students have the chance of encountering human fragility, suffering and limits. These are experiences that stimulate spiritual intelligence more intensely. If life had no limits, perhaps no human being would have questioned the meaning of their existence. Nevertheless, in our daily life we try to avoid them.

Finitude is the note that human beings have in common with all the existences they perceive around them. Human vulnerability, as opposed to that of animal existence, is open, seeks to understand itself, to find a *raison d'être* and a practice of salvation. "Vulnerability is a universal fact in the world, but the awareness of vulnerability is not" (Torralba, 2010, p. 223). Awareness of vulnerability is not developed suddenly but as the result of a series of personal experiences that occur throughout life and can lead us to its discovery. This awareness is the highest point of human maturity; it gives rise to the question about meaning and activates spiritual intelligence.

In service-learning projects, students have the opportunity to experience that, on their own, they are unable to cope with everything. When we participate in a project with these characteristics, we realize that, in order to solve certain complex situations or to respond to the needs of our environment, it is not enough for everyone to be better. We respond to social problems with community networks, not just the sum of individual goods.

In service-learning projects, students have the opportunity to experience that, on their own, they are unable to cope with everything. When we participate in a project with these characteristics, we realize that, in order to solve certain complex situations or to respond to the needs of our environment, it is not enough for everyone to be better. We respond to social problems with community networks,

not just the sum of individual goods. The ecological conversion required to bring about a dynamism of lasting change is also a community conversion (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 219).

Additionally, being in contact with those who suffer, knowing their firsthand vital testimony and committing themselves to these persons, can open students to experience human fragility, to question the origin and meaning of life. Accompanying our students in this vital experience can facilitate their awareness of the intimate relationship of everything that exists, generating a cosmic awareness of feeling, together with every being,

a part of the One. Christian fraternity is based precisely on the idea that everything that exists stems from the same Being, we are brothers and sisters in existence: “The very mystery of the Trinity reminds us that we were made in the image of that divine communion; therefore, we cannot realize or save ourselves alone” (Pope Francis, 2013, EG, 178).

That deep interpersonal connection is the root of genuine solidarity. Solidarity is not simply a charitable act; it does not consist in giving a material good to another. It is a spiritual experience that resides in the experience of unity, of belonging to the Whole, and it requires the abandonment of the ego and the overcoming of duality. “Lived this way, solidarity is not pure action or pure pragmatism; it is, primarily and above all, a spiritual experience of deep union with the being of the other” (Torralba, 2010, p. 231).

Stage III. “Over-centering” on One who is greater than ourselves: The joy of believing, joy of worshipping.

Process 6. Practicing meditation inspired on sacred texts

“Blessed is the man (...) whose delight is in the law of the Lord, and who meditates on his law day and night” (Psalm 1, 1-3).

Meditation evokes a mental process that enables us, through observation and analysis, to know the essence of things. Meditation is not the exclusive patrimony of a religious tradition but a spiritual practice that—both in religious and secular contexts—is practiced in daily life.

To carefully read a sacred text, to meditate on it, requires rereading it with the aim of allowing the message it possesses to penetrate deeply into our own being. Meditation inspired on the texts of the great spiritual masters of humanity is one of the most effective ways of developing spiritual intelligence. The ultimate goal is not to understand, but to integrate and assume the object of meditation in our own being (Torralba, 2010, p. 229). For a believer, be it an educator or a student, meditation evolves easily into prayer and encounter.

We can affirm of the Christian educator what we affirm of every believer and of the Christian community. Sharing what fills our life belongs to love. And Christians know well that life is not the same with or without Jesus Christ; building the world with His Gospel and led by His Spirit’s hand is not the same as doing it abandoned to our own reason and strength (Pope Francis, 2013, EG, 266). With Him, life becomes much fuller and everything

makes sense. This is why we intend to offer students the opportunity to encounter the Word of God in their reflective processes. It is an opportunity to understand that the Bible is not just any book, but that reading it requires a humble, listening attitude. In the Holy Scriptures the person of the student can find a source of profound inspiration, light to illuminate their actions, nourishment for their soul and a way to salvation. The Gospel gives ultimate meaning to our action and reflection in service-learning projects.

Conclusion

As members of Catholic Institutions of Higher Education we are called to be artisans of a true educational revolution which promotes a new humanism, fraternal and in solidarity. Education and research, especially the one that is promoted by the Catholic Institutions of Higher Education, constitute a privileged space to contribute to this necessary personal and community conversion.

The fulfillment of service-learning projects, by connecting the learning promoted by the different curricular subjects and research to the needs identified in the immediate context, enables the opening of the educational institution to the community, the connection with the ultimate reference—reality.

We are relational beings, and it is in this opening process from interiority to exteriority, towards the encounter with the other which makes transcendence possible, that we shape the integral education we are called to as Catholic educators.

The proposal of an educational and spiritual itinerary that accompanies students in this process is intended as a humble guide without any other purpose than to lead students to what in essence they are and are called to be. Nobody gives what they do not have. There is a time when our attention is focused on the connection with ourselves, in a process of knowledge and discovery of our own interiority. It is the phase in which the person is still centered on themselves. Progressively, and with adequate accompaniment, the person can start to decenter, to empty themselves and open up to the encounter with the other, through contact with fragility and dialogue with what is real. The person begins to be ready for a true donation. The experience of this fraternal conscience can be the occasion for a renewed social, ecological commitment that enables integral human development and openness to transcendence. In this fruitful dialogue one may find the gift of encounter with the One who is greater than oneself and gives meaning to everything.

With all the humility that comes from knowing we are standing on holy ground, as Catholic educators we dare to propose this educational itinerary, open and flexible, supported by service-learning.

In this accompaniment process, the figure of the professor, reference in this personal road of conversion and openness.

In this accompaniment process, the figure of the professor, reference in this personal road of conversion and openness, acquires its whole

fullness. These pages aim to contribute to the reflection on the vocation and mission of the Catholic educator, who is called to invigorate—in each of their students—this process of personal transformation.

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13. SPIRITUALITY AND SERVICE: IMPACT ON THE GRADUATES' EDUCATION

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Abstract

Every Catholic university, based on the preferences of the Gospel, is called to foster the academic excellence necessary to solve the real problems that affect its social context. The universities entrusted to the Society of Jesus share this mission and conception of academic quality and, particularly in Latin America, in recent decades have been generating initiatives aimed at training students for engagement and solidarity. Under the institutionalization of the University Social Responsibility (RSU) paradigm, the Jesuit universities in the region have stimulated the promotion of experiential experiences of approaching social reality and of service to the community through internships and participation in social projects, to encourage the response capacity of future professionals in the face of current problems, committing themselves creatively and constructively from an exercise of citizenship, democracy and ethical leadership to build a fairer society.

In light of this background, and based on advances in doctoral studies developed around the perceptual evaluation of the impact of the social projection policy of the Catholic University of Córdoba (Argentina) on graduates, this chapter seeks to account for the impact of these options and institutional actions regarding the training and profile of its graduates. To do this, the proposed analysis is supported by qualitative studies based on documentary analysis, in-depth and semi-structured interviews with graduates and employers, both of which are key references in assessing the impact of the training that is meant to be promoted.

54 Association of Jesuits Universities Entrusted to the Society of Jesus in Latin America. The Network is composed of 30 Jesuit universities. Its mission is to develop common projects in accordance with strategic regional priorities, to seek a greater contribution from higher education institutions to their societies. See: <https://www.ausjal.org/>

Introduction: academic quality and university mission

Defining the term 'quality' in higher education requires explaining the different ideological and pedagogical options that an institution assumes as a paradigm. It is based on these options that the dimensions and lines of work, the instrumental resources and the tools for monitoring and quality assurance are then defined. Every concept of quality is thus associated with an ideal to be achieved and does not exist in isolation from a particular mission.

Taking Harvey and Green (1993) as a reference, different conceptions of quality in higher education can be identified. The traditional notion associates quality with an exceptional phenomenon. It implies surpassing high standards and is identified with components of excellence, where the material and human resources that allow achieving the best results or products are essential. This notion assumes distinction, exclusiveness, elitism and, to a great extent, an aspect that is inaccessible to the majority.

There is another notion of quality, associated with perfection or coherence, where — more than products— it is important to guarantee processes that favour the good performance of things, without any monitoring of the results. This conception links quality to the achievement of purposes, its outlook is functional and there is a temptation to address particular demands or needs (market, family aspirations, etc.) that must be met.

In turn, as a cost-value relationship, quality requires universities to emphasize costs and economic efficiency of the means put at their disposal. Effectiveness implies a strong focus on measurable results, which encourages individualism and competition for available resources.

However, there is another notion, little explored and stimulated, linked to the idea of educational quality as the one that produces changes and enrichment in the participants of the educational process: students, professors, as well as external stakeholders, where the educational experience enriches the knowledge, skills and of transformation abilities (qualitative change).

From contributions like those of Harvey and Burrows (1992), this approach implies empowering students and other participants to influence their progress, involving them in the decision-making process that affects their transformation.

As Pope Francis expresses in his address to the participants of the Assembly of the Congregation for Catholic Education, held in Vatican City on 20th February 2020:

The fascinating world of education, which is never a repetitive action, but the art of growth, of maturation, and for this reason, it is never the same... It is a peculiar kind of movement, with characteristics that make it a dynamism of growth, aimed at the full development of the person in his/her individual and social dimension (Pope Francis, 2020).

An educational institution of excellence is the one that has the greatest impact or adds the most value to the integral development of students and stakeholders involved. This integral education involves promoting a process that ensures the acquisition of significant knowledge and the capacity building that allow university students to see themselves immersed in a social reality where they take an active role, and in which they act not only as experts in knowledge in a specific field but also as competent citizens committed to the humanising and sustainable transformation of their culture.

From this perspective, an educational institution of excellence is the one that has the greatest impact or adds the most value to the integral development of students and stakeholders involved. This integral education involves promoting a process that ensures the acquisition of significant knowledge and the capacity building that allow university students to see themselves immersed in a social reality where they take an active role, and in which they act not only as experts in knowledge in a specific field but also as competent citizens committed

to the humanising and sustainable transformation of their culture.

The questions are: what is the idea of quality needs to be promoted to fulfil what university mission? And in light of this, what mission are we called to in terms of the challenges of the context? Without delving into them, any idea of quality can be wrong and even contradict the objectives to be achieved.

As Carrizo explains (2006):

The university, as an institution that produces knowledge and shapes opinion and trends, has an unquestionable social responsibility. Perhaps its priority task today should be to think about itself, explaining the conditions in which it builds knowledge, trains professionals and conceives the human condition to know and act. The strategic position of the university within a society always calls it to responsibility (p.5).⁵⁵

⁵⁵ Own translation.

In Catholic universities, this task takes on a deeper dimension.

The mission of the university is to train talents to care and transform... It is a hopeful future for themselves, while they prepare to fully incorporate themselves into the organizational, business and institutional instances through which the dream of a longed-for region will be forged.....e soul and meaning of the personal and institutional option (of the university) is the quality of the spiritual experience of the members of the educational community and the allies with whom we want to collaborate in the care of the regional values and heritage, and in overcoming challenges, imbalances and problems (Aguilar, 2021, pp.7-8).⁵⁶

From this mission and facing the particular contexts of insertion, the main concepts of quality training are associated with the promotion of:

- ▶ engaged and relevant research (intellectual apostolate as the exclusive social mission of the university);
- ▶ active pedagogies (students' protagonist role);
- ▶ significant and relevant knowledge (integration between teaching-social projection/service-learning);
- ▶ active citizenship (recovery of the civic dimension, horizontal solidarity and advocacy);
- ▶ and critical reflection (critical and transformative thinking)

Faced with these challenges, Jesuit universities, in the range of Catholic universities, are called

to serve society (from its university specificity) to transform it, to contribute to making it fairer and more governable, with opportunities and quality of life for all, achievable with personal effort (AUSJAL, 2001, p.13).⁵⁷

The Common Educational Project of the educational institutions of the Society of Jesus in Latin America (CPAL, in Spanish, 2005) highlights the “impact on society and public policies” as one of the key objectives to fulfil its mission. In turn, the 2011-2017 strategic plan emphasizes the need

to support universities to try to make a qualitative leap in strengthening their Christian identity with Ignatian charism, so that they can fulfil their mission of educating men and women “for and with others” and to produce and spread knowledge and technology that contribute to the creation of a more humane, just and sustainable world (AUSJAL, 2011, p.11).⁵⁸

⁵⁶ Own translation.

⁵⁷ Own translation.

⁵⁸ Own translation.

The words spoken by Father General Peter Hans Kolvenbach (2000) clearly establish the vocation of Jesuit universities in terms of responsibility towards society. The superior general says:

Every Jesuit academy of higher learning is called to live in a social reality... and to live for that social reality, to shed university intelligence upon it and to use university influence to transform it. Thus Jesuit universities have stronger and different reasons, than many other academic and research institutions, for addressing the actual world as it unjustly exists and for helping to reshape it in the light of the Gospel (p.11).

Clarifying this mission, it is not difficult to find the notion of educational quality and innovation that we should promote and that should characterise us: that which is measured by the capacity for personal and social transformation. Under this notion, all means are aimed at perfecting and achieving the higher purpose of being a transformative university. The effort to improve must be made, then, in search of integral education as a process that ensures the acquisition of significant knowledge and the capacity building that enables university students to transform themselves and, together with others, the context they are part of.

For some universities, the object of their existence is academic excellence. *We consider that the reason for our existence is service to people and academic excellence, its best tool* (EDUSOL, 2006, p. 11).⁵⁹

University Social Responsibility (USR) and professional profile

As mentioned above, every Catholic university, based on preferences of the Gospel, is called to foster the academic excellence necessary to solve the real problems that affect its social context.

The universities entrusted to the Society of Jesus share this mission and conception of academic quality and, particularly in Latin America, in recent decades have been generating initiatives aimed at training students for engagement and solidarity.

By adopting the paradigm of University Social Responsibility (USR), Jesuit universities in Latin America promote experiential experiences to approach social reality and service. They are carried out through internships and participation in social projects, which seek to encourage the skills and competencies of future professionals in the face of current problems. Along with this, creative and constructive commitment is encouraged from a civic, democratic and ethical leadership exercise in the construction of a sustainable and fairer society.

⁵⁹ Own translation.

University Social Responsibility is understood as

the ability and effectiveness of the university to respond to the transformation needs of the society in which it is immersed, through the exercise of its substantial functions: teaching, research, outreach and internal management. These functions must be encouraged by the search for the promotion of justice, solidarity and social equity through the construction of successful responses to meet the challenges involved in promoting sustainable human development.

For this reason, University Social Responsibility must be a cross-cutting feature of the work of AUSJAL universities. Therefore, university authorities must guarantee coherence between university management and the planning and implementation of Social Responsibility actions in the substantial functions mentioned so that they are effective (RSU-AUSJAL Network, 2014, p.15).⁶⁰

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Specifically, the encouragement of such experiences leads our students to strengthen what Vallaes (2006) calls the three pillars of ethical education:

- ▶ Conscious emotion or enlightened motivation, which leads to feeling concerned and responsible for distant, systemic problems, only perceptible through reflection and specialised information;
- ▶ *critical reflection or argumentation, which allows to argue well and recognise good arguments to know what to do in certain complex areas of modern life, which implies the integration of a whole series of scientific knowledge and management of complex contexts. It also implies managing dialogue as an essential tool for ethical search and consensus (training in participatory democratic life, in citizen life).*
- ▶ *and action or entrepreneurship, which trains professionals capable of designing and participating in collective actions with various institutional participants in the solution of specific ethical problems, which implies teamwork*

⁶⁰ Own translation.

and human relations skills, inter-institutional organisational management and management of interdisciplinarity (p.17).⁶¹

Particularly at the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC), and motivated by the four reasons that characterise what is known as the Ledesma-Kolvenbach educational paradigm (*utilitas, iustitia, humanitas* and *fides*), the intended or desired professional is described as men and women of science, awareness and engagement (Álvarez, 2014).

Utilitas provides people with advantages for practical life and is associated with the need and usefulness of education for the good performance of certain professions. It is not enough for Jesuit universities to transmit instrumental rationality alone. When this happens exclusively, education easily drifts towards injustice and exclusion, since it accumulates knowledge, assets and powers for the better-off, who, in turn, are hired by those who have the most, to defend their interests. Hence, the other three motivations mentioned above, which the Society of Jesus has tried to incorporate, are required in this education.

Through *iustitia*, it is intended that students contribute to a citizenry educated in democracy and public responsibility, with the ability to participate, to promote equal opportunities and to voluntarily opt for public action committed to the common good. This mature notion of justice transcends individual actions and includes working for the transformation of socio-cultural structures since these structures are the ones that provide the basis for the existing political and economic structures. This transformation stems from the theological concept of reconciliation with God, with our brothers and with creation. Based on the concern for ecology as part of the mission, the promotion of justice also includes the commitment to care for the common home.

Humanitas aspires to the elevation of the human being. It seeks for the person to flourish by promoting profoundly human values, such as compassion, modesty, temperance, wisdom, fortitude, working for a better life for all human beings and promoting the well-being of other living beings and the planet as a whole. Today we understand that this motivation has, therefore, a horizon of integrality for the human person and universality concerning humanity as a whole. In a world where a large number of people are excluded for various reasons, humanism recognises the equal dignity of every human being. For this reason, it activates instruments and means that provide dignity and human development to all people without falling into false welfarism.

Originally understood as the “defence and propagation of the faith”, *fides* nowadays leads to offering students an experience of transcendence, with the possibility of open-

⁶¹ Own translation.

ing up to God as the ultimate goal. The faith proposed should be the faith of love for one's neighbour, which rejects religion as a tool of denial, exclusion and discrimination of those who are different. At the same time, it should give grounds for hope to the poorest.

Social outreach, service and impact on graduate education⁶²

Social outreach is a university function of knowledge transfer to society, which at the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC) is based on an educational paradigm that promotes an associative and multidisciplinary academic model, committed to the creation and exchange of knowledge in close relationship with the different social partners, and in which the functions of teaching, research and internal management are integrated.

Accordingly, it is not understood as a mere extension function or service provision, but as a scaffolding for the co-production of relevant solutions based on functional integration of different knowledge.

The Catholic University of Córdoba, as part of AUSJAL and according to the postulates of the aforementioned University Social Responsibility (USR) policy, has institutionalised a policy of social projection since 2011, understood as the process of

systematic and active participation of the university in the sustainable human development of the community of which it is a part ... promoting co-production between different stakeholders and knowledge towards quality knowledge and relevance in terms of association, to promote progress, create social capital, integrate the students' education with external reality, and function as an interlocutor in the solution of problems (RSU-AUSJAL Network, 2014, p.18).⁶³

The task of training professionals, sensitive to reality and in the right mind to transform it transcends the mere disciplinary and technical training. It implies carefully implementing a training policy that makes it possible to develop sensitivity towards the environment, especially directed towards the most disadvantaged stakeholders so that graduates are essentially aware, competent, committed and compassionate (Ugalde, 2012).

⁶² This section is based on the contributions of the following work: Giraudo-Rollán et al., 2019.

⁶³ Own translation

The task of training professionals, sensitive to reality and in the right mind to transform it transcends the mere disciplinary and technical training. It implies carefully implementing a training policy that makes it possible to develop sensitivity towards the environment, especially directed towards the most disadvantaged stakeholders so that graduates are essentially aware, competent, committed and compassionate.

Under this policy, many social outreach initiatives have been developed to date⁶⁴. Methodologies such as service-learning have a privileged place in those initiatives due to their potential as a contribution to the desired training.

However, given such an important option and commitment, it is worth asking what impact the social pro-

jection policy under the University Social Responsibility approach adopted by the Catholic University of Córdoba has on graduate training. How do graduates and external references perceive this impact; how can this effectiveness or impact on the profile of graduates be accounted for (evaluated)? These questions are central not only to this work but also to account for the impact of these institutional options and actions on the graduate's training and profile.

The impact of social projection in the training process of graduates: methodological option for its evaluation⁶⁵

During the period 2018-2021, and as a doctoral dissertation in process⁶⁶, it was proposed to provide methodological tools that would allow correlating educational processes according to the social projection policy proposed at the university (with a specific focus on the Faculty of Chemical Sciences), concerning the training and profile achieved in its graduates.

To this end, it was decided to follow an interpretative, retrospective and cross-sectional analytical approach, developed through a qualitative methodological design, and structured around the conducting and critical analysis of in-depth interviews with graduates,

64 Biannual curricular projection projects with curricular connections, special projects, projects focused on the welfare of the internal community, stable social projection programmes, management support projects, and other activities such as public policy advocacy and participation in networks. See [in Spanish]: <https://www.ucc.edu.ar/archivos/documentos/SPyRSU/2020/rsu-ucc-reporte-2019-ok.pdf>

65 This section is based on the contributions of the following work: Giraudo-Gargantini, 2019.

66 Giraudo, F. (ongoing).

employers and authorities of professional associations (who are responsible for the control of the ethical performance of the profession).

The population under study was made up of graduates of the faculty who did their undergraduate course from the implementation of the institutional policy of social projection (Rectoral Resolution No. 1092/2011), which was adopted from 2012, in the courses of Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry, until and including 2018.

To create the sample, a purposive and theoretical sampling technique was used to ensure plural representativeness, so that the cohort of graduates of both degree programmes could be included in the sample, as long as the definition given and the data provided were consistent.

As a control group, a sample of graduates from cohorts before the implementation of the institutional policy of social projection was provided using the same criteria. In this sense, it was initially proposed to consider cohorts before 2012, taking the proximal contemporaneity of the participants (age/period of study) as a criterion for selection, trying to minimize biases due to issues related to age, customs and the perception of the interviewees. In both cases, the number of interviews was subject to field saturation.

Concerning the references external to the university (key informants) they were employers of both groups of graduates to obtain a correlation between the analysis and the references from deontological institutions, considering the ethical and social performance of the graduates from the professional group in the practice of their professions. Employers are considered to be key points of reference to provide a perspective on professional performance, considering skills that go beyond the technical disciplines. The representatives of the professional associations (deontological level) were also considered and were able to provide reliable data on the professional ethical performance of graduates since the Disciplinary Courts are set up as collegiate bodies that judge this behaviour of professionals in their practice.

Beyond the diversity of analytical procedures available in the qualitative methodology, content analysis was followed through a spiral dynamic in which data from different sources were combined, obtained and analysed. Based on the data obtained, the grounded theory approach was followed (Glaser-Strauss, 1967) where data collection and analysis are carried out simultaneously. Interpretations of the data were supported by systematic coding.

Briefly, the research was carried out in four stages.

In the first stage, the desired scope of the training of graduates of the Faculty of Chemical Sciences was determined through the institutional policy of social projection of the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC). To this end, an in-depth investigation was carried out through a documentary analysis about the educational paradigm, training and pedagogy in the institutions of the Society of Jesus, as well as its foundations and implementation strategies of the social projection policy adopted during the period 2012-2018, focusing on the Faculty of Chemical Sciences, to define the scope of this policy in the training process of the academic unit and the impact it seeks to achieve in its graduates. Based on this analysis, in-depth interviews were conducted with those responsible for the institutional management of the period under study (chancellor and vice-chancellors of the university, management representatives of the Faculty of Chemical Sciences, heads of the areas involved in the Vice Chancellorship for Academic Affairs) to define the dimensions, categories of analysis and indicators that would allow addressing the survey with the graduates.

The perceptions of the graduates of the Faculty of Chemical Sciences regarding the university's social projection policy and its impact on their training were analysed using a problem sample and a control group, and this stage constituted the core of the research.

Finally, to achieve consistency in the results of the research, which focused on the perception of graduates, the assessment of external references (employers and representatives of deontological institutions) were analysed concerning the training and professional profile of the graduates of Chemical Sciences at the Catholic University of Córdoba.

By way of summary, the first two stages of the research allowed findings to be interrelated through documentary research, the testimonies of the institutional references and what was established in the social projection policy, whose impact is meant to measure. In this sense, the approach of the concept of social outreach adopted by the university and the objectives proposed through the institutional policy sought to promote the understanding of the effects of its application in two categories:

a. On the one hand, how the university relates to the community and its surroundings or area of influence, under the tenets of active involvement in concrete experiences, bidirectional association, co-production of knowledge, creation of multidisciplinary learning communities and real contribution addressing preferably the most disadvantaged stakeholders of the social fabric (see Table 1).

Table 1. Categories and dimensions of analysis of the university-community link through the social projection policy.

CATEGORY	SUBCATEGORIES	DIMENSIONS OF ANALYSIS
University-commu- nity link	Participation	Quality
		With active involvement
		Concrete and direct activities
		Real contribution
		Preference for disadvantaged sectors
		Problem-solving
	Co-production of knowledge	University-community association
		Bidirectional knowledge
		Cross-sector collaboration
		Learning community
		Multidiscipline
		Institutional synergy

Source: Giraudo, F. (ongoing).

b. The second category is related to the effects of the policy on future graduates, according to the educational paradigm adopted. This second consideration supposes the identification of both objective and perceptual properties, referred to:

- ▶ the external or impact or impact on the environment, with consequences at the socio-environmental level and on public policies;
- ▶ the internal impact or the transformation of the individual, with effects on personal and academic-professional training (see Table 2).

Table 2. Categories and dimensions of analysis of the impact of the outreach policy on graduates from the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC)

CATEGORÍA	SUB-CATEGORIES	DIMENSIONS OF ANALYSIS	OBJECTIVE PROPERTIES	PERCEPTUAL PROPERTIES
External impact	Transformation of the socio-environmental reality	Citizen qualities		• Tax culture and fulfilment of work duties. • Influence of the UCC's social projection and training policy on this aspect.
		Socio-environmental engagement	Social, sustainable actions or projects promoted.	• Comprehensive solutions achieved. • Self-perception of environmental and social commitment.
			Actions carried out in favour of the promotion of justice.	• Personal meaning of the word "justice." • Understanding the concept of promotion of justice explained in the Social Outreach Policy. • Self-perception of actor and leader.
			Actions in favour of the environment promoted.	• Influence of university education on actions linked to socio-environmental engagement.
		Ethical practice of the profession	Absence of deontological sanctions.	• Compliance with the Code of Ethics of professional practice. • Ethical conception of professional practice.
		Participation and/or contributions to public policies	Leadership positions held in public or private institutions for the public good.	• Contributions that have had an impact on the agenda of state or private-public welfare institutions. • Personal reflection on the importance of participation in public policy.
Internal impact	Personal/human training	Values education		• Scale of personal values. • Idea associated with the notion of "good person" • Scale of professional values. • Idea associated with the notion of "successful professional"
		Critical recognition of the reality and the profession		• Social problems linked to the profession, visualised as a subject of attention. • Social problems linked to the profession, feasible to be solved from their professional practice.
	Academic and professional training	Discipline competence	Average graduation rate and years of study.	• Personal consideration of their academic/professional preparation/competence. • Level of job placement (time/position/institution).
	Personal transformation	Life experience	Participation during their training period in experiential experiences of contact with the social reality/Type of experience.	• Advocacy that this participation has had on future professional and life choices/options. • Moments/experiences from the degree course that you remember as mobilising. • Moments/experiences from the degree course that you still put into practice today. • Moments/experiences from the degree course that you would like to deepen in future graduates.
		Critical reflection		• Training aspects that stand out as being of greatest value throughout his career.
				• Experiences throughout their career that allowed them to develop the ability to critically reflect on social and professional reality.

Source: Giraudo, F. (ongoing).

Instruments were designed to evaluate the perception of the Faculty's graduates regarding the training impact received concerning the social projection policy, as well as the perception of external references (employers and references from deontological institutions) from their experience with the graduates. The main conclusions drawn from this systematisation are set out below.

Based on these theoretical categories, instruments were designed to evaluate the perception of the Faculty's graduates regarding the training impact received concerning the social projection policy, as well as the perception of external references (employers and references from deontological institutions) from their experience with the gradu-

ates. The main conclusions drawn from this systematisation are set out below.

Results obtained: the graduate that we were able to build

Based on the methodology described to answer the questions raised by the research, it is possible to make a series of statements about the impact of the social projection policy on the graduates of the Catholic University of Córdoba (particularly those of the Faculty of Chemicals Sciences).

Regarding the external impact, it is possible to conclude as follow:

- ▶ **Citizenry qualities:** the experiences of social projection have not been mentioned as a factor influencing the development and fostering of citizenry qualities in graduates. The contribution of the university in cultivating a way of thinking and reflecting is highlighted, but the citizenry qualities and civic duty are correlated to the family training received and experienced, as well as to the individual and his or her convictions.
- ▶ **Socio-environmental commitment:** the experiences of social outreach show great influence on the understanding of/adherence to concepts of social engagement and promotion of justice, understood under the proposed training paradigm. However, there is an important link between this understanding and the disciplinary subjects proposed, the role and testimony of educators throughout the stimulated pedagogical process, and the subjects of the Training Area (philosophy, anthropology, theology, ethics). All this constitutes the scaffolding for the comprehensive training of the

graduate, this training being highlighted and perceived by all external references as the causes that promote the social commitment acquired. However, the social projection policy does not seem to have a decisive influence on the implementation of initiatives linked to environmental commitment, given the nature of the experiences offered.

- ▶ **Ethical practice of the profession:** university graduates do not have deontological sanctions for breaches of the Code of Professional Ethics, and the external references state that the prevalence of these sanctions is lower than in graduates from other universities. Concerning the ethical performance of the profession, these references highlight the fact that the graduates from the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC) have distinctive elements inherent to the training process they have experienced. They indicate that the main strength that distinguishes them is related to the comprehensive training they receive, without specifying details about their probable causes. A high percentage of the employers interviewed stated that the ethics put into practice when practising the profession were more evident than in other graduates. The causes of the training process that graduates highlight as influential are linked to the specific disciplinary field, the good examples set by their professors, the subjects of the Training Area and the pre-professional internships. The initiatives promoted under the social projection policy do not seem to have any influence on this dimension from the perception recorded.
- ▶ **Advocacy in public policies:** the importance attributed to this dimension by the graduates interviewed is high. Almost half of them have had some kind of experience in this regard and state that the main stimulus for doing so is related to the conviction of the individual, the education received through university disciplinary training and the sensitivity towards the environment, experienced in professional practice. Social projection initiatives are not explicitly mentioned among the factors promoting this quality.
- ▶ **Vocational motivation:** as an emerging aspect and not stated in its objectives, the social projection policy influenced the stimulation of motivational aspects in almost half of the graduates interviewed. According to the research carried out, this motivation in the analysed sample was related to teaching under different modalities and degrees of formality, as a tool to achieve the greatest good in professional objectives.
- ▶ **Impact at the academic level:** a greater significance of this impact stands out when community services are linked to disciplinary learning processes. This link is virtuous not only to understand the contents but also in terms of the skills acquired for future professional life, since they affect them personally, allowing them to glimpse horizons of meaning. Along with this, an

emerging aspect linked to scientific production became evident: some of the graduates interviewed carried out their final degree course work on the experiences of social projection, carrying out applied research projects based on them, with a high level of involvement in the community.

- ▶ **Labour influence:** it is recognized that the social projection policy influences the development of skills valued by employers when selecting professionals for a job. Outreach experiences contribute directly to obtaining these skills or competences that are not linked to strictly academic training.

Concerning the internal or personal impact on graduates, following the implementation of the outreach policy, it is possible to conclude that:

- ▶ **Values education:** there is an agreement between the graduates and the external references when it comes to indicating the main attributes and values experienced. Honesty - both on a personal level and when practising the profession -, empathy, love of others, ethics in professional practice, solidarity and tolerance are highlighted to a greater extent. The external referents found these values to a greater extent than in other graduates. With regard to the assessment of the influence received in terms of values education, all the interviewees point to two causes: first, the convictions and beliefs of the individual, together with their training and family support throughout life. Second, the university education received. In this sense, the institutional ethos takes precedence, together with the subjects of the Training

All graduates who took part in social outreach experiences indicated these experiences as the main factor in their encounter with social reality and as inputs for the critical analysis of reality. All of them positively valued its completion as part of the training process, indicating that they bring the reality of professional practice closer, consolidate the knowledge acquired and foster opportunities to develop sensitivity towards the environment and community needs in the target areas.

Area addressing specific topics of application in personal and professional life, and the example and testimony of professors in the specific disciplinary field. The graduates do not perceive a marked influence of the social outreach policy in this dimension, with greater recognition by external references.

- ▶ **Critical acknowledgement of reality and the profession:** in this dimension the importance of the social outreach policy is evident. All graduates who took part in social outreach experiences indicated these experiences as the main factor in their encounter with social reality and as inputs for the critical analysis of reality. All of them positively valued its completion as part of the training process, indicating that they bring the reality of professional practice closer, consolidate the knowledge acquired and foster opportunities to develop sensitivity towards the environment and community needs in the target areas. The pre-professional internships in the different target areas were also mentioned in this regard.

In relation to the external perception of this quality in the graduates, external references indicate that it is an attribute present in all cases, to a greater extent than in graduates from other universities.

- ▶ **Academic and professional training:** all the graduates interviewed expressed their agreement with the academic training received in the specific disciplinary area and highlighted the comprehensive training provided by the university, valuing positively the subjects of the Training Area and the curriculum design. composition of the syllabuses.

Consequently, employers pointed out that the comprehensive training process is a distinctive feature of the graduates, which is noticeable when it comes to practicing the profession. Together with this, it was pointed out that social outreach experiences improve the learning processes, as they are linked in terms of curriculum, and favour disciplinary competence when practicing the profession.

- ▶ **Experiential experience:** graduates who have participated in social outreach experiences have a vivid memory of them and all of them value their participation and their curricular involvement positively. These experiences enabled them to relate their future professional role to reality, to discover realities different from their own, to reaffirm personal and professional values, and to better learn the disciplinary contents by being able to apply them. They have influenced their participation as professionals in the places where they have been inserted or influenced the decisions they have made. However, for most of them, these have not been the most significant experiences of their university career, but those linked to the specific disciplinary field, according to their particular interests, and those significant on an emotional level (beginning of pre-professional internships, last subject, presentation of the Degree Final Project, among others).
- ▶ **Critical reflection:** according to the records, the social projection policy plays a significant role in the possibility of critically reflecting on reality to act

lucidity and produce changes in it. This capacity is also recognized by external references interviewed in a higher proportion than in graduates from other universities.

- ▶ **Vocational motivation:** following the actions described through the external impact analysis, there must be an internal motivation so that it can finally be translated into actions.

Motivation for teaching, both formal and informal, is one of the emerging aspects that social outreach experiences have generated in graduates.

Concluding Reflections

After the research, the findings on the impact achieved by the social outreach policy under the University Social Responsibility approach adopted by the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC) on graduate education, show that the social outreach policy and experiences have a great influence. This is evident in the understanding of the concepts of social commitment, and the promotion of justice understood from the educational paradigm promoted by the Society of Jesus. In addition, it is evidenced in the academic impacts that improve learning, as well as in the stimulation of applied scientific production; in the impact on public policies and the development of skills for the professional insertion of graduates.

Likewise, the promoted social outreach policy generates stimuli at the vocational level, reaffirms personal and professional values, allows an encounter with social reality and favours the recognition and critical analysis of reality. It is thus manifested in the high level of influence on the decisions and participation of graduates in the personal and professional fields. These assets and values are also highlighted by external agents and employers, as distinctive features of the professional profile stimulated.

However, their development and impact become meaningful and profound when combined with other important factors, such as the nature of the academic proposals offered in the disciplinary field, the role and testimony of professors throughout the pedagogical process stimulated, the subjects on the training area taught, and the institutional ethos or the way of experiencing the university during the years of study.

Along with this, the research carried out has also highlighted the need to take care in the selection of service-learning experiences promoted, based on the themes and values that are to be promoted (for example, respect for the common home or public policy advocacy) making these choices explicit. Similarly, it is necessary to awaken and

support the development of a personal emotion-spirituality associated with the proposed experiential experiences, to make them meaningful beyond the technical-disciplinary or social aspects.

There is a synergistic relationship between social outreach and service-learning experiences and the consolidation or strengthening of this institutional culture that should not be overlooked... Certain institutional objectives set out in the social outreach policy should be reviewed to make these options explicit at both a value and instrumental level. If this is not promoted and implemented, the multiplicities of experiences of liaison with society will be simple placebos that prevent us, like Catholic universities, from fulfilling in depth the mission that has been entrusted to us.

These dimensions and options are closely linked to an institutional spirituality, a way of life, customs, norms and institutional options that make up an organisational culture and a specific training proposal, consistent with the tenets and values to be promoted. Here there is a synergistic relationship between social outreach and service-learning experiences and the consolidation or strengthening of this institutional culture that should not be overlooked. This feedback constitutes the basis for fruitful practices

that contribute to the promotion of highly trained, conscious, prophetically critical, compassionate and committed professionals to processes that transform structures.

Given this, although no contradictions were found between the findings of the documentary research on the Ignatian educational paradigm implemented and the different actors involved (which accounts for a coherence between ideology, policies, processes or procedures and results achieved). According to the results of the research carried out, certain institutional objectives set out in the social outreach policy at the Catholic University of Córdoba (UCC) should be reviewed to make these options explicit at both a value and instrumental level.

If this is not promoted and implemented, the multiplicities of experiences of liaison with society will be simple placebos that prevent us, like Catholic universities, from fulfilling in depth the mission that has been entrusted to us.

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THIRD PART

Spirituality as Intentional Movement towards Care



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14. UNDERSTANDING SERVICE-LEARNING: A NEW VISION OF YOUTH IN SOCIETY AND A NEW CONCEPT OF LEARNING

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Abstract

In this chapter, I will discuss how service-learning is a multidimensional concept which, in addition to being a particularly flexible and effective teaching and learning approach, is also a philosophy and a community-development model – qualities that make it well suited to this time of global social change.

Considering mainly the North American context and making use of extensive research conducted by the National Youth Leadership Council (including best practices and other resources), I will point out that a structural shift to service-learning requires two major changes in thinking: a new vision of youth in society and a new concept of learning.

I will close the chapter with a brief reflection on how service-learning can be closely connected to the theological foundation of service in scripture, providing a pathway to the formation of engaged citizens and disciples of Jesus Christ.

Service-Learning as a Philosophy, Community Development Model, and Teaching Strategy

A widely used definition of service-learning is found in the National and Community Service Act of 1990 (Sec. 103), which describes it as an educational experience with the following attributes:

- ▶ Students learn and develop through active participation in thoughtfully organized service experiences that meet actual community needs and that are coordinated in collaboration with school and community;
- ▶ It is integrated into the students' academic curriculum or provides structured time for a student to think, talk, or write about what the student did and saw during the actual service activity;

- ▶ It provides students with opportunities to use newly acquired skills and knowledge in real life situations in their own communities; and
- ▶ It enhances what is taught in school by extending student learning beyond the classroom and into the community and helps to foster the development of a sense of caring for others⁶⁷.

Service-learning is a complex concept—in addition to being a teaching and learning method, it can also be understood as a philosophy and a community-development model.

However, there was not always agreement in identifying service-learning. The reason for any confusion over its definition may be that service-learning is a complex concept – in addition to being a teaching and

learning method, it can also be understood as a philosophy and a community-development model (Conrad & Hedin, 1991; Billig, 2000).

As a philosophy	Service-learning embraces young people as a community resource and asset. It views all people, regardless of age, as citizens with the capacity to contribute.
As a community-development model	Service-learning takes on real issues such as pollution and environmental crises, hunger and homelessness, and racism. Communities change for the better when service and learning are joined.
As a teaching and learning method	Service-learning is a form of active learning that values critical thinking and problem solving. Research shows that when service-learning is effectively implemented students gain in measures of academic achievement, citizenship, and character.

This multidimensionality means that high quality service-learning, as research has shown (see in particular Atkins et al., 2006; Furco & Root, 2010), can have promising outcomes for students:

Personal development

- ▶ Self-Image (likes self; feels worthwhile, confident, competent)
- ▶ Internal Locus of Control (believes self can make a significant difference; everything is not left to chance or luck)

⁶⁷ For further exploration of this claim, see Nathan & Kielsmeier (1991).

Social and Interpersonal Development

- ▶ Social Comfort (is comfortable and feels competent in social situations)
- ▶ Group Work Skills (works well in a group to achieve a task; elicits participation from group members; participates fully)
- ▶ Social Sensitivity (exposure and empathetic to a wider range of people, issues, and places; moving from self-centeredness to broader perspective and understanding)
- ▶ Intergenerational Connectedness (ability to interact and work cooperatively with familial and non-familial adults; effectively seeks advice and learns from adults)

Values Development

- ▶ Team Responsibility (values working with a group to accomplish a task; believes a group can often accomplish more than an individual)
- ▶ Social responsibility (believes that members of society are interdependent and have an obligation to take care of those less fortunate)
- ▶ Civic responsibility (believes that members of society have an obligation to participate in public affairs and processes)

Academic and Cognitive Development

- ▶ Basic Academic Skills (reading, writing and calculation)
- ▶ Specific Subject Matter Knowledge (e.g., social studies, ecology, history)
- ▶ Critical Thinking Skills (e.g., decision making, problem solving, analytical skills)
- ▶ Engages Learner (interested and motivated in learning; invests time in learning)

Spiritual Formation

- ▶ Deepens faith commitment
- ▶ Finds meaning and purpose

What is sure is that service-learning is unthinkable without taking youth seriously.

Service-learning transforms a deficit vision of youth into a bolder fresh vision that sees young people as assets. This in turn boosts a new idea of learning and how young people can make use and make sense of the amazing amount of knowledge generations have accumulated, while transmitting it in order that it can be remade yet again into something new and useful. This shift can be summarized as follows:

TRADITIONAL VIEW OF YOUTH	SERVICE LEARNING'S VIEW OF YOUTH
Utilize Resources	Act as Resources
Passive	Active
Consumer	Producer
Needs Help	Offers Help
Recipient	Giver
Victim	Leader

Service-learning allows the natural forces of youth —energy, idealism, and creativity — to be converted for a greater good, benefitting young people themselves and larger society⁶⁸.

Young people are like the nineteenth-century coal mine canaries in England and the United States whose extreme sensitivity to poison gasses alerted the miners to danger before their own lives were threatened.

In this perspective, service-learning represents a fresh life-giving approach to the atmosphere surrounding young people, currently immersed in a wealth-oriented mentality that doesn't help their participation and

active role in society. Inundated by images and expectations linked to the culture of material gain and personal prosperity, discontented young people are among the early indicators that all is not well in a world of growing affluence. Put in other words, they are like the nineteenth-century coal mine canaries in England and the United States whose extreme sensitivity to poison gasses alerted the miners to danger before their own lives were threatened.

Thinking about the US case, disengagement of youth from society is an early warning of a malaise that is accompanying the rapid expansion of the world economy. A

⁶⁸ Here are some examples taken mainly from America's K-12 education landscape. In Destrehan, Louisiana, middle schoolers working together are accomplishing an extraordinary achievement as environmental stewards. Dubbing themselves the Wetland Watchers, they are reclaiming wetlands and restoring them for environmental and educational purposes. Students in Virginia, Minnesota, started a dating violence awareness campaign designed to help girls and women facing gender-based abuse. Organizations like the Wyman Center work with school groups across the United States to reduce childhood mortality and improve maternal health through service-learning as a strategy to reduce teen pregnancy. Combating diseases like HIV/AIDS and malaria have become the focus of youth-led campaigns across Africa, in Germany, and in the United States. And young people are often promoters of a new ecological awareness. In countless schools they are leading the charge for reducing waste and increasing energy efficiency. They are founding school forests in Minnesota and Wisconsin, reclaiming wetlands in the Gulf Coast, restoring native prairies in Montana and Wyoming.

kind of spiritual “fading” has crept into comfortable communities. The flourishing of economy has brought about wealth and comfort and the same time impoverishment of the soul reflected in a dramatic decline in participation in faith communities in the United States⁶⁹.

Understanding service-learning means shifting away from a mentality that ultimately destines young people to become, as Rev. Jim Wallis underlined in his book *The Soul of Politics* (1995, n.d.),

our poorest citizens, our most at-risk population, the recipient and reflection of our worst values and sicknesses, our most armed and dangerous criminals, the chief perpetrators of escalating violence – and more the object of our fears than our hopes.

What is at stake is the loss of the moral test that the late US Senator Hubert Humphrey posited in 1977, when he declared that the quality of a society is measured by how it treats, among others, those in the dawn of life.

In a nutshell, service-learning has all the qualities to be well suited to this time of global change affecting personal and social instability and can itself become a source of positive societal transformation as well as a strategy both for academic-educational growth and spiritual development.

Young people as active learners and engaged citizens

I reflected on the potential power of young people in South Korea in 1968. As a US army officer, I was sent to patrol the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) but volunteered to lead an experimental human relations project for the 15,000 troops of the U.S. Army's Second Infantry Division. The Second Infantry was positioned astride the historic invasion route to Seoul and on constant alert to repel a North Korean attack.

Ironically, studies showed that South Korean civilians hated the American troops more than the belligerent North Koreans poised to invade the South. Research by M.I.T. showed that a combination of cultural insensitivity and American arrogance, as

69 Of course, we cannot fail to mention youth philanthropy's efforts, as part of nonformal education. Most of the national youth development organizations in the US – 4-H, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, Camp Fire, Future Business Leaders of America, Future Farmers of America, and others – all put service and service-learning front and center as part of the way they work with youth.

Youth philanthropy is a force in society. It's becoming a common form of youth participation because it's a good way for young people to get started thinking about the issues they care about and how they can make a difference.

well as sharp contrasts in incomes and lifestyles, fueled a climate of mutual disrespect between the occupying army and our Korean hosts.

My attempts at lecturing American troops about changing their attitudes and behavior toward our Korean allies were a dismal failure. A new plan was needed. Chung Young Bok, a liaison officer from the 27th Regimental Combat Team, South Korean Army, shared my concern.

Lt. Chung and I found a way to place American soldiers as volunteer English language tutors in all fourteen Korean middle and high schools in the Second Infantry Division area. Despite warnings from my commanding officer that American soldiers would not volunteer and that we could never adequately prepare them to teach English, young troops volunteered in droves. We enlisted the Peace Corps to train them, a cross-cultural experience for both the Army and the Peace Corps. The Korean schools were delighted with the effectiveness of the American tutors.

The Korean press discovered what came to be called the English Language Assistance Program and widely publicized the story of how Korean and American goodwill was demonstrated through the tutoring partnership. The Army embraced it once it proved to be successful and replicated it throughout Korea. My boss in the Army, who initially thought that I had created a doomed plan, wound up giving me the Army Commendation Medal.

Later, in the heart of one of America's most depressed inner cities, the insights I gained in Korea were reinforced. St. Louis, not surprisingly, was scorching hot in June 1982. I was working with a team of high-school youths, preparing them to mentor over 3,000 middle-school students five days a week for ten weeks of the summer. The high-school students would be assisting adult teachers that summer and took their positions very seriously. Their training began each day with physical exercise involving music and movement. Eventually the older students would lead these same exercises for their younger, inner-city counterparts.

Derek Jackson, a 16-year-old African American young man, was always on time. Six-feet-two inches tall, strong, and quietly determined, he could have been a tight end on the football team. One day at the physical conditioning class, I noticed Derek suddenly leave the gymnasium. I found him outside sitting on the steps. He said he had been accidentally kicked during the exercise class. I kidded him, "What kind of an excuse is that?". Derek stood up stiffly and replied, "My leg really does hurt!". He rolled up his pant leg, exposing a jagged bullet hole in his calf, still oozing blood.

As we drove to the hospital, Derek said he had been shot the night before. He had been afraid to say anything because he really wanted to keep the tutoring assignment, to help the younger students. Happily, his leg healed, and he went on to be an outstanding leader that summer.

From passive students and gullible consumers to active learners and engaged citizens, giving evidence that collective change is possible.

Chung Young Bok and Derek Jackson epitomize the countless people their age and younger worldwide, who are pioneering new roles for

themselves in society; from passive students and gullible consumers to active learners and engaged citizens, giving evidence that collective change is possible, as Robert Kennedy pronounced in his 1966 “Ripple of Hope” speech in Cape Town, South Africa:

Each time a person stands up for an idea, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, they send forth a tiny ripple of hope, and crossing each other from a million different centers of energy and daring, those ripples build a current that can sweep down the mightiest walls of oppression and resistance.

The youth of this world are serving on the front line of community need as never before. Schools, colleges, and community-based organizations have sought to tie this strong desire *to be of use* to academic and civic outcomes through the way of teaching and learning we call service-learning.

A new concept of learning

A group of African American eighth graders from the Academy of Science and Foreign Language Middle School in Huntsville, Alabama, was touring the Maple Hill Cemetery. Their questions brought the tour to a complete halt. After hearing thorough biographical descriptions of the many important 19th century citizens of Huntsville who were buried in the cemetery, the students asked if any of them were African American. The guide did not know. The answer, discovered later, was that this beautifully maintained resting place for civil war veterans, former governors, and other up-standing individuals was for “whites only”.

After the cemetery episode, the students and the teachers of the academy set off on a journey to discover where Huntsville’s African Americans from the last century were buried. Along the way, they learned a great deal more. They found Glenwood

Cemetery, a resting place for African Americans, in a deplorable state, with unmarked graves, vandalized headstones, and poorly kept records. They also found an equally unrecorded larger history that would have remained forgotten had students and teachers not launched a project that has changed the community.

Teachers at the academy responded to the interest of students and found answers to many questions, including one that is left out of most classrooms: “What are we going to do about it?”. The answer to that question was the creation of the Alabama African American History Project and a dazzling array of community contributions and learning experiences.

Students subsequently led the restoration of Glenwood Cemetery, raising funds to replace or repair 166 headstones. They also saw to it that the state placed an official registry sign at the cemetery. Math classes plotted the previously unmapped site using resources donated by the University of Alabama. The students’ concern about the neglect of Glenwood Cemetery led them to ask state legislators to change a state law that related to preservation of cemeteries.

The young people scoured court records, city council minutes, deeds, marriage certificates and will, family inventories, and *The Negro Gazette*, a locally published newspaper from the 1800s. They also listened to and recorded oral histories. Curricular materials developed by the middle-school students from original historical sources became the basis of a third-grade social studies unit about the history of Huntsville. Over the years, the students published several books based on their research on prominent African Americans from the area.

Service-learning is the equivalent of an education commons: a pedagogical meeting place where, rather than the work of one person, the group effort establishes a long-term, sustainable model for peer education and inspiration.

This example, but many others could be mentioned, shows how the eighth-grade students from Huntsville, while reclaiming the desolated cemeteries to honor their forebears, became *active citizens*, and, at the

same time, shows that service-learning is the equivalent of an *education commons*⁷⁰:

⁷⁰ This notion of community dedicated to service and the cultural commons that makes this possible is beginning to find some formal and informal structures around the world, most notable is the Ibero-American Service-Learning Network cofounded by CLAYSS in Argentina and the National Youth Leadership Council in the United States. This affiliation of organizations working to combine the streams of national service, youth development, and both K-12 and higher education can be a model for sharing information and resources.

a pedagogical meeting place where, rather than the work of one person, the group effort establishes a long-term, sustainable model for peer education and inspiration – a model that is then extended to society at large in strong connection with its actual community needs.

Interestingly, in the United States this approach, despite its proven positive outcomes and its long tradition, has struggled to be extensively institutionalized. Whether the American origins of service-learning lie with its roots in non-military national service espoused by William James in 1910, or in John Dewey's philosophy of experiential education in the 1930s, or the social tides of the turbulent 1960s, the practice has grown modestly⁷¹. As Furco and Root (2010, p. 16) emphasized a decade ago,

Service learning has been a part of America's K-12 education landscape for more than 30 years. Yet today, service learning is found in less than 30% of K-12 schools in the United States, even though it's achieved a substantial footing in American institutions of higher education and the primary, secondary, and higher education systems of many other countries (...). Skepticism over service learning's educational merit continues despite published research reviews showing a consistent set of positive outcomes for students

A structural shift to service-learning requires not only a change when thinking of "youth" in society but also a new concept of "learning".

A structural shift to service-learning requires not only a change when thinking of "youth" in society but also a new concept of "learning" (Kielsmeier, 2010).

⁷¹ If we were to trace a history of service-learning in the United States, we might do so starting with the early twentieth century need to figure out an alternative to war and violence and a means of identifying common cause for the country, as enunciated by William James and his 1910 essay "The moral equivalent of war". Other key moments were the creation of Civilian Conservation Corps, i.e., President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's most popular antidote for the blight of the Great Depression of the 1930's, and President Kennedy's call to young people to join the newly formed Peace Corps, which brought new vitality to national service.

Later, George H W Bush and Bill Clinton shaped the contemporary expression of what we know now as National Service. In that concept there was introduced Federal legislation that included participation for school and community-based service-learning programs.

At the same time parallel public policy initiatives supporting service-learning for K-12 schools and higher education were initiated at the state and federal level. In essence defining National service as not a free-standing program such as Peace Corps or AmeriCorps or City Year but as a sustained and funded partnership between the federal government, states, and public schools known as Learn and Serve America. Stipends were offered to all State Departments of Education for K-12 Service-Learning and financial incentives to colleges and universities to integrate service-learning.

Major private sector investors in service-learning have included the Kellogg Foundation and State Farm Insurance as well as many smaller community-based philanthropies. The National Youth Leadership Council I led was an advocate and implementer of a network of state-based service-learning initiatives as described in a variety of publications.

In 2008, the National Youth Leadership Council brought forth the first standards for service-learning in K-12 education⁷². While this book is devoted to higher education, I consider that it may be fruitful to remind here these evidence-based criteria, which have been adopted again and again by school districts, and national, state, and provincial ministries of education both in the United States and internationally in Australia, Canada, Argentina, and others.

The standards for service-learning in K-12 education outline the body of evidence for the necessary elements to make sure that service-learning is a rigorous and high-quality way of teaching and learning within our schools.

- ▶ *Meaningful Service*: Service-learning actively engages participants in meaningful and personally relevant service activities.
- ▶ *Link to Curriculum*: Service-learning is intentionally used as an instructional strategy to meet learning goals and/or content standards.
- ▶ *Reflection*: Service-learning incorporates multiple challenging reflection activities that are ongoing and that prompt deep thinking and analysis about oneself and one's relationship to society.
- ▶ *Diversity*: Service-learning promotes understanding of diversity and mutual respect among all participants.
- ▶ *Youth Voice*: Service-learning provides youth with a strong voice in planning, implementing, and evaluating service-learning experiences with guidance from adults.
- ▶ *Partnerships*: Service-learning partnerships are collaborative, mutually beneficial, and address community needs.
- ▶ *Progress Monitoring*: Service-learning engages participants in an ongoing process to assess the quality of implementation and progress toward meeting specified goals and uses results for improvement and sustainability.
- ▶ *Duration and Intensity*: Service-learning has sufficient duration and intensity to address community needs and meet specified outcomes.

These standards, when well implemented, form the basis of a high-quality and complex methodology, that is,

a way of combining the methods of experiential education with the needs of society. It is serving and learning, and it is a way of creating the world. Young people need real employment and real service opportunities – and communities need genuine work and service accomplished. (Benson & Roehlkepartain, 1993, p. 11)

⁷² See “K-12 Service-Learning Standards for Quality Practice” at <https://www.nylc.org/page/standards>.

The result, as previously mentioned, is the shift to active and meaningful learning and higher retention rates, as the following table shows:

RETENTION RATE	ACTIVITY	ENGAGEMENT
5%	Lecture	Passive Learning
10%	Reading	
20%	Audiovisual	
30%	Demonstration	
50%	Discussion	Active Learning
75%	Practice	
90%	Teach Another	

Growing to Greatness: a resource for service-learning studies

In this book devoted to spirituality, I think that a good resource for reflection on this topic in the light of a new vision of youth and learning are the results of the National Youth Leadership Council's annual National state by state review of K-12 and higher education service-learning entitled "Growing to Greatness". Below is an abstract of this project as summarized by Mary Beth Neal PhD, research director of the project.

The "Growing to Greatness", the state of service-learning project (G2G) series, from 2003 to 2010, presents a comprehensive view of scope, scale, and results of service-learning. It serves as a resource to help practitioners make the case for service-learning to decision-makers as well as to improve their practice by offering examples of successful service-learning programs. It addresses a wide variety of important questions: What is it? And what are the strategies for ensuring its utility, quality, and sustainability?

Each issue includes the following:

- ▶ Inside front cover: "Service by the numbers" (quantitative descriptors supplied on an annual basis by collaborating service-learning organizations).
- ▶ Research articles (both quantitative and qualitative, including two original US national-level surveys; one surveying US school principals, and a retrospective survey of youth ages 18–28 regarding the effects of service experienced during their elementary and high school years).
- ▶ Research to identify quality standards for high quality service-learning.

- ▶ Special topics, for example service-learning targeting a certain demographic or concern such as dropout prevention, violence prevention, parental involvement, equity and justice, transition to adulthood, career development, civic engagement and more.
- ▶ Recent policy supporting service-learning on local, state, and national levels.
- ▶ Scope and Scale/Prevalence: Articles describing most recent data and indicators of service-learning scope, scale, and impacts from local to international levels – to document effects and communicate the value of service-learning to the general public.
- ▶ School based program examples (either as a stand-alone article as well as part of US state profiles).
- ▶ Community based program examples (either as a stand-alone article as well as part of state profiles).
- ▶ Service-learning in higher education and in internationally-
- ▶ US State profiles showing infrastructure, policy, program examples, and scope/scale data.
- ▶ Back cover endorsements from those individuals and organizations who find the G2G series useful.

Since there is no space for an adequate discussion, I invite the reader to explore the seven reports from 2003 to 2010⁷³, sure to offer an insightful tool for spiritual and institutional reflection on service-learning – “Growing to Greatness” was inspired by the words of Martin Luther King, Jr., who said that *“everybody can be great, because everybody can serve”*, and the reports aims to highlight the “greatness” embodied by the young people participating in service-learning, and to bring insight and encouragement to the practitioners, researchers, and policy-makers who support them.

Service-Learning in context of faith development

What has been said so far about service-learning, if thought of in the context of faith, can bear further fruit.

Several academic studies suggest a positive relationship between spiritual practice and service. Youniss, McLellan, and Yates (1999) detected, for example, that students who believe that religion is important in their lives are almost three times more likely to participate in service than those who do not believe that religion is important (see

⁷³ The series can be found at the National Youth Leadership Council website: <https://www.nylc.org/page/GrowingtoGreatness>.

also Hart et al., 2007). More specifically, researchers Youniss et al. (1999) argue that service-learning practices create a transcendent system that provides a faith base from which youth can derive principles for action. Hart and Atkins (2004) describe service-learning as a key source of social capital and when combined with religion.

These few examples suggest that service, in the organized form of a high-quality methodology and an institutional configuration, not only enriches learning by making it multidimensional, but encourages the spiritual growth of students and the educational community, while having as positive spill-over effect a further willingness to serve.

The gospel of Christ is about bringing “good news” to the world, in word and through acts of service to the poor, immigrants, and those burdened with illness or a physical or emotional disability utilizing de facto the tools of service-learning.

After all, this would seem almost “natural”. The gospel of Christ is about bringing “good news” to the world, in word and through acts of service to the poor, immigrants, and those burdened with illness or a physical or emotional disability utiliz-

ing de facto the tools of service-learning. It is not without reason that its practice is found in Roman Catholic, Anabaptist, Quaker, Reformed and evangelical schools and churches as well as faith-based nonprofits. Each of these communities integrate biblical texts and Christian teaching with service-learning activities.

One example is Benilde-St. Margaret’s, a Catholic school in Minnesota, where teachers see service-learning as a way to respond to the National Conference of Catholics Bishops’ call for Catholic Social Teaching on Economic Justice. The President of Benilde, writes: *“Part of our identity, one of our core strengths, is our commitment to service-learning - guiding our students to live in the Gospel messages in a way that improves humanity”*.

I can think of no other time in human history when the revolutionary simplicity of integrating active learning with service is more needed – for the spiritual and personal development of our youth, for their academic achievement and their engagement as global citizens. Our message to the youth of the world should be: “You are needed! We challenge you to lift hammers to help neighbors build homes, open books to tutor younger children and bring a healing touch to our elders”.

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15. THE SPIRITUAL DIMENSION OF SERVICE-LEARNING: A MULTICULTURAL AND INTERRELIGIOUS PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Across the globe, personal greed, failure in corporate and government bailouts show that Nation's moral character is in peril. Higher education institutions need to promote and support the development of the students' ethical values, which can only sustain the country's future. The countries across the globe face a dire need for a culture of care, where the individuals practice interconnectedness with the Divine power, self, others, and God's other creation. Spirituality, which goes beyond religion or a particular belief system, is interconnected by creating meaning in our lives.

All Higher education institutions have their institutional mission incorporating social consciousness as part of their educational experience. Increasing student diversity on campus requires colleges and universities to be inclusive and appreciative of many cultures, values, and religions. Service-Learning is a pedagogy that can develop multicultural training and can provide a powerful context for exploring issues related to justice, responsibility, faith, and commitment. Service-Learning can help college students to explore faith and spirituality since it offers many opportunities for reflection on personal values, responsibilities, and moral commitments. Service-Learning helps students' spiritual growth and can create a new generation who are more caring, more globally aware, and more committed to social justice than previous generations.

The spiritual dimension can be developed by engaging the students through Service-Learning. The examples of Service-Learning offered by institutions from different cultures and its scope for enhancing multicultural and interreligious perspectives will be discussed in this chapter.

Introduction

The debate in recent times in higher education focuses on rankings, quality, financing, and student mobility. However, more significant questions about spirituality and the social relevance of higher education have taken on new urgency. The COVID-19 pandemic, the climate crisis, the calls for decolonization, the persistence of gender violence, the rise of authoritarian nationalism have given rise to both a new era of uncertainty and perhaps to an opportunity for what some have called a significant transition or a civilizational shift to a newly imagined world. We have reached a point where we have a limited capacity to understand the way forward but must have an unlimited capacity of caring for each other and the planet within which we are but a tiny part.

Reports about personal greed, corporate and governmental failures increasingly reflect human moral and ethical collapse. Higher education builds youth must inculcate spiritual and ethical values through their curriculum and pedagogy for the world to have a sustainable future. Christian educational institutions have become increasingly diverse and multi-faith. There is always a struggle to find the right balance in being faithful to its vision, mission, and identity in embracing and serving multi-faith commitments and students. As campus communities become ever-more diverse, it is vital that all students feel a sense of belonging, even while embracing multiple campus cultures within a single institution. Increasing student diversity on campus requires colleges and universities to appreciate many cultures, values, and religions.

What is Spirituality?

Spirituality is a lifelong development of a sense of the authentic Self. Spirituality places us in relationships with others through care and outreach.

Spirituality is something that's often debated and commonly misunderstood. Many people confuse spirituality with religion and bring pre-existing beliefs

about the impact of religion on discussions about spirituality. Though all religions emphasize spirituality being an essential part of faith, it is possible to be "spiritual" without necessarily being a part of an organized religious community. Spirituality is a broad concept with room for many perspectives. People may describe a spiritual experience as sacred or transcendent or simply a deep sense of aliveness and interconnectedness (Beauregard and O'Leary, 2007). Spirituality is a lifelong development of a

sense of the authentic Self. Spirituality places us in relationships with others through care and outreach.

a. Spirituality involves the ongoing construction of meaning and knowledge.

Spirituality and spiritual experiences can be symbolic, unexpected, and present in learning environments. Spirituality emphasizes interconnectedness and wholeness. Spirituality not only asks “Who am I”? Nevertheless, it can also ask, “Whose am I?”. Welch and Koth (2009) challenge the assumption that students’ spiritual development is a developmental approach to nurture students’ spirituality through service-learning (Pigza & Welch, 2010).

b. Spirituality also emphasizes interconnectedness and wholeness.

When the students are involved in community engagement, they interact with the community and get challenged by their needs. Such an experience in the community makes them raise some tough questions about their existence and interconnectedness.

c. Spirituality as human intelligence.

Spirituality results in the ongoing construction of meaning and knowledge. Robert Emmons (2000), a leading researcher in the psychology of spirituality, proposed that spirituality is a different type of human intelligence. The ability of the person to process the world around them and discover meaning and significance is spiritual intelligence (for further explorations, see also Rahman, 2017). Spirituality impacts students, where the students see the meaning of their life and how they view family, friendships, vocation, religious affiliation, and political and civic engagement through the lens of Spirituality (Pigza & Welch, 2010).

d. Spirituality as wholeness and compassion.

Historian of alternative education Ron Miller, in his treatise “Holistic Education for an Emerging Culture” (1999), has referred to the “many layers of wholeness and meaning” of which human beings are composed. Glazer (1999) has also described wholeness as “the inherent, seamless, interdependent quality of the world,” And therefore, a relationship exists between everything. It is the responsibility of the educators to lead students to discern this wholeness. The educators who use service-learning pedagogy can facilitate the students to develop this dimension of spirituality. Rachel Naomi Remen, the clinical professor of family and community medicine, addressed human questions in education in her essay “Education for Mission, Meaning and Compassion” (1999) and wrote that the soul-saving and world-saving attribute of compassion implied its place in the classroom and personal relationship (Jones, 2005).

Spirituality in a Multicultural, Multireligious context

The major religions in Asia are Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism. Many Christian institutions intentionally offer service learning since their institutional mission focuses on developing socially conscious and spiritually inspired young men and women.

The major religions in Asia are Buddhism, Islam, and Hinduism. Many Christian institutions intentionally offer service-learning since their institutional mission focuses on developing socially conscious and spiritually inspired young men and women.

If there is an actual spiritual dimension linking us so that we are all brothers and sisters in some profound and loving way, we have a vital basis for creating peace in the world and genuinely caring for each other's welfare. We will be rich in a much more critical way than in the material dimension, and these riches will transform our world for the better.

Spirituality and Buddhism

Education was first initiated in India on a larger scale during the Buddhist movement. The main aim of Buddhist education is the student's holistic development (Thero, 2017). According to Buddhism, holistic development includes physical, mental, moral, and intellectual development. Buddhist educational objectives are broad and deep similar to that of the objectives of modern-day education. It focuses on spiritual purity by ending all mental ills like lust, faults, and ignorance through physical and mental discipline. The intelligent person without virtue and discipline is fruitless. Buddhism also teaches a person to live selflessly, and this is made possible by training a person to look at himself/herself and others with respect. Serving society is the central concept of Buddhist education. If the educational institutions offer education with these objectives, there will not be any social problems, complexity, and corruption in this World (Thero, 2017). HEIs, which have a more significant proportion of Buddhist students, have such an understanding of spirituality.

Spirituality and Islam

Islam defines spirituality as the presence of a relationship with Allah that affects the individuals' self-worth, sense of meaning, and connectedness with others (Hussain, 2020).

In the Islamic religion, by contemplating God's signs in the world around us, knowledge gives us Information to think, act, and feel. When a person with high spiritual intelligence goes through life, he/she constantly derives positive thoughts from his/her events. This experience acts as fuel for his inspiration, optimism, gratitude, and perseverance. People with lower levels of spiritual intelligence take false meaning from the world around them, or they fail to recognize the sign of God. This experience fuels anger, jealousy, arrogance, and conceit (Rahman, 2017). It is also believed in Islam that the most important dimension of health is the spiritual one. Islam also perceives spirituality as having special cognitions, behaviours with oneself, God, and others (Marzband *et al.*, 2017). "*Islamic Spirituality is the solution to the present behaviour disorder*" is another belief in Islam (Ubale & Abdullah, 2015). They believe that the sources of Islamic Spirituality help preserve spirituality and shape human behaviour, involving human capacities at mental, emotional, physical and social interaction levels. Service-learning enables the students and staff to reflect on their behaviour as they engage in the community

Hinduism and Spirituality

Hinduism is a combination of many religious traditions native to India. There is no specific founder for Hinduism. In Hinduism, Spirituality is an attitude. Hindus believe that one can enter higher states of consciousness or the realm of the Self by transcending beyond their ordinary nature and perpetual consciousness. They also believe that a spiritual person does not necessarily believe in God. However, he or she believes in himself/herself and their spiritual nature by leading a spiritual life. The spiritual person will be able to control the mind and body, be free from the temptations of life, and remain mentally stable under all circumstances by distancing themselves from the world's attractions. By identifying himself with the inner Self, the spiritual person will overcome the limitations and weaknesses by practising virtue.

In Hinduism, the Vedas that present the most profound single truth, say Brahman (in English, Divine), pervades the entire universe. This divine reality is present in all living beings. Brahman created everything, and everything is constantly repeating its cycle and preserved, dissolved, and transformed. Srivastava and Barmola (2013), based on their research study on how Rituals in Hinduism is related to spirituality, have reported that rituals that Hindus follow lead to spirituality, and it is the rituals that help to adjust the ego, understand psychic phenomena, maintain health and wellness, the effect of distant prayer and relation between science and Spirituality. When the students go to the community, service-learning helps them relook into themselves, and hence their ego gets transformed, which Hinduism promotes through rituals.

Christian Spirituality

The scriptures of Christianity say that there is no exclusively private self. Human existence is inherently a relational one. The root meaning of spirituality is taken from the Latin word 'spiritus,' meaning the breath or life force. Spirituality refers to meaning and purpose in one's life, a search for wholeness, and a relationship with a transcendent being.

Human existence inherently embodies a social task. The great North African theologian, Augustine of Hippo, in his Commentary on Genesis, Adam's sin (image of human failure) was portrayed as living for himself alone and believed that human existence was related to the common good. Christian Spirituality has an essentially social dimension, which has explicit attention to social transformation. Many Christian writers feel that social engagement is possible mainly by mysticism and contemplation. There is a close relationship between Christian spirituality and social transformation critically, depending on how the public world is valued.

Only by contemplating God's compassion for humanity can make one show genuine compassion and create deep transformative structures (Sheldrake, 2016). Spirituality is more of individual practice and has to do with having a sense of peace and purpose. It also relates to the process of developing beliefs around the meaning of life and connection with others. The National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) data gathered in 2004 from 149801 students at 461 four-year degree colleges and universities showed a good correlation between participation in spiritual practices and spirituality. NSSE also reported that the strongest predictor of spiritual growth among the curricular experiences was enrolment.

Educational experiences and practices that promote spiritual development – especially Service-Learning, interdisciplinary courses, study abroad – have uniformly positive effects on traditional college outcomes.

Educational experiences and practices that promote spiritual development –especially Service-Learning, interdisciplinary courses, study abroad– have uniformly positive effects on traditional college outcomes.

Exposing students to diverse people, cultures, and ideas through study abroad, interdisciplinary coursework, Service-Learning, and other forms of civic engagement helps students value multiple perspectives as they confront our time's complex social, economic, and political problems. Self-reflection and meditation are among the most powerful tools for enhancing students' spiritual development.

Christian faith also believes that when those involved in service projects do not reflect on their experiences, do not ponder the situation of those served and relate them to the sacred scriptures and practice of their community, then precious opportunities to make explicit the connections between faith and faith life are forfeited (Radecke, 2007).

Service Learning and Spirituality

The college years are very significant for an emerging adult to develop intellectually, morally, and spiritually. Earlier research has highlighted that disinclination of some, perhaps many, young adults to be involved in traditional spiritual beliefs or ministries does not indicate that they are religiously disaffected or spiritually disengaged. It reveals the contrary: 77% of college students pray, 78% discuss religious topics with friends, and 70% attended religious services. Only 27% say that the existence of God is a matter of indifference to them (Radecke, 2007).

Studies have found that undergraduates, and youth in general, have an overwhelming interest in spirituality. Barrett (2016) discovered that 78% of undergraduates discussed religion or spirituality with their friends. Roehlkepartain *et al.*, (2008) have investigated spiritual beliefs among 12- to 25-year-olds in eight countries and found that only 20% described themselves as not spiritual. However, students have expressed that higher education academic experiences are not meeting their desire for spiritual development. In a survey conducted by Higher Education Research Institute, UCLA, 2010 it has been reported that 53% of undergraduates said that the classroom had no impact on their spiritual beliefs, and only 55% were satisfied with the experience their college provided for religious or spiritual reflection.

Definitions of Spirituality are many and varied, often equated with religion or morality, and can be used as inclusive and recognize all things' interrelatedness. Faith is the matrix of meaning that human beings construct, negotiate, disassemble, and reconstruct throughout their lives as they seek to make sense of the world, their lives, relationships with others, and God.

Conceptualization of Spirituality comprises the following dimensions:

1. being engaged in a dynamic process of inner reflection to understand better oneself and the meaning and purpose of one's life;
2. living out one's philosophy of life with authenticity and integrity;
3. seeking a connection to and relationship with a higher power; and

4. believing in the interconnectedness of humanity and a related desire to be of service to others (Bertrand, 2013).

Spirituality in education refers to no more – and no less– than a deep connection between student, teacher, and subject –a connection so honest, vital, and vibrant that it cannot help but link the omnipresent God and spiritual values. Nourishment of this spark in the classroom allows it to flourish globally in Humanities and Sciences, politics, medicine, engineering –wherever our students are and go after graduation. In Higher education institutions, the classroom is unable to foster the spiritual dimension of students. Over the past 25 years, the prevalence of Service-Learning on college and university campuses has grown exponentially. Initially conceived in the 1980s as a means to engage what was perceived to be a self-absorbed “me generation” of college students in service to society, service-learning has now become a tool to address a host of learning outcomes, including critical thinking skills, career exploration, moral development, the ability to engage in a diverse world, and an understanding of one’s spiritual and/or religious identity (Eyler *et al.*, 2003). Service-learning is a proven pedagogy that provides the right avenue for the students to develop spirituality. Spirituality

Service-learning is a proven pedagogy that provides the right avenue for the students to develop spirituality. Spirituality is an integral dimension that develops the whole person. One of the significant elements of service-learning is reflection. The reflection on the community experiences leads to new knowledge.

is an integral dimension that develops the whole person. One of the significant elements of service-learning is reflection. The reflection on the community experiences leads to new knowledge. The transformation from “Me” to “We” happens during the reflection. The transformation may include a change in or even a challenge of attitudes, values, or

beliefs (Welch & Koth, 2009). Transformation in the new digital era also requires a holistic, human-centric approach, one we call the Head, Heart, and Hands of transformation. The heart has received the least consideration, but it is attention to all three elements that enables educational institutions to succeed today and thrive tomorrow. The head, heart, and hands of transformation is not a panacea, but it is a holistic and human-centric approach that is proven to enable higher education institutions that truly embrace it to succeed today and thrive tomorrow.

Service-Learning and Whole Person Education

The twenty-first century expects higher education institutions to produce well-equipped graduates for various jobs with the required skill sets and the ability to cope with the various demands on the personal and professional sides. Higher education has constantly been facing pressure to enhance competence for a world that keeps changing the work demand, and this need has been much more accelerated in the recent past when the whole globe has faced the disastrous effects of the pandemic. The Centre for Research in Higher Education policies (CIPES) of Portugal has investigated and suggests that a set of transversal competencies is the need in the present situation. These competencies are critical in preparing students for future work. One crucial skill is adaptability (Schueller and Figueiredo, 2021). The constantly changing job market also requires skills developed in college to grow during their professional career. Therefore, the Colleges are required to make intentional efforts in imparting such employable skills that are required. The companies value such flexible education offered by higher education institutions through whole-person education. A report from the Brookings Institution titled “The ‘Great Gatsby Curve’ for Character Skills and Mobility” (Reeves, 2014) gives many economic data to show the value of whole-person education, particularly in the United States. Long-term career success and intergenerational wealth require a whole-person education that develops 21st-century skills.

The context of Whole-Person Education

Employers expect higher education institutions to provide the following three skill types along with excellent disciplinary skills.

- ▶ Cognitive Skills: problem-solving, creativity, critical thinking
- ▶ Interpersonal Skills: communications, teamwork, leadership
- ▶ Intrapersonal Skills: adaptability, initiative, discipline, ethics, persistence

These skills strongly influence the long-term success of individuals in the workplace. Creating new experiences can develop such skills, which actively develops metacognitive skills.

As an example, Loyola Marymount University (California, the USA) offers whole-person education as a simultaneous process of Information, formation, and transformation. It encourages personal integration of the student’s thinking, choosing evolving Self through academic and professional development and physical, social, psycholog-

ical, moral, cultural, religious/spiritual growth. When students get to know themselves and the world at large through whole-person education, they are encouraged to grow in personal and social literacy skills needed for responsible citizenship. Another example is Japan, where education –a mix of cultural philosophy, social neuroscience, historical analysis, and socio-cognitive and constructive theories – is understood as a whole person education, practised as Zen-in education by people of this country. The Japanese started promoting education for sustainable development through this whole-person education. (Clark *et al.*, 2020).

Higher Education institutions evolve strategies to develop competence on the intellectual side without suitably balancing the affective and psychomotor domains. The academic experience offered by HEIs cannot make the students fit for the challenges in their personal and professional life. The Latin word Universitas means whole, and hence university education needs to be holistic. Everywhere in human existence, whole-person development is anticipated. In the family, workplace, and the community, everyone aspires for whole-person development. It is developing a person to develop personally to lead indeed and improve others. It gives someone the ability to know how to improve themselves and know how to help others improve.

Whole person development is the solution by employers to retain the employee and effective employee engagement, which is a real challenge these days. The workplace changes rapidly, and so the employers face high employee turnover and unmotivated teams. 2018 LinkedIn report says that 93% of employees stay at a job longer if there is an investment in their career. 2016 Deloitte Millennial survey shows that 71% of those who are likely to leave their job in the next two years are dissatisfied with their Development of Leadership skills. Sometimes, employers develop the employee's traditional skills but overlook their personal and professional skill development in the workplace. In such cases, the employers need to adopt an approach that focuses on improving personal and emotional skills or soft skills and traditional professional skills.

The workplace becomes a place with a high level of trust in the environment to work. The employees develop a growth mindset, focusing on personal development, which results in a high level of employee engagement and retention. Employees can work on core skill sets that may not be directly related to their job but are very important to success as a leader. A 2015 study from LinkedIn says that 59% of US hiring managers say it is challenging to find candidates with soft skills. When the company takes an interest in their work and their personal lives, the employees feel valued, leading to increased engagement and loyalty in their work.

Education of the whole person is much more than self-actualization. It strives to cultivate students' social, emotional, physical, and ethical development. This experience fosters creativity, enables the person to experience psychological wellbeing, and encourages social skills. Accomplishing the institution's mission of whole-person education is possible by evolving suitable mechanisms for students to explore societal issues, facilitating them to judge those issues. By expanding their experiential learning, the students become problem seekers and problem solvers in the relevant context. Such learning environments make the students develop professional competencies, communication skills, leadership, and team skills; Many Higher Education Institutions today offer Serve-Learn -Sustain programs that give ethical and societal contexts for whole-person education.

The educational experiences offered at the Christian liberal arts institutions shape the lives of young people who are stepping into adulthood because they offer the opportunity for a broad-based sustained, relationally based conversation led by trusted scholars about who God is, who we are, and how we live faithfully in this World (Longman, 2020). The holistic approach seeks to develop critical, confident, and independent learners capable of action in their professions and society in general. The holistic teacher enables the learners to become critical learners and devise ways to take action in society. Holistic education is made possible by the HALTI approach (Holistic Approach to Learning and Teaching Interaction). Patel, 2003 has independently developed the HALTI approach over nine years of reflective teaching practice in the field of information systems and computing across three higher educational institutions, which could now be extrapolated to other fields too. The two aspects of this approach are: developing Self, and the inspired learners become concerned about knowledge through the discipline of knowledge. In the holistic approach, the critical learners perceive the Self as the foundation of the critical learner and address the Self's needs. The students' education during their undergraduate program (18-21 years) intertwines discipline and learning about themselves and society. The Self is the basis of the personal construction system. At the undergraduate level, the students are in the process of discovering themselves. The critical learners' self-discovery process is by using case studies or experiential learning in a teaching session. This experience of self-discovery is the spirituality dimension in whole-person education (Patel, 2003).

Service-Learning proves to enhance students' civic responsibilities, career awareness, interpersonal skills, and cultural tolerance

In the present scenario, higher education institutions visualize community issues to illustrate actions towards accomplishing the

UN Sustainable Development Goals. The liberal arts education provides a good and productive environment to develop four characteristics: broad disciplinary foundation, humanism values, connection to communities, and self-awareness originated from in-class learning and outside classroom engagement. Specifically, liberal arts education encourages students to actively get involved in civic efforts crossing economic, social, cultural, and environmental disciplines.

Service-Learning proves to enhance students' civic responsibilities, career awareness, interpersonal skills, and cultural tolerance (Hebert & Hauf, 2015; Peters *et al.*, 2006; Toncar, 2006). All these competencies are vital for students to grow into social innovators. In whole-person education, there is an integrated approach of the head, heart, and hand, and this approach impacts the students' daily actions and behaviours. This approach distinctively shifts higher education, resulting in the most required outcomes of learning. It results in making the students become critical thinkers, lifelong learners, and global citizens. This approach also encourages the learners and educators to develop socially, ethically, and psychologically. Higher education institutions need to create opportunities for students to reflect critically about social change and how they need to behave to change society. The educators offer such experiences of discomfort, which ultimately results in a transformation in the students and the society. Education is multidisciplinary and multidimensional in creating a holistic experience. It is not a place for creating the workforce alone (McSweeney *et al.*, 2015). The experiential learning pedagogy, service-learning is quite suitable for offering whole-person education. These education programs put into effect at the higher education level make attempts to integrate the transformative and spiritual aspects of holistic education. Thus spiritual development may occur during the service-learning experience (Barrett, 2016)

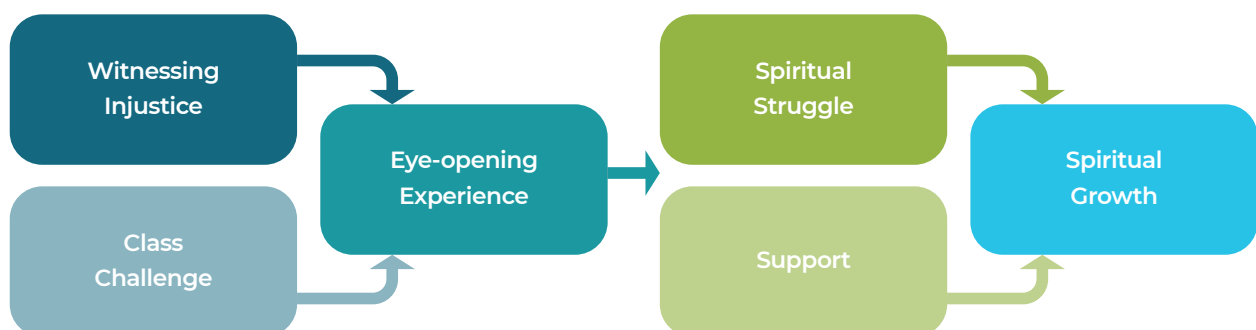


Figure 1. Conceptualization of how spiritual growth may occur during Service-Learning

Service-Learning as a spiritually engaged pedagogy

Study findings point toward important service-learning components that should be incorporated to maximize potential spiritual growth for students. First, it is essential to develop community partnerships that will enable students to interact with and build reciprocal relationships with individuals facing injustice so that possibilities exist to hear stories about or witness injustice. Indeed, through these stories and observations, students' stereotypes and assumptions about the world are challenged. In this eye-opening experience, a student realizes that his or her preconceptions about people living in poverty are not entirely accurate, and, therefore, the student's prior worldview is no longer sustainable. The resulting disequilibrium opens up the possibility for growth. At the same time, Service experiences challenge students' assumptions; class experiences should challenge students to think critically about assumptions and beliefs, which can be facilitated by hearing diverse perspectives in class discussions or class readings and asking students to consider, in-class discussions and assignments, what they believe and why (Higher Education Research Institute Report, 2007).

The most significant predictor of spiritual growth among undergraduates was whether a professor encouraged spiritual discussions in class.

The most significant predictor of spiritual growth among undergraduates was whether a professor encouraged spiritual discussions in class. As students face the disequilibrium associated

with having their eyes opened and realize that their prior assumptions may be inaccurate, they must have access to support through integration and relationships. The effective integration of classroom material and service-learning can help students understand their challenging experiences and process their feelings of disequilibrium. As demonstrated in previous research, this vital integration can occur in class discussions, small-group reflections, journaling, and class reading and writing assignments (Astin et al., 2011; Eyler & Giles, 1999; Hatcher et al., 2013).

Concerning the impact of service-learning on self-authorship, Jones researched a group of students two and four years after they participated in a service-learning course. The results of this study suggested that service-learning promotes development in each domain of self-authorship, but what is enduring about service-learning is the likelihood of increasing integration of these domains. This integration occurs because the service-learning context enables students to construct their identities in complicated, challenging, and unfamiliar environments. These settings typically

facilitated new and more complex thinking about participants' personal and social identities, constructing identity about serving others, and the kinds of commitments participants wanted to make in their lives. Because students were able to develop relationships with both individuals and social issues with which they were unfamiliar, previously held notions of Self and others were disrupted, challenged, and reconstructed (Jones & Abes, 2004).

Whole person education offered through Service-Learning in Asia

Whole person education via Service-Learning may lack the clear boundaries of a defined academic discipline. But by touching each point of a trinity – intellectual, social, and moral – it enables the United Board for Christian Education in Asia and the colleges and universities in its network to infuse academic life with new purpose.

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purpose. Let us focus on a few examples of how different institutions have taken on this journey of Service-Learning on their campus.

The Hong Kong Baptist University offers whole-person education through the Centre for holistic teaching and learning. The university delivers whole-person education that fosters their students' spiritual, intellectual, and physical development and nurtures them to become confident, caring leaders who possess integrity, perseverance, and a sense of responsibility for themselves and others. Their focus on whole-person education reflects their Graduate Attributes (GA). Their academic, co-curricular, and extracurricular activities develop their Graduate Attributes.

The United Board, an Asian higher education network, offers ground teaching and learning programs in academic rigour, social concerns, and moral inquiry. United Board trains educators to offer WPE that promotes critical thinking, and their curriculum leads towards the exploration of ethics, service, and knowledge. The ranking criteria challenge Asian institutions, so the United Board replaces the wild pursuits of prestige and ranking with a commitment to developing sound citizens. The students

become sensitive to the needs of the surrounding community. The United Board wants education that connects knowledge to Christian values; hence, service-learning becomes an integral part of WPE. UB expands its holistic approach to East Asia, Southeast Asia, and South Asia.

To increase their awareness of social issues, Chung Chi College in Hong Kong launched the Service-Learning Programme as an elective course of the Graduation Capstone course of the college's general education curriculum. Students can participate in in-service programs in local, mainland China or overseas social organizations for three to six weeks. Students reflect on the knowledge and skills learned in class and explore their potential through this experiential learning.

Many parts of the Philippines face frequent natural disasters, being one of the top 10 climate hotspots. Therefore, resilience is an essential life skill for the Filipinians. Miriam College, Philippines (United board Report, 2015) developed teaching-learning modules using the whole person approach-leading to a culture of safety and caring for others. The prepared materials equipped the students with resilient knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to face the unknown future, a few dimensions of spirituality. Seoul Women's University, South Korea, developed a Service-Learning Program for Gender and Sexuality Education (United Board Report, 2015). This program was to identify the intangible factors associated with adolescents' gender/sexuality culture and understand the complexity of sexual violence and sex trafficking. On interviewing 22 youngsters, the students realized the significance of commodifying sexuality, experiencing hierarchy in the peer group, exploitation under the pretext of romance, and overlapping perpetration and victimization. The women students get prepared to face real-life challenges through this program, and their spiritual quotient can be enhanced.

Ginling Women's College, Nanjing University (United Board Report, 2015), offered a service-learning program to prepare future English teachers. The Institutional motto being "Abundant Life", the English students were enriched by serving in the Community Children's Libraries. The students of this course learned Child development, second language acquisition, and pedagogy to teach reading for children. The students became more confident about attracting the attention of parents and children by working with the students in the Library. They also developed skills to ask questions during storytelling, apply voice modulation, and adapt suitable body language. This experience has paved the way for many students to take up teaching as a career. The students have expressed that the community engagement has taught them what they missed in learning in the classroom. The students were able to truly experience

the shade of Abundant life through this service-learning program. Ginling Women's College had another service-learning program on Health care for the elderly (United Board Report, 2015) for the Nutrition and Gerontology course students. They conducted surveys on Nutrition and Psychology before and after Health education offered to 1000 elders of 60 years and above. The students realized the necessity of offering health care education for the elderly, and this experience can make them empathetic, and they learned to connect with the elders quite naturally.

In Petra Christian University, Indonesia, the students of Architecture and interior design were involved in inclusive designing as their service-learning activity (United Board Report, 2016). The service activity explored how to provide equal opportunities for persons with disabilities, senior lecturers, pregnant women, and children of the faculty to access the university library resources. The students were taught inclusive design in Sociology classes, where they learned on Universal design approach. The training sessions enabled them to develop empathy with the target community. The workshops with the target group enabled the students to get input for designing the Library. With all the additional disciplinary knowledge gained, the students could design an accessible library on the 6th floor. In a multidisciplinary theme-based service-learning by Silliman University, Philippines, the students addressed the negative impact of climate change and disaster preparedness in rural communities (United Board Report, 2016). The objective was to impart awareness on climate change to the rural community and organize a responsive program for appropriate mitigating measures against the negative impacts of climate change. Hence, the rural community has become more sustainable and disaster-resilient. During the activities with the rural community, the students were enriched with the local knowledge from the community and worked extensively with external and internal partners. A monograph prepared with an interdisciplinary approach on climate change adaptation, with drawings and paintings by the Fine Arts students of the university, was used by all age groups in the community.

St Luke's College of Nursing, Trinity University of Asia, Philippines, offered a health education model as service-learning for the elderly in rural-urban settings (United Board Report, 2016). On determining the indigenous knowledge on health-promoting practices of the elderly, students developed a Health Education model on the health practices of the elderly. The nursing students developed a Training of Trainers model. Few elders in the community and the nursing students started teaching classes for the others in the community. The students of Nursing were able to apply all their academic learning for educating the elderly in rural-urban areas.

Hue University College of Foreign languages, Vietnam, offered a Service-Learning program on Community teaching (United Board Report, 2016). Target community for one group comprised of shop sellers, street vendors, orphans in pagodas, the second group served the staff at some tourist centres, and the third group taught English for the disabled who were the inmates at Hope Centre, and the fourth group taught English for the workers in cruise boats. Lots of foreigners travel in cruise boats, and many foreigners serve as volunteers at Hope centre. The students designed the syllabus and lesson plan, prepared teaching materials, compiled a bilingual phrasebook for the respective community. The students prepared materials with common vocabulary/phrases they use in dialogue along with Vietnamese translation. English teaching in the different community groups has trained them to develop the required teaching skills for their future career as English teachers.

Soegijapranata Catholic University, Indonesia, offered a Service-learning Program on improving Small and Micro Enterprises by Activity-based Budgeting for the students of Management Accounting (United Board Report, 2016). This service activity enabled the students to design financial plans for small and micro-enterprises. The community engagement in this course has enhanced the student registration for this course in the following semester. Many students continued to serve the community even after completing the course by applying their marketing concepts and helping them in their marketing. On discussing the business problem with the community, the students were able to identify the root cause of their problem related to financial planning. These community experiences helped the institution review and revise the syllabus to design courses on budgetary implementation.

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One of the potent tools for making this happen in Lady Doak College, India is Life Frontier Engagement (LiFE), a Service-Learning, community-based experiential learning, and action research program, which without doubt fuses the best of all academic disciplines, expanding the faculty and student boundaries, creating more substantial, more seamless institutional practice. The goal of Life

Frontier Engagement aligns with the college's mission to help Lady Doak students mature into intellectually mature, morally upright, socially responsible, and spiritually inspired women. Students will better appreciate the relevance of their academic training when they cross the frontier – from the classroom to the community – where they can apply their knowledge and gain a deeper understanding of social dynamics and needs. This experiential learning is in complete alignment with the concept of whole-person education, which seeks to prepare students intellectually, socially, and spiritually for rewarding professional and personal lives. It provides whole-person education to undergraduate students in their final year that assimilates academics with real-life experience. It facilitates joyful experiential learning to prepare students to discover real-life values. It enables them to integrate insights from across disciplines with applied and action research to address pressing economic, social, and health issues in the community, transforming each student into productive, caring citizens of our global society.

LiFE is a flagship program of Lady Doak College and is a mandatory course taken up by the final year undergraduate students for six academic credits. Every academic year a total of 14 departments with 17 courses and 24 batches of approximately 1000 students complete around 200 community-based projects ranging from novel community service to research initiatives, resulting in the benefit for the learner and the community. Life Frontier Engagement has provided many opportunities for students to relate what they have learned in their classrooms with the societal issues that clamour for attention. This experience has led them to a deep understanding of the realities with which an ordinary person grapples in his day-to-day life. Working closely with communities has given the students newer insights into their lifestyles. It has especially enabled them to spot how the people they worked with continue to suffer for basic needs like employment, electricity, proper sanitation, health, street lights, education, and how the farmers suffer from high levels of debt and the gender bias surrounding them the agricultural labourers. The students work in small teams, and they have developed excellent team spirit and communicated well with one another and the community. A friendly bond emerges among the students, faculty, community, and collaborating NGOs. This Life Frontier engagement program provides a platform for peer learning and team building. The institution conducts an annual culmination, as an open house, where the students from various departments display their project works in the booths provided, and this event is open to the public, faculty, and students of all departments. During this time, the students reflect on their experiences and share how their decision-making, problem-solving, and leadership skills were enhanced as they had to handle situations independently. Lady Doak College has paved the way for students to connect with society, interact with the world beyond the col-

lege's premises, apply their knowledge and explore new horizons in Service-Learning through the LiFE program.

Thus, spirituality and Service-Learning can be related meaningfully in institutions of higher education when the vision and mission of the institution has a focus on serving others.

Role of leadership on campus in fostering spirituality

The institutional leadership gears the direction for every activity in an institution. Therefore, the institutional leaders' efforts in promoting spirituality through service-learning play a vital role in the growth and creation of the institution's brand.

In many Asian institutions, the mission statement plays an integral part in serving the community. The academic leader in the higher education institution emphasizes the three pillars of higher education: teaching-learning, research, and service. Service-learning is an engaged pedagogy that integrates all three pillars of higher education. The leaders need to know the extent to which service-learning is a vehicle to promote whole-person education. The whole person leaders can see the significance of service-learning and functions as a bridge between the governance team and the faculty team. The common traits that the whole person leaders intentionally initiate to promote Spirituality in HEIs through service learning are:

- ▶ Deeply convinced of the call as a leader, the necessity for character formation through developing spirituality.
- ▶ Inspiring the different sections of the stakeholders with the benefits of service-learning.
- ▶ Collaborating with the different sections of staff irrespective of their religion and culture in planning for incorporating service –learning in the organisational chart.
- ▶ Being mindful of the dimension of spirituality as perceived by different religions and promoting it through the institutional model for service learning.
- ▶ Offering the necessary administrative support to the office of service-learning since it promotes the spirituality of all stakeholders.

Providing a spirit of lifelong learning to students

Service-Learning and reflection open the students to the disorienting dilemmas,

the transformation of their perspective, dissolution, and recomposition of meaning that are core faith formation components. Any university can actively promote the integration of faith and civic engagement in a diverse and multi-faith setting by institutionalizing Service-Learning'. Thereby the students can explore issues related to justice, responsibility, faith, and commitment by integration of meaningful classroom Academic knowledge and community service.

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The interfaith scholars' program at DePaul University (Dalton, 2007) exemplifies campus efforts to encourage interfaith student leadership. Scholars are chosen through a competitive application process and represent the

student body in several ways, including religious diversity. Once selected, they develop their interfaith leadership skills, build intentional relationships with one another, facilitate activities and programs for their peers, and reflect on their learning and growth. The scholars host regular dialogues and discussions that can engage hundreds of students.

Classroom and other student organization meetings offer convenient and informal settings to engage students in exploring topics of faith and service. The use of trained student peers helps create an informal and welcoming environment that makes it easier for students to discuss topics of service and faith. Personal stories and faith journeys, particularly by the exemplary community and faculty/staff leaders who are role models, motivate students to consider their commitments and values. Small discussion groups can help maximize involvement and encourage sharing and discussion to define the terms "civic engagement clearly" and "faith" broadly and inclusively for the dialogue. The dialogues are assessed through participant surveys and feedback that provide valuable feedback on students' questions, concerns, and perspectives about the connections between faith and civic responsibility. These approaches can help connect faith and Service-Learning (Dalton, 2007) and broaden the intellectual foundation thereby facilitating whole-person development and lifelong learning.

Conclusion

Institutions of higher education are beginning to explore specific programmatic approaches for supporting students in deepening their development of values, in-

cluding spiritual values, in conjunction with furthering their intellectual growth. The goal for education should be no less than a spiritual quest for the times we live in. Curricular Service-Learning experiences and, campus leadership is also crucial for affirming and strengthening the commitment to incorporate the search for personal meaning and values, for authenticity and spiritual growth, as central to the mission of higher education.

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16. FRATERNITY AND CARE IN SERVICE-LEARNING

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Abstract

The contribution of service-learning to the formation of citizens is clear and out of discussion. The specialized literature defines it as a methodology that promotes values and activates behaviors conveying valuable qualities on the basis of learning, engagement and direct action in the environment. Even though its close relation to altruism, cooperation, engagement, solidarity and a critical sense has been recognized, the potential connection between this methodology and the values of care and fraternity has not been dealt with. The purpose of our contribution is to bring to light their presence in service-learning practices and highlight their importance in social life. At the beginning of this chapter, we reveal how care and fraternity have emerged during the world pandemic situation that still affects us. And then we show how the concept of fraternity, which is a victim of the limiting view frequently assigned to it, is used distrustfully. In the chapter, we use the expression “emancipating fraternity” to stress its inclusive nature, which can embrace both the field of interpersonal relationships and the community dimension of the term. As for the second value, care, our starting point is the universal desire to be looked after shared by all human beings, to introduce our-

The contribution of service-learning to the formation of citizens is clear and out of discussion. Even though its close relation to altruism, cooperation, engagement, solidarity and a critical sense has been recognized, the potential connection between this methodology and the values of care and fraternity has not been dealt with. The purpose of our contribution is to bring to light their presence in service-learning practices and highlight their importance in social life.

selves to the term based on the ethics of care developed by feminist authors who focus their attention on the context, relationships, interdependence, damage prevention and responsibility towards others from several disciplines. While discussing both terms, we dwell on the features that are more directly linked to the essence, philosophy and methodology of service-learning.

The “Magnifying Glass Effect” of a Crisis

Every crisis human beings face—be it individual or collective—leaves a trail of losses and a feeling of confusion among those immersed in it. The COVID-19 pandemic has claimed thousands of human lives, destroyed employment, left the most vulnerable groups in a state of abandonment and increased social inequality, aspects which we cannot, must not, and do not want to minimize. The pain caused in the short, medium and long run will mark the lives of many people who have seen how their vital path has been abruptly and suddenly changed.

Nevertheless, the health crisis has also let us distinguish which attitudes, behaviors, works, social policies and involvement contribute to get through in a highly complex and uncertain situation, which others are secondary or dispensable, and which ones we should delete from our life systems due to the suffering they cause and the risk at which they put life on earth.

The COVID-19 has somehow applied a “magnifying glass effect” to the analysis of reality. On the one hand, we have seen the already existing injustices and inequalities with magnifying lenses. On the other hand, the “magnifying glass effect” has also occurred to identify contributions of different nature, which are signs of hope for life in common and the progress of humanity.

COVID-19 has somehow applied a “magnifying glass effect” to the analysis of reality. On the one hand, we have seen the already existing injustices and inequalities with magnifying lenses: the fact that not all houses meet minimum health and safety standards, that there are children living in destitution, that a considerable number of elderly persons

are neglected, that we have normalized unjustifiable inequalities among the population of a same country, that poverty ravages much more people than we are willing to acknowledge and that there are continents at a clear disadvantage in respect of access to vaccines. These are just a few examples.

On the other hand, the “magnifying glass effect” has also occurred to identify contributions of different nature, which are signs of hope for life in common and the progress of humanity. These are aspects which have gained a visibility they did not have in some cases and, in other cases, they have been increased in an apparently spontaneous and natural manner. Let us mention two of the ones we deem to be the most relevant.

The first one is about the possibility of stopping and fighting climate change. The link between the pandemic and humans' predatory attitude in their relation to earth has progressively become more consistent.

The confinement imposed by different governments, teleworking and the fall in the use of air and road transport have had a drastic impact on the reduction of environmental pollution levels, which constitutes a key element for people's health. It is a specific fact, but it shows the possibility of improving not only air quality, but also nature conservation.

The claim for environmental policies that are respectful with the natural environment and the need to introduce changes to our lifestyles are no longer a demand of ecologists and groups sensitized to this issue; rather, it is substantially supported by a large majority of citizens nowadays.

The second aspect we have valued during the health crisis, way above what we do in other times, has to do with the awareness of the fact that we all need help. It was necessary to undergo a global pandemic to realize how fragile, vulnerable and dependent we are as human beings.

During the first weeks, with an unusual collective lucidity, we noticed that our lives literally depended on care: the care delivered by healthcare workers, by the men and women who cleaned our cities, by the haulers and shelf-stackers who guaranteed the population's access to food and by the people who looked after the elderly or children during the lengthy periods when schools were closed. These caregiving tasks are underpaid and not valued enough socially, and they appeared as essential activities to guarantee life (Rendueles, 2020, pp. 86-87).

We found out (in some cases, in an extremely harsh manner) about the existence of our own limits and how much others help us overcome them. We experienced that those around us are the ones who alleviate our suffering, propel us or lead us by the hand to go through experiences in which we are filled with panic and which we cannot face alone because we lack the necessary emotional, material and physical resources. Taking into account the family, neighborhood and town networks of mutual help that arose spontaneously, we verified that there is no way out of the crisis and no possibility of social transformation unless care is put at the center.

And we discovered another truth: that "the others that help" are also us, and we are part of a network of relationships which gives and receives, and it becomes dense and

robust as the number of acts of giving and receiving rises. We are subjects of needs and subjects of help to the same extent. And the relationships we build with those with whom we share concerns, fears, challenges and hopes mark not only our individual life, but also the fate of humanity.

The values of care and fraternity—under this or another label—have sprung up at different relation levels: in connection with coexistence in a same town, in the work field, in families' daily life, in friendship and neighborly treatment, just to name a few examples. However, and in spite of the importance they are assigned due to the “magnifying glass effect,” the truth is that both of them are scarcely present in the public space, social policies and—unfortunately—the educational sector. And, particularly, in higher education.

There is a fact that should be food for thought: neither care nor fraternity are starting points (we wish!). On the contrary, they are challenges that require more than good intentions to be solved. We need solidary economic policies, social organizations based on justice, changes in lifestyles harmful to relationships and the environment, as well as educational proposals that take into account these aspects.

As is the case with any type of learning, the acquisition of values like care and fraternity depends on the actions they trigger, the opportunities to train them, recurrent experiences to consolidate their acquisition, and reflection moments to become aware of them and assign them the value they deserve.

Ethics Training and Higher Education

Perhaps the first question we should ask ourselves is which commitment is assumed by higher education with regard to its students' moral instruction. It is likely that, if we made a survey among university professors, we would get very different—if not contradictory—answers.

We know that the responsibility of education in people's moral instruction does not terminate with compulsory schooling. It extends to any environment and educational level; and it is our belief that it also reaches higher and university education. The difference lies in the fact that, while teachers assume the youth's human and civil development as part of their job in schools, this situation is not replicated in the university field.

There is still a considerable percentage of educators who separate university students' preparation for the labor world from their education for an active citizenship and their contribution to the general good. They are of the opinion that university must ensure the acquisition of knowledge and the technical, scientific and competence-related development directly linked to the practice of profession, sending ethics learning to the background. In their view, it is informally achieved through the relationship between students and teachers, or between students themselves, and through learning and meeting experiences provided by university. It is their understanding that this little interventionist way of instilling values is enough, and that it is neither necessary nor convenient to make it the main subject or expressly deal with it; and that in no way should it affect curricula, teaching projects or university structure.

One of the most frequent criticisms directed to university throughout history is—not in vain—the lack of involvement in the actual issues of the society it is part of. Nowadays, distancing, elitism, ignorance and disconnection with what happens around, insensitivity or indifference are accusations still made against a social institution that is an authority on the formation and instillment of the ethical principles of professions, regardless of the importance the faculty places on it in this regard (Martínez, 2008).

The progress made by university regarding its relation to society is evident, and it would be unfair to ignore it. Numerous and prestigious schools of different continents have taken over responsibility and civic engagement with society in addition to their research and teaching duties, and have put the latter to the service of improvement and social transformation. They believe that university's third mission, i.e. communication or transfer of knowledge, is reductionist and limited if it fails to encompass engagement with civil society; and they argue that education in values and the promotion of students' participation in projects concerning involvement in the natural or social world are also ways of boosting academic excellence and optimizing the level of personal and competence-related preparation of future professional generations (Puig, 2012; Tapia, 2006, 2018).

Introducing civic engagement as the third mission of university and assuming the ethics education of students makes us rethink interventions, design curricula and set proposals that make it possible. What does the idea of university as a space for citizenship and civic responsibility translate into? How are university youth educated in values? These questions are not new, but they are appropriate to be brought up on a regular basis, individually and collectively. And, even though we are not answering them here, we deem it relevant to recall a reflection by philosopher Gilbert Ryle in relation to an extract of the Socratic dialogues about the teaching of virtue. He puts for-

ward that “virtues, skills, trades and the arts cannot be taught only orally, but through example and critically supervised practice” (Ryle, 1982, p. 405) and insists on the fact that not all learning is by memory.

Introducing civic engagement as the third mission of university and assuming the ethics education of students makes us rethink interventions, design curricula and set proposals that make it possible. What does the idea of university as a space for citizenship and civic responsibility translate into? How are university youth educated in values?

In his brief reflection, the philosopher lays bare two issues. The first one is how old the debate on the teaching of values is, when he talks about a reply by Aristotle to Socrates. The second one is the impossibility of teaching virtues only through words, memorization or indoctrination. The acquisition of values does not depend on the

amount of knowledge: it requires action.

Although the text does not delve into how to educate on values, it does propose an approximate idea of how not to do it.

Service-learning, a School of Values

One of the features of service-learning is its contribution to education in values. Educators of different academic fields and levels acknowledge that this methodology constitutes a powerful and effective tool for education in values based on experience.

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manner, it surpasses both verbal transmission and the proposals which are focused on identifying unfair situations and raising awareness of them but do not go beyond criticism and indignation. Unlike them, service-learning makes a decided step and incorporates action.

It is apparent that perceiving needs is a vital moment in this methodology and that it is—more often than not—the starting point from which the service is structured and

the pieces of learning required to obtain a quality service are defined. The detection of needs is more than an exercise to know the environment or critically understand what happens in the community; it moves towards the engagement to improve situations regarded as deficient or problematic.

The involvement of young people in projects where they learn while working on the actual needs of the environment in an active and committed manner with the intention of improving it (Puig et al., 2008) is far from the academic learning that has characterized formal education for decades, and it lets them develop skills and values in an experience-based and contextualized way.

Together with reflection, action and experience bring to bear values and competences which are difficult to activate using other methodologies. This assertion is very common among professors who have included service-learning in their lessons. Many faculty members insist on how difficult it is for them to list the different pieces of learning acquired by students. They state that the competences and values built up exceed the ones planned and programmed when designing the activity.

The specialized literature (Furco, 2002; Puig et al., 2015; Tapia, 2006) expressly mentions the advantages of service-learning in students' ethics training. This aspect is present in a wide array of pieces of research and was the aim of a recent study (Martín et al., 2021) in which the significant number and diversity of values activated during the different stages of a service-learning activity stand out among its results.

Between Hierarchical Structuring and Ignorance in the Selection of Values

Service-learning and values will continue to be the center of our contribution. Nevertheless, from now onwards we will focus on two specific values: fraternity and care. Why these two? Have we not held above that the values that come into play in a service-learning project are numerous and diverse?

Our selection is justified by the scant presence of fraternity and care in the service-learning literature when, just like we have previously discussed, they are crucial values in highly complex social times. This does not mean that they are not recognized in particular or that they have not been underlined in some concrete experiences, but while this methodology is—almost immediately—linked to altruism, cooperation, engagement, solidarity and critical sense, this is not the case with the values of fraternity and care. When it comes to the hierarchical structuring of the values present in ser-

Scant presence of fraternity and care in the service-learning literature when, just like we have previously discussed, they are crucial values in highly complex social times. Almost immediately linked to altruism, cooperation, engagement, solidarity and critical sense, this is not the case with the values of fraternity and care. When it comes to the hierarchical structuring of the values present in service-learning, neither fraternity nor care are included in the most relevant ones.

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It would be erroneous to think that this lack of visibility is evidence of the low importance these values have in service-learning or that they are “second-hand” values. In our view, it is not like that. On the contrary, we believe that both values are constantly present in service-learning activities. Furthermore, although their

presence is stronger in some projects, they are inherent to this methodology.

Clearly, the concepts of value respond to particular meanings, but also to sensitivities and how society regards them at a given historical moment. Some values seem to have fallen into disuse, while others reappear in certain conditions. Experts in the topic warn us of the evolution of values, of how their importance fluctuates in a same individual, a community or a specific cultural group and, consequently, how the significance they are assigned changes through time (Frondizi, 1992).

We think that the reasons why fraternity and care have not been as lucky as the above-mentioned values up to now in the education—and social—field are partly related to the significance they are attached, which is often limiting.

As regards the value of fraternity, it is a concept whose meanings are defined in historical circumstances that give rise to strikingly different conceptions of the same term. In some cases, they are linked to civic friendship and, in others, to Christian or revolutionary fraternity, or modern solidarity (Puyol, 2017). Without identifying each of them, we would like to show that, as long as the term is restricted to certain religious connotations or a sense of assistance is stressed, its use is reduced both in academic and intellectual environments. It is surprising that the emancipating sense of the value of fraternity has become so weak in the two contexts.

As the term was somehow polluted, other concepts of value have—partially—filled

the void resulting from the absence of the term “fraternity.” They have been mostly the concepts of solidarity, reciprocity and cooperation.

The term “care” does not carry an ideological burden related to religion or politics, as is the case with the concept of fraternity. In fact, its growing presence in different fields is connected with the contributions regarding the ethics of care which have been proposed by disciplines such as psychology and philosophy.

The work of different authors (whose ideas will be discussed in the next sections) has been essential to recover personal relationships, empathy, compassion, responsibility towards others and care as characteristic elements of the ethics of care, which is as important for life as the ethics of justice, known for its attention to impartiality, equality and respect for the rules.

Nevertheless, these works run the risk of remaining as academic reflections if they are not translated into proposals and practices which regulate community life and land at the education field.

As for the value of care in service-learning, it is evident that it enjoys greater visibility than that of fraternity. It is naturally identified in activities known as “face-to-face” service-learning where the service is intended to fulfill a group’s needs. The relationships between the youth performing the action and its recipients are common in this type of activities. Elderly persons, children at risk of exclusion, persons with disabilities, migrant groups and populations with a deficit in their infrastructures are examples of intervention that promote the creation of emotional bonds and produce affection feelings towards others. In all these cases, it is generally and clearly observed that one of the values developed by university students is care and empathy for the people who benefit from their intervention.

It is more complicated to spot care attitudes in projects where the immediate recipient is not a group: when the service-learning activity is aimed at recovering the historical heritage or preserving the natural environment, when actions favoring non-polluting energy or water sanitation are conducted, when actions involving complaints about climate change or awareness campaigns are designed, care does not usually stand out as one of the values of the project. Nonetheless, restricting this value exclusively to the field of people is a reductionist approach that ignores the significance of the care of the planet, which is essential to generate a global and equal development, just like the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) establish in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, goals which should be the compass for many of the service-learning activities carried out by universities.

Fraternity as a Duty, Fraternity as a Right

“All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.”

Article 1 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights introduces brotherly behavior as a duty in the treaty and in relationships. The expression “towards one another” at the end of the article encompasses the group of men and women who share their human condition without being related by blood ties or family relations.

The requirement set forth in article 1 is clear: to act in a spirit of brotherhood and, as a consequence, respect the neighbor’s right to be treated “as a sibling.” Thus, what starts a duty, i.e. “act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood,” is almost automatically converted into a right: the right to fraternity. The right of every person, whatever their origins, race, sexual orientation or beliefs, to be respected and treated equally. The duty and the right bind and protect all the inhabitants of the planet to the same extent.

Pope Francis speaks out in this line in Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti*. His first reflection refers to “open fraternity, which allows each person to be recognized, valued and loved regardless of physical proximity, beyond the place in the world where they were born or where they live” (Pope Francis, 2020, *FT*, 1).

The encyclical letter, which has a marked social character, is an urgent call for the exercise of fraternity. A fraternity that is far from the reductionist perspective the concept is habitually linked to. In a broad sense, fraternity is projected beyond everyday relationships, and it aims at institutions, social life, policies and government systems.

From the very beginning, the Declaration of Human Rights establishes an unequivocal link between a fraternal behavior and the values of freedom and equality. “All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights.” This is a link that appeared two hundred years before under the motto “liberté, égalité, fraternité” during the French Revolution to claim that no individual or social group should be within someone else’s domain, and that all persons are to be considered subjects of political and social rights.

In addition, the origin of the fraternal relationship—in whichever space it is applied—is mutual recognition. Recognizing, valuing and appreciating each other like

siblings with equal rights and duties. Fraternal treatment in interpersonal relationships and social policies is impossible without recognition.

In this line, neurologist and psychiatrist Cyrulnik (2009) argues that living with no neighbors is a wicked defense, and that a world which does not take into account others is evil. Fraternity cannot occur without others. The right to fraternity also comprises the right to relationships and the development of sociability. In its social dimension, it directly aims at building a responsible and inclusive citizenship which considers and addresses the needs of its members as a whole, and which allows each member to fully develop themselves and do their best.

As was previously stated, the concept of “fraternity” has been subject to historical circumstances and geopolitical spaces which have determined its meanings, intensifying or omitting some of its dimensions.

Our goal is to unveil and recover the aspects of fraternity that are relevant in the practice of service-learning.

It is not our intention to analyze the different meanings the term was given throughout history, which have been thoroughly stud-

ied by important authors (Baggio, 2007; Domènech, 2004; Puyol, 2017). Our goal is to unveil and recover the aspects of fraternity that are relevant in the practice of service-learning, despite the fact that the concept itself fails to occupy a key role in the theoretical contributions written about this methodology.

In the next sections we will deal with different dimensions of fraternity, and we will defend its relational and emancipating character. Two characters that supplement each other and contribute to the instructive quality of service-learning. Avoiding, denying or removing any of them mutilates the meaning of the term, but, above all, it impoverishes the educational possibilities of a practice that is often presented as a practice of care and social transformation.

However, before analyzing some dimensions of the term, we will put forward three service-learning experiences in the university field which will allow us to bring to light the values of fraternity and care in this methodology.

(Pieces of) Learning, Service(s). Different Types of Fraternity?

We know that there are different university areas where service-learning can be incorporated: in a specific subject, in curricular practices, in end-of-course or end-of-master works, in cross-cutting or interdisciplinary projects, or as credit recognition (Esparza et al., 2018). Besides, students themselves may create practices similar to service-learning—beyond institutional proposals—when they perceive a need in their environment and believe they can help to satisfy it. Let us briefly describe three experiences.

Experience 1

Housing problems are a reality mostly observed in the outskirts of cities rather than in neighborhoods with higher purchasing power. Damp, lack of electricity, cracks, water leaks or excess noise are some of the difficulties the poorest families encounter in their daily life. Their houses generally do not comply with the safety conditions necessary to maintain appropriate levels of well-being. Against this background, some schools of architecture have designed interdisciplinary projects aimed at drawing plans and preparing analyses, reports and several documents where concrete solutions to the problems detected are suggested. The direct relationship between university students and the families and neighbors are vital for their proposals to be relevant and useful.

Experience 2

During the lockdown months, university students of different schools of education volunteered to look after children who had to stay at home and help them with their homework while their parents worked. Although all students provided a similar service, when they were asked about the reasons for their action, different motivations were mentioned. These were some of the comments: “it’s a pity that children fail the course if we can help them”; “many children are looked after by their grandmas and that’s very dangerous because they’re the most vulnerable ones. We can’t let that happen”; “it’s unfair that the children of working classes, for whom it’s more difficult to get online, are at a disadvantage with the rest of their classmates”; “I feel prepared to perform this task and I like to think that I’m helping to make ‘things’ go better at such a tough time”; “it seems to me that, if my friends who are studying medicine are going to hospitals, it is logical for me, as a future teacher, to do my bit, right?” Amid laughter, a student also said that “it’s a good occasion to study again things I forgot and which I might have failed if I were examined.”

Experience 3

Based on direct contact with the entities that take care of persons with reduced mobility or severe functional limitations, end-of-course and end-of-master works have been implemented by some materials engineering courses to offer concrete solutions to the specific needs of the users of such entities. The requirement all works must meet is facilitating the autonomy of the affected persons. In order for the service to be effective, students spend time at the centers identifying people's level of mobility and the difficulties they face. On the basis of the first-hand information obtained, they formulate improvement proposals which are agreed upon with the users and professionals of the entities in all cases. For the duration of the project (a school course), service providers and users meet to adjust the characteristics of the product. Examples of the products created are adapted shoehorns, plates and cutlery. In their projects, these young people put into practice their knowledge of mechanics, design, production and, sometimes, the basics of nanotechnology.

The three stories are inspired by real practices carried out at university schools. Let us imagine for a moment that we administer a survey asking faculty members experienced in service-learning to highlight the values they deem most relevant of the three proposals, based only on the brief description above. We believe we are in a position to predict the result. With almost absolute certainty, in the first places we would find the concepts of solidarity, engagement, empathy and cooperation. Should we insist a bit more, critical thinking, care, social responsibility, general good, moral sensitivity or effort would come up. Nevertheless, it is very likely that fraternity would not appear among the first ten.

In the next sections we will try to demonstrate how its content is naturally included in most—if not all—experiences even though the term “fraternity” is not used.

Emancipating Fraternity. From the Interpersonal Relationship to the Community

The concepts of value do not remain isolated from one another. On the contrary, they are strongly connected to each other, such that it is possible to talk about families or chains of values to refer to those which are similar or whose meaning evokes that of other values. Thus, for instance, it is common to hear expressions like “social values,” “individual values,” “collective values” or “democratic values.”

Fraternity also has concepts of value that are close to it. “Friendship,” “solidarity” or “care” are terms that normally appear when fraternity is applied to relationships. Additionally, “justice” and “engagement” become more relevant when its more political sense is evoked. We do not intend to polarize the two uses of the term, which could make it difficult to attach a more integrating and inclusive meaning to “fraternity.” It is our understanding that the expression “emancipating fraternity” encompasses the different dimensions of the term.

Furthermore, it is worth mentioning that fraternity is not just a value that defines people, it is—as was stated in previous sections—also a virtue applicable to organizations, management and policies.

Given that our reflection is focused on the value of fraternity, we will emphasize four aspects in service-learning which, in our opinion, show their close relation. They are the following: relationships based on equality; feelings of affection towards others; civic friendship between strangers and ideals of justice.

► Relationships Based on Equality

Let us recall that article 1 of the Declaration of Human Rights begins with the statement “all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights,” and it finishes requiring that they act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood. Indeed, fraternity does not get on well and much with asymmetry and power relations. Siblings treat each other as equals. The differences among them do not justify the fact that one is above others or that one has more rights, more obligations or fewer duties.

Factors that frequently condition social relationships—such as prestige, purchasing power, one’s mood or ideological preferences—vanish when it comes to fraternal treatment. Equal respect prevails over any other consideration. It is impossible for fraternal treatment to include inequality in dignity and rights or the subjugation of an individual or a group to someone else in any field—neither personal nor collective. Fraternity has an inclusive and universalizing nature as it embraces “everyone” and leaves nobody out of a link network to which human beings belong just due to their condition as such.

► Feelings of Affection Towards Others

The popular expression “love each other as siblings” is a good depiction of the feeling of love that characterizes this type of relationship and that has consequences on behavior and treatment. In this regard, fraternity has to do with the establishment of affection rela-

tionships that go beyond reason, demand or duty. Loving someone favors kind treatment as well as a respectful behavior that seeks the other person's well-being.

Fraternal relationships are filled with esteem, understanding, affection and the desire for others' success, enjoyment and happiness, apart from worry and concern when they suffer or fail to get what they long for. All these feelings galvanize us into action and invite us to do our best for our siblings to be happy. The siblings' relationship is not indifferent to pain, nor does it abandon the other in hard times. A sibling is recognized as somebody who matters. Such recognition is full of feelings that trigger action: embracing, taking care, defending, demanding justice or vindicating are some of the actions which arise in fraternal relationships in a natural and slightly formal manner.

► Civic Friendship between Strangers

Civic, community, social or citizen friendship are some of the terms used to vindicate a fraternal relationship in solidarity with strangers, i.e. people with whom neither life nor personal projects are shared.

The "voluntary" duties accepted among friends are a reference point of the relation that would be desired among those who are not. Beyond the lawful individual projects and spontaneous groups, human beings share citizenship and fate. None of the greatest challenges (related to health, the environment, economy or society, among others) posed to humankind can be tackled without solid cooperation systems.

As Puyol puts it when he refers to the concept of citizenship in Classical Greece, "friendship provides us with the moral force we lack in the anonymity of the public space" (Puyol, 2017, p. 21) and it surpasses the requirement arising from compliance with laws or personal interest.

The gift theories and anti-utilitarian sociologists (Caillé, 2014; Godbout, 1997; Mauss, 2009) have proven the existence of behaviors of help "to third parties" in different societies. Their pieces of research show that people are driven not only by interest, but also by their desire to cooperate with others. It is these tasks free of charge, in exchange for which nothing is expected, that build a social link between the "strangers" of a community. In the area of psychology (Tomasello, 2010), cooperation, concern for the well-being of others and an inclination towards altruism are also regarded as features characteristic of humans.

► Ideals of Justice. Fraternal Justice

The French Revolution is the historical benchmark whose definition of the term “fraternity” is more radically close to the idea of justice and has a marked political dimension. As was mentioned above, under the motto “freedom, equality, fraternity” values such as citizens’ rights are defended. These rights do not depend on personal feelings, emotional bonds or friendship relations.

Fraternity lies not in the attitude of the person who acts fraternally, but in the right of that who must be treated as a sibling; the inalienable right of all individuals to be free and not to suffer any form of domination, nor to stay out of unfair systems that produce exclusion, and first and second class citizens.

Social criticism, complaints due to the violation of rights, and the will to modify structures that prevent the exercise of freedom and self-fulfillment are intensified in the most revolutionary dimension of the term “fraternity.” This is also a claim in the Encyclical Letter *Fratelli Tutti* (Pope Francis, 2020), where a bet is made on fraternity materialized in social policies that guarantee the general good and each person’s dignity.

Having underlined four aspects of the term “fraternity”—and assuming that the topic has not been exhausted with them,—we invite the reader to recover the three experiences described above and analyze them assessing their relation to the content presented.

In our view, far from paternalist attitudes, the service-learning methodology favors reciprocity among giver and receiver, horizontal relationships and respect for everyone’s dignity. In addition, the goal of service-learning is social transformation and the introduction of specific changes that improve the situations on which work is made.

In our view, far from paternalist attitudes, the service-learning methodology favors reciprocity among giver and receiver, horizontal relationships and respect for everyone’s dignity. Identifying needs contributes to arouse moral sensitivity, discover alterity and feel affected by the pain of others. None-

theless, it is the service element that guarantees donation to strangers, thus fostering the construction of civic friendship networks. In addition, the goal of service-learning is social transformation and the introduction of specific changes that improve the situations on which work is made.

Developing projects that allow us to improve the safety conditions of houses in the poorest neighborhoods, helping and looking after children—one of the most isolated populations—during the pandemic or creating objects that increase the autonomy of people with reduced mobility are not just solidarity actions, they are also activities that promote justice and the human right to self-fulfillment.

From the Desire to be Taken Care of to the Act of Looking After Someone

The ethics of care begins with the universal desire to be taken care of, to establish a positive relationship, at least, with some other beings (Noddings, 2009, p. 53).

Fraternity and care cannot be understood as independent values dissociated from one another. They are values which feed back to each other and appear together.

Fraternity and care cannot be understood as independent values dissociated from one another. On the contrary, they have as many similarities as differences, or even more things in com-

mon, for which reason the latter sometimes replaces the former, due to the pollution the term “fraternity” has suffered in our times.

Thus, even if they are treated differently in our discourse to precise some of their connotations or go into greater detail regarding their meaning, they are values which feed back to each other and appear together in social life and educational practice. It is hard to imagine an activity in which one of them is significantly present and the other one is absent.

Below we will make an approximation to the value of care, and then we will introduce the “ethics of care,” which have placed this value at the heart of their pieces of discourse, be it from the area of psychology, politics or education. As we did with the term “fraternity,” we will focus on aspects which we deem particularly relevant for service-learning.

In the literature on care (and the ethics of care) there are three aspects that repeat themselves again and again. In the first place, the universal desire to receive care. Receiving others’ care is not an experience that causes rejection; quite the contrary, it is something one wishes and enjoys. Secondly, the positive effects that being looked after has on people. Love, understanding, well-being, happiness and security are some

of the most salient examples. And thirdly, how naturally we take care of people who depend on us and those for whom we feel affection. Empathy and responsibility are values that stimulate care work.

For instance, we know that care provided to very young children, patients or dependent persons literally saves lives. This is a reality that nurses, for whom care is an important and crucial part of their profession, are very well acquainted with.

We have also received contributions from anthropology which set care behavior as the first sign of civilization. When a student asked her what she considered to be the first sign of civilization, anthropologist Margaret Mead answered “a broken and healed femur.” In her opinion, the healed femur evidenced that someone took care of the injured until the bone healed; otherwise, this person would have died.

Understanding civilization as community help is a way of placing care at the center of cohabitation, relationships and progress. Humanity makes progress in so far as the number of care behaviors increases and, accordingly, it is reduced in their absence.

However, in spite of their importance for personal development and their presence in everyday activities, care has been recently included in ethical reflection, which has historically been very concentrated on justice and impartiality. Additionally, care has gradually positioned itself in pedagogical discourse and educational practices.

The Ethics of Care

It is not a coincidence that female experts in several disciplines were the ones who made it possible to topicalize care, and develop theories and proposals evidencing its significance for the construction of better lives and systems more attentive to people. Thanks to them, there has been a gradual consolidation of an ethics of care that confines its attention to the context, relationships, interdependence, damage prevention and responsibility towards the others, elements which have a very secondary—if not null—role in the ethics of justice.

In 1982, the publication of Carol Gilligan's *In a Different Voice* about female moral judgment and the ethics of care opens a period of questioning about the predominance and generalization of male models as normality standards in the field of psychology, and vindicates other ways of perceiving reality, setting priorities and making decisions.

Focused on the study of moral development, the author argues that Kohlberg's six-stage theory on moral judgment universalizes men's way of thinking at the expense of ignoring women's voice. In this regard, she asserts that "women bring to the life cycle a different point of view and order human experience in terms of different priorities" (Gilligan, 1985, p. 47).

When applying Kohlberg's proposal, Gilligan notices that women come to a standstill in the transition from the stage that assesses good relations (stage 3) to the one that assesses social rules (stage 4). Dissenting with the results that reflected a widespread regress in female thinking, she does research on the topic and arrives at the conclusion that the female logic is different from that of men and that it is ignored in Kohlberg's proposal. She champions the recognition of the ethics of care together with the ethics of justice, thereby integrating women's voice.

If Gilligan develops the ethics of care in relation to the moral domain, Joan Tronto does so from a political perspective. She defends care as an antidote for capitalism (Tronto, 2017) and as an alternative to the way of understanding life that pushes human beings to compete with one another instead of cooperating and assuming responsibility for other people.

The political scientist has an active participation in the debate sparked off by Gilligan as she links the ethics of care to gender. In her opinion, stating that women are natural caregivers who are especially gifted for that purpose is a wrong strategy since this narrative leads to the normalization of inequality structures deeply rooted in society (Tronto, 1987). According to this author, putting "care" on a level with "women" makes it impossible to explain gender differences arising from the subjugation conditions women are in. To illustrate this with a recent example, let us recall the unequal distribution of care work between men and women during the pandemic.

Among the different aspects Tronto has delved into, here we recover two contributions made with her colleague Fisher: the definition and phases of care.

They propose the following definition of care:

"a generic activity that includes everything we do to maintain, perpetuate and repair our world so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, ourselves, our environment, as well as the elements which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web" (Fisher & Tronto, 1990, p. 40).

It is interesting to stress that, in their definition, the authors go beyond the interpersonal relationship level and place care as a category applied to social life, a contribution that is almost immediately linked to the essence of service-learning as a care practice aimed at the general good.

It is interesting to stress that, in their definition, the authors go beyond the interpersonal relationship level and place care as a category applied to social life, a contribution that is almost immediately linked to the essence of service-learning as a care practice aimed at the general good. In this same regard,

Josep Maria Puig defines care as “a quality of value of interpersonal relationships, but not just of relationships; it is also a feature with which institutions, practices and, ultimately, the very idea of citizenship are imbued. Care greatly exceeds the personal and becomes a category to understand social life as a whole” (Puig, 2021, p. 69).

As regards the care process, Fisher and Tronto propose four phases.

- ▶ Phase 1: interest in a specific situation. Identifying a need is crucial to commence a care process.
- ▶ Phase 2: an individual or an entity is in charge of and responsible for satisfying the identified need.
- ▶ Phase 3: actual care work is performed and aimed at changing the initial situation.
- ▶ Phase 4: the care receiver responds (the authors of this phase refer to it as “care receiving phase”).

Afterwards, Tronto adds a fifth phase in which she stresses that, while care work is done, its receivers trust that it will last, they count on it and take it for granted that it will not fail.

The huge coincidence among the phases put forward by the authors and the ones which indicate the development of a service-learning activity (i.e. detecting needs, establishing partnership relations, acquiring knowledge, providing a service, celebrating and assessing the activity) is surprising (or maybe not). This is another item of evidence of the significance of the value of care in service-learning.

Last, we will briefly introduce Nel Noddling’s contribution from the field of moral education. The author presents the ethics of care as an alternative to character education and defines it on the basis of its mainly relational nature. Her studies are directed more at

promoting the development of relationships in education centers than at analyzing who gives and who receives care (a key aspect in other proposals, including Tronto's).

Less worried about care as a virtue of people or institutions, the author gives priority to care relationships. She believes that it is the relationships between teachers and students that have a decisive influence on the latter's moral development. She says "how good I can be will depend in part on how you treat me" (Noddings, 2009, p. 21), thereby emphasizing the importance of a kind and cordial treatment in the educational intervention.

Very sensitive to the nature and singularity of every context, the author strongly vindicates the creation of classroom conditions that predispose students to good and foster moral sensitivity. If one condition is the kind and respectful relationship of an adult towards the youth, another one is the design and implementation of practices that invite them to train values.

As moral sensitivity is a virtue without which care relationships cannot be formed, Noddings proposes the convenience of creating specific practices to bring students closer to the actual needs of life, and understands that this contact with fragility will arouse feelings of responsibility and care towards others on their inside. In particular, she expressly cites community service as an opportunity to promote care practices and relationships of responsibility towards others among children and young people.

Noddings' contribution warns us of the importance of creating conditions which provide us with care opportunities, an aspect that must also be taken into account in university classrooms, where the enormous number of students and not much flexible curricula do not facilitate it.

To Conclude

We conclude this work with the hope of having done our bit to bring to light the link between fraternity and care with the essence and philosophy of service-learning; a practice that is attentive to relationships, engaged with real-world issues, sensitive to the singularity of every context and claiming in view of injustice and inequality.

We began this chapter by discussing the suffering caused by the pandemic, and we finish it with Daniel Innerarity's reflection about the same: "the paradox that a risk, which put us all on an equal footing at first, has at the same time revealed how unequal we are" (Innerarity, 2020, p. 25).

We like to believe that if we are capable of placing fraternity and care at the heart of education, policies, everyday relations and our universities from now onwards, the next pandemic, the next crisis—be it economic, social, health or environmental—that affects humanity may find us better prepared and in a more equal situation.

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equal situation. Maybe then will we be able to confirm what is still a challenge today, that “differences of color, religion, talent, place of birth or residence, and so many others, cannot be used to justify the privileges of some over the rights of all” (Pope Francis, 2020, *FT*, 118).

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17. INTEGRAL ECOLOGY AND SPIRITUALITY FOR SERVICE-LEARNING

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Abstract

This essay is framed in the current context of injustices, in which strong human, social and environmental degradation is taking place. Special attention is paid to the current pandemic and the deterioration it represents in the process of human degradation, which has been going on for centuries. In this context, two global initiatives in search of solutions stand out, such as the “Sustainable Development Goals” and the “Global Compact on Education.” The importance of the 500 years of Ignatian spirituality is also mentioned. The main focus is on the role of education and universities. This essay is basically meant to be a ‘concrete dialogue’ driven by an operational conception of justice which includes the spirituality of care and is supported by the paradigm of integral ecology, as a key issue in the social teachings of Pope Francis. The conceptions of knowledge and action processes inherent in that conceptual horizon are dealt with in this text. It is also mentioned, succinctly and for reference, how the social teaching of the Church, in its most current expressions, works operationally within the “orientation framework for the promotion of socio-environmental justice” in the *Província dos Jesuítas do Brasil*. It also reflects visible aspects of the way in which learning is acquired and spirituality is reached in line with this conceptual horizon. Our aim is to identify the cultivated spirituality inherent in the promotion of justice and care—within the practices of service-learning in communities—and how this is implemented through social initiatives in the university context. At the end of this essay, its main argument is supported by narrative extracts which help guide practices of service-learning and spirituality, inherent in these initiatives. The accounts were taken from a Jesuit university in southern Brazil, and they show how the main dimensions of the operational conception of justice are contemplated within the framework of integral ecology.

Introduction

The Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'* (Pope Francis, 2015, LS) had a huge impact on public opinion all over the world. Although some people made a hasty reading of the encyclical, since they were absorbed by the dramatic environmental crisis that the planet is facing,

it gradually became evident that it comprised a much more profound proposal, which challenged humanity to take a position within a new paradigm summarized in the expression “integral ecology,” in which educational processes, the production of knowledge and technological, socio-cultural and human practices are involved. According to the encyclical, the deterioration of nature or the environment must be considered in profound interrelationship with human and social deterioration:

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together, and we cannot adequately address environmental degradation without paying attention to the causes of human and social degradation (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 48).

In the encyclical letter, it is stated that everything is intimately interrelated and that our current problems require a closer examination of all aspects of the global crisis. In this sense, the proposal is that there is a need for “an integral ecology which reflects clear understanding of human and social dimensions” (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 137). This is clearly observed in the following passage:

There are no two separate crises: an environmental crisis and a social crisis; but a single socio-environmental crisis which is really complex. Solution guidelines must include a comprehensive approach to combat poverty, restore dignity to the excluded and, at the same time, take care of nature (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 139).

Human fraternity and the protection of Creation constitute the only path towards integral development and peace. It is important to highlight that Pope Francis does not speak about “two paths,” but “one path.” Undoubtedly, there is a clear message behind those carefully chosen words in connection with the proposal in the Encyclical LS, in which the need for an integral ecology is highlighted.

In 2020, Pope Francis had a new encyclical published, the Encyclical Letter Fratelli Tutti (FT), in which human and social dimensions are explained, and it is practically a great new chapter completing reflections included in Encyclical LS. When presenting this new encyclical at Saint Peter’s Square on October 8, 2020, Pope Francis said: “Human fraternity and the protection of Cre-

ation constitute the only path towards integral development and peace” (Pope Francis, 2020b). It is important to highlight that Pope Francis does not speak about “two paths,” but “one path.” Undoubtedly, there is a clear message behind those carefully chosen words in connection with the proposal in the Encyclical LS, in which the need for an integral ecology is highlighted. The Pope seems to indicate that the content of

the Encyclical FT should be considered in greater depth in connection to the content of the Encyclical LS. No doubt both encyclical letters together summarize the current social teachings of the Catholic Church.

The idea of an integral ecology is not really a new concept. In different fields of science there are thinkers who, especially in the last fifty years, have shown similar serious concerns. For instance, in an essential piece of writing, Félix Guattari worked on “ecosophy” and developed the idea of “the three ecologies” (Guattari, 1990). Alfonso Murad (2020) developed a detailed and enlightening analysis on “deep ecology,” reflecting on the work done by a number of authors, in particular that carried out by the Norwegian philosopher and ecologist Arne Naess (2007, 2017).

Without reintroducing the details of the process of the evolution of knowledge present in the previously mentioned epistemological studies and debates, this essay is completely based on the broad horizon of integral ecology offered by the current social doctrine of the Catholic Church. This work is divided into three parts:

1. A brief outline of the human, social and environmental disasters degrading humanity today, and the great challenges manifested particularly in two global solution-seeking movements, whose objectives are reflected in the “Sustainable Development Goals” (2015-2030) and the “Global Compact on Education” (Klein, 2021; Congregation for Catholic Education, 2020), as well as in the spirituality inherent in these programs;
2. A proposal to operationalize the concept of social and environmental justice, as designed by the *Província dos Jesuitas do Brasil* in its “guiding framework for the promotion of social and environmental justice” (*Companhia de Jesus - Jesuítas do Brasil*, 2020) and the spirituality present in this framework;
3. A narrative summary—within the scope of the debate on the social function of universities—of aspects of service-learning practices present in some community-based university projects and the spirituality expressed through those initiatives.

A Universe in Turmoil: Questions and Perspectives

These days, the degradation of civilization is visible in human society. There are several reflections made on this current phenomenon. But there are also several studies and statements of all kinds centered on the growing symptoms of the serious state of such decline.

Has humanity lost its sense of humanity? Have we been taken hostage by superficialities and lost values which have always been fundamental, such as the value of human dignity? The syndrome of self-sufficient arrogance of a few, vilely disguised from all, seems to take visibly shameless forms. The complete disregard for the human being present in many political, economic and social situations assumes shapes of extreme, calculated and perverse irresponsibility. This is mainly seen in the massive accumulation of wealth and in the exclusion, isolation and death of the people who suffer the most. Racism, xenophobia and discriminatory prejudice of all kind have become evident and intimidating in several places.

Lack of care for life in all senses, especially with respect to Mother Earth, seems to be an unhealable wound. Despite all efforts made to find the cure for this ill, ambition and profit at any cost seem to be still reigning. After so much civilizational construction, humanity's huge efforts and achievements are threatened by today's world. Unfortunately, the projected image appears to be that of a profound acceleration of degradation in all senses.

It is vital that decline be replaced by awareness. It is vital for humanity to recover balanced educational processes in order to retake the reins of the human condition. It is vital that humanity's soul be restored.

Will the Pandemic Lead to Awareness Recovery?

Humanity's shock at today's pandemic⁷⁴ poses challenges which cannot be ignored. While this situation presents enormous challenges, it is encouraging to see that all over the world there is every indication that a new world is possible and necessary. New thinking methods are being developed at both individual and collective levels. Their scope and strength are still unmeasurable. However, they clearly indicate the need for and the urgency of a radical transformation.

We are still racked by the pandemic. We do not know when we will be able to see a sign of the new reality some people call 'post-pandemic.' In our minds and hearts, we find it difficult to design this future reality. Some ideas are recurrent. I remember two of them: (1) The pandemic came to launch—once and for all—what has been called, for a long time, a change of era. (2) With the pandemic, 20th century security has crumbled and the 21st century has definitely begun.

⁷⁴ The COVID-19 pandemic broke out all over the world in early 2020 and it is still affecting people in mid-2021, at the time this essay is being written, causing devastating consequences in various contexts.

According to Cardinal José Tolentino Mendonça (2020), the current pandemic is making us start a new historical era. The pandemic will come to an end. But when that happens, we will be part of another era in cultural, civilizational and spiritual terms: a spiritually different era.

As a Jesuit, by choice of religious consecration within the Catholic Church, I cannot fail to mention the important moment that the *Companhia de Jesus* is going through as a religious order, since it is celebrating the 500th anniversary of St. Ignatius Loyola's conversion, i.e. 500 years of Ignatian spirituality (1521-2021). He was a personality who starred in radical ruptures in his own career. He inaugurated a transforming spirituality, radically defying the dominant logic, both in his own family and in the social and cultural contexts of his time. He shook the base structures which supported him. His spiritual change gave life a new meaning. He started to view people and things from a completely different perspective. He changed from "a degrading and depraved view" to "a view of recognition and dignity." He started to "find God in all things," adopting a completely new behavior.⁷⁵ As to our current situation, the pandemic has also affected us a great deal. It made our logic confusing. It made us question base structures and the certainties which sustain us. All over the world, it revived the search for and the attention to the different voices filled with human wisdom in history. These voices have always been there. Unfortunately, humanity ignores them.

For those of us who belong to the Christian tradition, the previously mentioned idea of that which is 'completely new'—an idea also discussed by Ignatius of Loyola—makes us enter the great and unfathomable mystery of the love in Jesus Christ's "regenerating cry." And in that cry, the three original questions come back and resound: "Where are you?" "Where is your brother?" "What is the state of the Creation?"—questions made at the beginning of the Sacred Scriptures of our tradition.

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cred Scriptures of our tradition.⁷⁶

75 In this essay, the use of the term "spirituality" is directly related to the "Ignatian mysticism" of "finding God in all things" (Loyola, 2015).

76 "Where are you?" That is the way God addressed Adan (Genesis 3.9). "Where is your brother?" That is the way God addressed Cain (Genesis 4.9). "What is the state of the creation?" That is the way God addressed humanity,

In a reading I did in the early 2019 from a little book by the Brazilian theologian Leonardo Boff (2018), a passage particularly caught my attention: “We will develop awareness, learn to be wise and prolong the human project, which will be purified by the large crisis that is likely to assail us.” The author of this book referred to two delicious passages from the Sacred Scriptures in which God is presented as “a passionate lover of life” (Wisdom 11, 24) and issues a radical call to us: “Choose life so that you may live” (Deuteronomy 30, 28). In Leonardo Boff’s words, “Let us walk fast, since we do not have much time to waste” (Boff, 2018).

The pandemic made us acquire a more profound understanding of this statement. Now I hope that the pandemic will really make us stop running in the wrong direction (that of death) and make us take quicker steps in the right direction (that of life). This is the spirituality we need the most.

Other Specific Questions

As I have already mentioned, we seem to be living an era in which there is a rapid acceleration in degradation in all senses. This is a global issue, particularly affecting people in the most exploited, deteriorated and impoverished contexts. The wider the gap of social inequality gets, the greater the damage to the environment becomes.

Sometimes I become shocked at the images that come to my mind. Here are two accounts related to expressions in people’s eyes which may be considered paradigmatic:⁷⁷

1. A black boy’s look, representing millions of children who have to survive in the midst of the outrageous housing deficit of the huge urban peripheries. They are children who grow up in a degraded and inhuman underworld. This is a look which, in its expression of innocence and charm, claims justice. This is a look which represents that of millions of adults who are no longer innocent but feel humiliated, uncomfortable, annoyed or desperately resigned to the pain and anguish of an unfair ‘fate,’ daily questioning the world of luxuries, squandering and indifference⁷⁸ which crushes them. This is a question which

not letting it forget His mandate to take care of everything (Genesis 1, 26-31; 2, 15). With respect to Genesis 2.15 and, especially Genesis 1, 26-31, in theological terms, Lúcio Flávio Cirne (Cirne, 2013, pp. 82-89) addresses “the human being in the Creation” in a detailed and profound way.

⁷⁷ I succinctly reintroduce what I mentioned in a conference prepared for the Third Seminar on Contemporary Spirituality, Religious Pluralism and Dialogue at the Catholic University of Pernambuco - UNICAP, 4/22-24/2020. This event was canceled due to the pandemic, but the conference presentations were electronically published by the sponsoring institution (cf. Follmann, 2020).

⁷⁸ What the poor black boy living on the periphery feels is a global mark in today’s human society. That is the wound caused by the indifference condemned by Pope Francis in Lampedusa in 2013, when he spoke about the “globalization of indifference” (cf. Ihu On-Line, 2013). Recovered from

comes from the world of trash, hunger and the craving for attention and recognition.

2. The sad look of an indigenous leader filled with disillusionment when confronted with one of the many monstrous companies which is devastating his habitat, a person experiencing a mixture of sadness and desperation for the hundreds of indigenous peoples who have been victims of genocidal processes in the history of Latin America and of its colonized peoples in general. This depicts the sad genocidal mark of the colonization process which is still present in our minds and in our existence—a mark which affects even our spirituality. This is a look which questions us with force and is both fascinating and deeply disturbing. A look accompanied by the desperate cry of indigenous peoples whose rights are daily infringed in their own territories.

Paraphrasing Boaventura de Sousa Santos's thoughts (2019), we can say that the histories and structures of our societies are deeply marked by capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy. This triple 'heritage' is still present in today's extractive economies and economies deeply rooted in financial economics, which generate outrageous social inequalities; in structural racism which shows its pervasiveness in a new way; and in the conscious awareness of the slowness with which progress is made on equality in all social spheres.

Education is also aimed at deconstructing inhuman depravities inherent in the abovementioned triple heritage of capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy (Santos, 2019).⁷⁹ In addition, there are spiritual movements which help recover African and indigenous ancestral wisdom in Brazil.

Notes on Sustainable Development Goals

According to Victor Martin-Fiorino (2020), one of the salient aspects of the early 21st century was the issuing of a United Nations (UN) declaration in which eight important Millennium Goals were included and whose assessment was expected by 2015. In this declaration, goal 7—on environmental sustainability—was the highlighted objective. The results of the assessment of the four aims in this goal, apart from the aims of the other goals, were considered to be positive in 2015, despite the

<http://www.ihu.unisinos.br/noticias/521786-qadao-onde-estas-caim-onde-esta-o-teu-irmao-o-discurso-de-francisco-em-lampedusa>

79 A really promising example is that of Laws 10639/2003 and 11645/2008, which revise and clarify the Guidelines and Fundamentals of National Education Act (LDB - Law 9394/96) in sections 26A y 79B, establishing compulsory education on ethnic-racial relations as well as in African, Afro-Brazilian and indigenous history and culture in the Brazilian educational system (Brasil, 2009).

low level of commitment displayed by States, companies and other social actors (Martin-Fiorino 2020, p. 153).

In 2015, the UN established the well-known “Sustainable Development Goals” — SDG 2015-2030 (United Nations, 2015). Although all objectives related to environmental sustainability are important within the scope of this work, we have decided to highlight goal 4: “Quality education: This goal aims to ensure inclusive, equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all” (United Nations, 2015). This goal is necessarily linked with the other objectives which address the most urgent matters to be dealt with in order to achieve effective sustainable development.⁸⁰

To enable these real men and women to escape from extreme poverty, we must allow them to be dignified agents of their own destiny. Integral human development and the full exercise of human dignity cannot be imposed. Education conceived this way is the basis for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and for reclaiming the environment.

In his speech at the UN’s 70th anniversary on September 25, 2015, at the time these SDGs were published, Pope Francis—after broadly outlining the greatest challenges for humanity today—reintroduced many topics expressed in the Encyclical *LS* and issued the following call:

To enable these real men and women to escape from extreme

poverty, we must allow them to be dignified agents of their own destiny. Integral human development and the full exercise of human dignity cannot be imposed. They must be built up and allowed to unfold for each individual, for every family, in communion with others, and in a fair relationship with people in all the contexts in which human social life develops –friends, communities, towns and cities, schools, businesses and labor unions, provinces, nations. This presupposes and requires the right to education —also for girls, who are excluded in certain places—which is ensured first and foremost by respecting and reinforcing the primary right of families to educate their children, as well as the right of churches and social groups to support and assist families in the education of their children. Education conceived this way is the basis for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and for reclaiming the environment. (Pope Francis, 2015)

80 The 17 SDGs are: 1. No poverty; 2. Sustainable farming; 3. Good Health and well-being; 4. Quality education; 5. Gender Equality; 6. Clean water and sanitation; 7. Affordable and clean energy; 8. Decent work and economic growth; 9. Industry innovation and infrastructure; 10. Reduced inequalities; 11. Sustainable cities and communities; 12. Responsible consumption and production; 13. Global climate action; 14. Life below water; 15. Life on land; 16. Peace, justice and strong institutions; 17. Partnerships for the goals. Goal titles clearly show how broad the scope of “sustainable development” is. Summarized from: <https://www.pactoglobal.org.br/ods>

Pope Francis' speech clearly focuses on the importance of providing everyone with the following: "In practice, this absolute minimum has three names: lodging, labor, and land; and one spiritual name: spiritual freedom, including religious freedom, the right to education and all other civil rights" (Pope Francis, 2015). In other words, human dignity requires access to lodging, decent and duly paid work, a balanced diet and drinking water, as well as religious freedom, spiritual freedom in a general sense, and education.

According to Pope Francis, "a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach which must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 49). In this respect, integral ecology involves the integrated job of "combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded and protecting nature" (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 139).

According to Martin-Fiorino, when our main concern is integral ecology, our attention centers on both scientific concepts and the fact that the ecosphere is our Common Home, thus integrating scientific and engagement-related issues concerning all forms of life:

- ▶ In the reconciliation with a form of living which allows us to transcend ourselves, rejecting self-centeredness and from a perspective of care for others and the environment (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 208).
- ▶ Implementing reciprocity or mutual help and care among human beings; i.e. in solidarity with others, overcoming the throwaway culture (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 156).
- ▶ Sharing life with all living creatures, both human and non-human beings, considering the universal principle of the destination of goods and beginning from the most fragile (Pope Francis, 2015, LS, 158).⁸¹

Proposal for the Global Compact on Education

In his message on September 12, 2019, the day on which the Global Compact on Education was launched, Pope Francis' words centered on the following:

All changes require education processes if they are to produce a paradigm shift which can respond to the challenges and problems of the current world, be useful to understand and find solutions to the needs of every generation, and contribute to the flourishing of humanity now and in the future (Pope Francis, 2019).

⁸¹ Cf. Martin-Fiorino (2020, pp. 155-156).

Pope Francis has always been interested in education. While on some occasions he has spoken directly to educational institutions at all levels, his attention has usually centered on education as a social process inherent in society, which is meaningful and harmoniously related to the past, the present and the future of humanity. His view of education comprises a wide variety of life and learning experiences, which allows young people to develop their personality both at individual and collective levels.

On February 7, 2020, in his address to participants at the seminar on “Education: The Global Compact,” organized by the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Pope Francis insisted that it is necessary to restore an integral education process. And he added that it is important for new generations to understand and embrace their own traditions and cultures, which is essential for the creation of bonds between different cultures. Moreover, he stated that it is vital to develop self-understanding while respecting cultural diversity and change. And he emphasized:

This will enable the promotion of a culture of dialogue, a culture of peaceful encounter and mutual understanding, in a spirit of respect and tolerance; an education that enables young people to identify and foster true human values from an intercultural and interreligious perspective.

(...) By encouraging the training of heads, hearts and hands, intellectual and socio-emotional education, the transmission of individual and societal values and virtues, the teaching of committed citizenship concerned for justice, and the transmission of abilities and knowledge that can prepare young people for the world of work and society, families, schools and institutions become essential vehicles for the empowerment of future generations. This way, we will no longer speak of a broken educational compact. This is the real compact! (Pope Francis, 2020a)

We will not explain the “Global Compact on Education” in this work. However, it is important to highlight that this compact is characterized by the placement of the human being at the center of all educational processes and by the reintroduction of the family as the first and indispensable educator. In the seven commitments of this compact, a lot of attention is paid to children, adolescents and young people, especially to girls in certain contexts; all efforts made with the human being at the center of the educational process. It also focuses on the most vulnerable and the poorest, and highlights the need to find other ways to understand the economy, politics, growth and progress; with a view to an integral ecology and to protecting and improving our common home.⁸²

82 On-line magazine IHU, on the Global Compact on Education, 10/16/2020:

<http://www.ihu.unisinos.br/78-noticias/603808-educacao-papa-lanca-pacto-global-com-sete-compromissos-por-um-mundo-diferente>

The Operational Concept of Socio-Environmental Justice and the Hypothesis of Approach to Sustainable Development and Integral Education

Prolegomena

A possible shortcut used to respond to calls present in Pope Francis' social encyclicals, in the UN's "Sustainable Development Goals" and, above all, in the "Global Compact on Education" is that which we define as the "promotion of socio-environmental justice." The explicit interest which the *Companhia de Jesus* has had in integrating the commitment with social justice and environmental issues since the late 20th century is clearly expressed in the Guidance Framework for Social and Environmental Justice of the *Província dos Jesuítas do Brasil* (Província dos Jesuítas do Brasil, 2020). As I have already mentioned at the beginning of this essay, this commitment was intensely reaffirmed by the statement of the paradigm of integral ecology in Pope Francis' social encyclicals.

Thematic Vectors for the Promotion of Social and Environmental Justice

With the coordination of the *Observatório Nacional de Justiça Socioambiental Luciano Mendes de Almeida – OLMA*,⁸³ which is the entity that facilitates actions for the promotion of justice, the constant search for the culture of care is focused on three main vectors: care of human dignity in the treatment given to ourselves and others, care of the gifts of Creation and its diversity, and care of socio-economic and public policy planning with the aim of reducing social inequality.

► *Care of Human Dignity in the Treatment of Ourselves and Others*

This is the dimension or thematic vector of the care of human dignity, which involves self-recognition and the recognition of others. In practice, this dimension is related to the relationship with ourselves—in our self-understanding and self-awareness—and with different people—in relationships based on ethnicity, race, religion, gender, generation, national origin, and views of the world—always seeking ways to foster communication, the value of plurality and the inclusion of all.

► *Care of the Gifts of Creation, Life and Ecosystems*

83 Important notes: The Observatório Nacional de Justiça Socioambiental Luciano Mendes de Almeida—OLMA for its acronym in Portuguese—will be mentioned throughout this chapter. This is an observatory network in the Província do Brasil, Companhia de Jesús, with headquarters in Brasília, Federal District. www.olma.org.br

This is the dimension or thematic vector which is related to the care of the gifts of Creation. It involves conserving, protecting and adequately using natural gifts in order to take care of ecosystems and life and guarantee the future of planet earth and its inhabitants, and to pay attention to our personality, the way we live and work, and life diversity in the different biomes of each region.

► *Care of Politics, Society and Economy to Reduce Social Inequality*

This is the dimension or thematic vector which has to do with the care of the socio-economic and public policy order. In this third dimension, the aim is to reduce inequality, social exclusion and poverty; in the search for access to the universal right to work, social assistance, social security, health, lodging, education, food and nationality.

2.3. Strategies for the Promotion of Social and Environmental Justice

With a view to working hard on the promotion of justice and basing our commitment on the previously mentioned social and environmental perspective, some operational shortcuts are being taken. In this regard, three levels or strategies are distinguished in connection with the promotion of justice or socio-environmental justice. In other words, we may influence justice-related practices at the level of knowledge production and of direct dialogue with groups, organizations and movements which are involved in decision-taking and—above all—at the level of everyday life in connection with our way of being, living and behaving.

The previously described actions, which take into account the three dimensions or thematic vectors explained, start to have operational force when they are studied in these three strategic positions or cross-sectional levels. This triple and complex cross-section, which is simplified here, may be a productive way of achieving sustainable development and integral education.

The Social Role of Universities, Service-Learning and Spirituality

Impact on Universities and Society

The prophetic call and the concern expressed by the theologian Leonardo Boff, which were previously mentioned, are not new. However, they make the multiple and ancient cries of humanity's soul resound and reverberate in a new and vigorous way.

This is mainly related to an ethical question, echoed by many voices in the last decades. This is also a question addressed to academic institutions in their main role as knowledge producers and educators of future professionals in all areas of knowledge.

There is still a wide gap between societal demands and real academic contributions. But many efforts are being made to overcome this gap. A great number of intellectuals and other social actors should be thanked for their varied contributions to this effect.

This essay allows us to resume this debate, which fills us with hope just like all topics related to integral ecology. However, we should not leave some issues unmentioned, namely the complexity theory (Morin, 2005), the transdisciplinary theory and practice (Nicolescu, 2000), the debates on the ecology of knowledge (Santos, 2010) and on environmental rationale (Leff, 2006, 2016), as some of the various ways of bringing together the academic world and the world outside universities. In all these debates, important clues are given for the revalorization of knowledge—knowledge which has been trampled on and set aside by academic minds and their vitiated and segmented logic.

Despite important technological advances, or frequently due to them and how they were made, human society is far from having resolved its own internal problems. The same must be stated about conflicts arisen from the relationship between human beings and natural resources. Some of our internal problems and some of the conflicts in our relationship with nature have worsened. The academic world is taking too long or experiencing alienation when it comes to performing its function.

The world is in crisis, not because it is going through a creative process, but because it is a world in a process of degradation, struggling to survive. Universities will survive if they manage to help humanity and the world to survive. Universities make sense only if they generate creative processes in humanity.

The complex socio-environmental crisis has been unleashed in an agitated world where contradictions between current and past problems form the fabric which needs to be analyzed in order to understand the problems and conflicts the academic world must face. The world is in crisis, not because it is go-

ing through a creative process, but because it is a world in a process of degradation, struggling to survive. Universities will survive if they manage to help humanity and the world to survive. Universities make sense only if they generate creative processes in humanity.

The 'recovery of awareness' caused by the pandemic shock may be just another superficial and inconsistent movement if humanity remains inert and does not draw on its experience to make amends with its past within each cultural context. 'Making amends with the past' requires a profound transformation both at the level of education and in what we call spirituality or the soul of humanity.

The Role of Universities

When we think about the care of human dignity, the care of society and the care of the environment, we are faced with important relational logic present in a complex way in society; and the academic world has not always been able to construct a coherent dialogue. Conversely, the academic world has usually become isolated, building its own world.

How can this dialogue be facilitated? How can the academic world's isolation and self-referentiality be fought against? Three questions or basic issues should be always considered: (1) in university life, the first question must always be the following: What kind of society do we want? (2) Naturally, the second question will be: What kind of subjects should be educated for the society we want? And (3) consequently, our look will turn to universities: What kind of education do we need? And, as part of this question: What kinds of universities are necessary, considering the education required for individuals and the society we want to have? (cf. Follmann, 2008, p. 322).⁸⁴ Our dream is to move in the direction of a sustainable society, i.e. towards technological innovation in keeping with international advances and the establishment of social and environmental sustainability assurance, with a view to the balanced survival of society and the environment both at present and in the future. That is why citizens and professionals in society should go through an appropriate education process driven by the system in which this process is developed. Undoubtedly, the best guidelines to achieve these goals are stated in the above-mentioned Global Compact on Education.

Social Initiatives and Spirituality for Service-Learning

The university chosen for this study is a Jesuit university located in the south of Brazil. In this university there is a center known as Center for Citizenship and Social Ser-

⁸⁴ These three questions arise from the first Strategic Plan 2001-2005 of the Association of Universities trusted to the Society of Jesus in Latin America and the Caribbean [AUSJAL, for its Spanish acronym].

vices, [CCIAS, for its Spanish acronym],⁸⁵ which runs the social initiatives of the institution. Among the eighteen projects carried out as an interface between the university and the community, five initiatives were selected for this work:

1. The initiative known as *Horta Mãe-da-Terra* is a collective production project aimed at the cultivation of vegetables and unconventional food plants, which is run by university students, primary and high school students and teachers, as well as teachers, educators, academic interns and local actors from a municipal school in a working-class neighborhood.

Learning takes place “as a result of an integral education aimed at developing personal dimensions through reflections and experiences addressing social, political, emotional, cultural, mystical and environmental issues.” Project leaders comment that “when these issues are addressed in a practical way, it is possible to shape citizens with critical, emancipating, political, transforming, social and proactive thinking; who are capable of analyzing and dealing with complex situations involving natural and social processes both at school and in the community.” As to the learning gained by educators and interns, project leaders state that “educators and interns have the opportunity to work with a community in which there is a high rate of social vulnerability. This is a transforming experience” (*Projeto Horta Mãe da Terra*, in OLMA, 2021).⁸⁶

2. The initiative called *Programa Esporte Integral* is a group of community-based collective activities held at the university sports facilities and other centers used for citizenship education, democratic participation experiences and the exercise of the right to leisure-time sports.

This effort, true to its main goal, i.e. citizenship education, favors service-learning in various democratic participation experiences, especially those related to the exercise of the right to leisure time through the practice of team sports and the participation in free time activities. In these events—whenever possible and feasible—all participants, together with team members, professionals, interns and specialists are involved in activity planning, information search and assessment.

3. The initiative known as *Programa de Atenção Ampliada à Saúde* is undertaken in an easily accessible building near the town hall and it is an interdisciplinary healthcare ‘school-service’ program, focused on the institutional school service of the undergradu-

85 Universidade do Vale do Rio dos Sinos—UNISINOS, São Leopoldo, RS, Brazil. See Center for Citizenship and Social Services [CCIAS, for its Spanish acronym]: <http://unisinis.br/cidadania/ccias-centro-de-cidadania-e-acao-social-unisinis/>

86 References in this paper constitute part of the author’s research for an online publication at OLMA - www.olma.org.br: OLMA (2021). Meaningful Experiences of Socio-Environmental Justice (in progress).

ate course in Psychology, among others. Its objective is to encourage healthcare practices, taking into account the constitutive requirements of human and social development processes and with a view to improving quality of life. In this program, all professionals, teachers, specialists, interns and students become involved in various learning and service activities which are supplemented by systematic theoretical seminars, weekly supervision, monthly case studies, apart from the permanent learning and training engagement in various areas and topics. Learning programs for participants or program target groups are centered on psychoeducation, eating habits, hygiene, and healthy habits, apart from other issues dealt with in individual and/or group consultations. All this makes their work in the program turn into meaningful service-learning experiences.

4. *Vida-com-Arte* is a musical education and family-tie-strengthening program whose goal is to deal with socially vulnerable children and teenagers in municipal schools, and give participants the opportunity to live in a healthy environment and be able to develop their musical and human skills.

During the 2010s, diverse service-learning activities took place three times a week, and in these initiatives professional musicians, interns, workshop attendees and young trainees from the most vulnerable neighborhoods in town had the opportunity to exchange experiences with others while singing and playing musical instruments, such as the violin, the viola, the violoncello, the double bass, the flute, and the drums. The interactions between workshop attendees at the university orchestra rehearsals have always been important learning moments. Similarly, public appearances have always marked a climax in learning processes and citizenship education programs.

5. The initiative known as *Grupo de Cidadania e Cultura Religiosa Afro* was formed on campus by the *Núcleo de Estudos Afrobrasileiros e Indígenas* [NEABI, for its acronym in Portuguese] and its meetings, organized for Afro-descendants who live in town and its surroundings, are weekly held. Kids, young people and adults get together in this group in order to have cultural interactions, engage in inter-religious dialogue, gain learning collectively, acquire information on their reality and get closer to the academic world. Activities are especially aimed at gaining respect for religious diversity among participants and at helping the black population go through historical and identity processes. Learning processes have always taken place collectively, especially through conversations with all teachers, professionals, students and participants of all ages. The method used in the analysis of life stories of the local black population was that known as “collective hermeneutics.”

Its main feature has always been oral communication, through the narration of life stories and the exchange of experiences which affect us all. *Cidadania* is considered a collec-

tive learning environment in which there are affirmative actions that lead to the inclusion of the Afro population in the academic world.

Therefore, these five initiatives involving the university and the community foster diversity and encourage practices which may be considered service-learning activities.

When we try to identify spiritual aspects in these social initiatives, very interesting horizons open up:

The team leading the initiative *Horta Mãe da Terra* informed us that they understand and practice “spirituality through the vegetable garden project as a tool to promote life care and good quality of life” and through the way this effort is viewed: earth as our “great mother,” *the Pachamama*” of indigenous peoples and the “magna mater” of almost all traditions of humanity, thus assuring a dignified life. “Land care and cultivation lead to spirituality” (*Projeto Horta Mãe da Terra*, in OLMA, 2021).

The initiative *Programa Esporte Integral* also offers spiritually enriching activities: “Dialogue strategies, group dynamics, visits to other institutions and other group-building activities are undertaken upon participants’ requests.” These efforts were characterized as “reflection-encouraging events for the collective building of values” (*Projeto Esporte Integral*, in OLMA, 2021).

Team leaders of the initiative *Programa de Atenção Ampliada à Saúde* clearly stated: “We have no specific moments devoted to spirituality”; however, “when it comes to adopting a stance and taking decisions, our team is led by our ethics, always attempting to obtain the best results for participants, interns and the community with which we are engaged.” In another passage it is also stated that “we are an integrated team and we work collectively every day. Our work is the result of the dialogue we get engaged in and it is always aimed at seeking the best for our community.” Team leaders also comment on the collective work done to come up with solutions, as a spirituality practice or a way to avoid isolation: “We seek to reach agreements with partners in order to form work alliances and look for more solutions to the large number of problems and challenges faced” (*Programa Atenção Ampliada à Saúde*, in OLMA, 2021).

Leaders of the initiative known as *Projeto Vida-com-Arte* highlight that “this project has an impact on many adolescents and young people and it is in itself an expression of a constant spiritual practice, a fight against social injustice and a way to share feelings and knowledge” (*Projeto Vida-com-Arte*, in OLMA, 2021).

The group called *Grupo de Cidadania e Cultura Religiosa Afro* was motivated by the desire of various religious leaders to learn more about African culture and history and Afro-descendants. Therefore, spirituality is clearly present. Since the foundation of the group “there has been significant openness and promotion of varied spiritual practices, as well as reflections on Ignatian spirituality. We always begin activities by having a moment’s reflection, from the perspective of either Catholic spirituality or any other religious creed.” The spirituality in this project has always been “expressed in terms of the rights to active equality, dignity and fraternity, in terms of confidence and knowledge, and in terms of justice and peace among all peoples, cultures and religions.” Its leaders state that “respect for religious diversity guides, in this way, the search for the basis of peaceful coexistence between multiple forms which lead to the Almighty and to overcome weaknesses and behaviors that divide humanity.” And they add that “Life without presence and stigma, related to value judgment about people who are different from us, leads to diversity appreciation, religious complementarianism and social equality” (*Grupo Cidadania e Cultura Religiosa Afro*, in OLMA, 2021).

Thus, despite taking different creative ways, the five initiatives discussed in this essay deal with perceptions and specific practices geared to the same spirituality, which is based on the concept of socio-environmental justice and common pedagogical practices. This spirituality is mainly rooted in the ‘mysticism’ which is awoken and cultivated through full recognition of our own dignity and the dignity of others, through the suffering and indignation at outrageous and unacceptable inequalities and at the inhuman hardships suffered by many brothers and sisters, and through the care of life and the gifts of Creation, encouraged by the love for present and future life on this planet.

A Spirituality of Care - Conclusion

Humanity urgently needs to focus on ‘the culture of care’ and get rid of ‘the culture of indifference’. Attention needs to be paid to the relational dimension and to the interconnection of all things in human coexistence, in interpersonal relationships, in society and in our relation with the gifts of nature.

We need to pay special attention to fairness in all complex human coexistence. This special attention is, in conclusion, what we can call ‘spirituality of care’. This seems to be the most appropriate name, since it centers on the permanent care of human dignity and life in all forms.

In other words, this is a spirituality which is present in the care of human dignity, the care of the gifts of Creation and the care of the social and economic values of inclusion and equality. We do need to cultivate that triple mysticism of care. Care needs to be taken not only in decision-taking and the production of knowledge, but also in the way we are, live and behave in our daily lives. To put it simply, we need an integral spirituality which is always part of our lives and actions.

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We need a spirituality which radically changes our practices, which makes us go back to the true path of justice and which provides human wisdom with a regenerating force. According to theologian Leonardo Boff, “we are going to reconsider our practices and learn to be wise and prolong the human project, which will be purified by the serious crisis that is likely to make us stronger” (Boff, 2018, p. 158). According to this theologian, it is necessary for us to walk quickly towards this end, since we do not have much time to waste (p. 159).

The spirituality needed today is related to the willingness in our hearts to search for the best ways of building sustainable and life-generating societies. One of the most effective ways to achieve this goal, which may be pursued in various forms, is that devised following the new learning practices focused on service-learning.

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18. CONCLUSIONS: WHY COMPLICATE SOMETHING SO SIMPLE?

María Nieves Tapia

CLAYSS, Latin American Center For Service-Learning

"At the end of our life, we shall all be judged by charity."

Saint John of the Cross

"Why complicate something so simple?" (EG, 194) is one of the most challenging questions Pope Francis poses us in his exhortation on "The Joy of the Gospel."

To conclude this book, we would like to echo this question and go over this fragment of *Evangelii Gaudium* in which we are presented with a selection of biblical texts considering the love for our neighbour who suffers, and the urgent call of the Pope that our hermeneutical interpretations and our "conceptual tools" do not end up detracting or minimizing the Word of God:

We incarnate the duty of hearing the cry of the poor when we are deeply moved by the suffering of others. Let us listen to what God's word teaches us about mercy, and allow that word to resound in the life of the Church. The Gospel tells us: "Blessed are the merciful, because they shall obtain mercy" (Mt 5,7) ... "So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy, yet mercy triumphs over judgment" (Jas 2,12-13) ... "Maintain constant love for one another, for love covers a multitude of sins" (1 Pet 4,8). This truth greatly influenced the thinking of the Fathers of the Church and helped create a prophetic, counter-cultural resistance to the self-centred hedonism of paganism. (EG, 193)⁸⁷

This message is so clear and direct, so simple and eloquent, that no ecclesial interpretation has the right to relativize it. The Church's reflection on these texts ought not to obscure or weaken their force, but urge us to accept their exhortations with courage and zeal. Why complicate something so simple? Conceptual tools exist to heighten contact with the realities they seek to explain, not to distance us from them. (EG, 194)⁸⁸

We know that the intellectual work typical of the academic context, necessarily rich in hermeneutics and conceptual devices, can—even with the best intentions—end up "complicating something so simple."

⁸⁷ Emphasis added in bold by the author.

⁸⁸ Emphasis added in bold by the author.

We have produced thousands of papers, studies and critiques on the identity and mission of the Catholic university. Yet, in the real world of our institutions, we often notice the deep gap between the tenets stated in our missions and our teaching and research practices. We witness the distances between our deep theological reflections and our institutions' daily practices, which are not always different from those of other non-denominational universities.

We believe that the service-learning proposal can help us "not complicate something so simple" and to strengthen, in our Catholic educational institutions, the Christian love that should be at the centre of our identity and mission.

From this perspective, we believe that the service-learning proposal can help us "not complicate something so simple" and to strengthen, in our Catholic educational institutions, the Christian love that should be at the centre of our identity and mission.

In several papers in this volume, there has been an attempt to underline that what is most "the identity" of a Catholic University should be, precisely, the simplest and most central part of our faith: we believe that "God is Love" (1 John 4,8), that "whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." (1 John 4,20), and that the new and more "appropriate" commandment left to us by the Master is that of mutual love (John 13,34).

Paraphrasing St. Paul's words (1 Cor. 13): if our students can speak in the tongues of Cambridge, Paris and Beijing, but did not learn to love their neighbour, what's the point of attending a Catholic university? If our Catholic universities dominate all the sciences and are at the top of all the rankings, but do not contribute to building a more fraternal world, we run the risk of being nothing more than a "clanging cymbal." Even if we make the most generous donations or promote multiple voluntary services and activism, "but do not have love, I gain nothing" (1 Cor. 13, 2).

For all those reasons, we understand that developing a spirituality of service, based on authentic Christian love, should be essential for the CHEIs to avoid "complicating something so simple."

As this book surveys, service-learning projects help us focus on the essentials because they allow our students to learn to truly love others in deed and truth. They also allow them to use their knowledge and skills serving the needs of others, the commu-

nities and the planet, to bring theory and practice together, and join head, heart and hands.

Accompanying these practices with a spiritual reflection allows us to acknowledge the God we cannot see in the brothers we see. This approach to faith has an impact on the lives and projects of our students, much more than so many lessons in morality and theology that can remain at the level of the purely theoretical.

A spirituality based on the practice of fraternal service can help our students discover and cultivate the Love that is patient and merciful and never gets tired of giving (1 Cor., 13), even in cultural contexts that privilege hedonic consumption and ruthless competition. It can allow the new generations to find in the donation of themselves and the construction of a more just and fraternal world, a transcendent meaning of life, even if regarding themselves as agnostics or atheists.

The specific SL projects allow students who define themselves as Catholic, others who profess different religions and agnostics or atheists to work together in the service of others.

Unlike campus ministry masses, missionary groups and other activities that require the profession of the Catholic faith as a prerequisite, service-learning projects can be an open way of welcoming and proclaiming the Good News to those who a priori are not interested in religion.

Similarly, and especially in contexts where Catholics are a minority compared to those who profess other creeds, service-learning projects can become a fruitful space for dialogue and ecumenical and interreligious spiritual reflection, regarding the "golden rule" common to the great religions (Pushpalatha, 2020; Tapia, 2020).

The practice of caring for others allows us to work and reflect together in an ecumenical, interreligious dialogue and also with so many who—without professing a religious faith—are committed to justice, solidarity and care for people and the planet.

As noted in this book, the practice of caring for others allows us to work and reflect together in an ecumenical, interreligious dialogue and also with so many who—without professing a religious faith—are committed to justice, solidarity and care for people and the planet.

For this reason, service-learning projects are among the most "Catholic" and identity-based things we can offer, both in the sense of adherence to the most essential aspects of our faith and the teaching of the Catholic Church and at the same time, in the original "universal" sense of the term Catholic.

On the last day, the Master will examine us all, university students or illiterate, professors or laymen, Catholic or not, and will ask us if we have loved him concretely in our suffering brothers and sisters (Mt. 25, 31-46). If we teach our students to use their knowledge at the service of others through service-learning proposals, if they learn to love others in deeds and in truth, we will have prepared them to pass the most important exam of all.

In addition, evidencing our identity and mission as Catholic institutions will become less complicated.

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19. APPENDIX

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Introduction

Here is a collection of quotations from Vatican documents that underpin the holistic education and social engagement of Catholic Institutions of Higher Education (ICHEs) for the common good.

It is possible to see a strong affinity between the texts selected and service-learning pedagogy, including explicit reference to it in the documents of the Global Compact on Education.

1. Integral Education and Social Mission of CHEIs

“Therefore children and young people must be helped, with the aid of the latest advances in psychology and the arts and science of teaching, to develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy (...) Moreover they should be so trained to take their part in social life that properly instructed in the necessary and opportune skills they can become actively involved in various community organizations, open to discourse with others and willing to do their best to promote the common good.” (GE, 1965, n.1)

“(...) The students of [Catholic Higher Education] institutions are molded into men truly outstanding in their training, ready to undertake weighty responsibilities in society and witness to the faith in the world (...).” (GE, 1965, n.10)

“Scientific and technological discoveries create an enormous economic and industrial growth, but they also inescapably require the correspondingly necessary search for meaning in order to guarantee that the new discoveries be used for the authentic good of individuals and of human society as a whole. If it is the responsibility of every University to search for such meaning, a Catholic University is called in a particular way to respond to this need: its Christian inspiration enables it to include the moral, spiritual and religious dimension in its research, and to evaluate the attainments of

science and technology in the perspective of the totality of the human person.” (John Paul II, 1990, ECE n. 7)

“A Catholic University, as any University, is immersed in human society; as an extension of its service to the Church, and always within its proper competence, it is called on to become an ever more effective instrument of cultural progress for individuals as well as for society.” (John Paul II, 1990, ECE n. 32)

“The Christian spirit of service to others for the promotion of social justice is of particular importance for each Catholic University, to be shared by its teachers and developed in its students. The Church is firmly committed to the integral growth of all men and women.” (John Paul II, 1990, ECE n. 34).

“Since, in many countries, the population of Catholic schools is characterized by a multiplicity of cultures and beliefs, religious formation in schools must be based on the awareness of the existing pluralism and constantly be able to be meaningful in contemporary society. This scenario is extremely diversified, therefore religion cannot be taught in the same way everywhere: in some situations, religion classes can provide the occasion where the Gospel is proclaimed for the first time; in other circumstances, educators will provide students the opportunity to experience interiority and prayer, prepare for the sacraments, and invite them to engage in youth movements or social service activities.” (CEC, 2014, 3 h)

“Catholic higher education aims at forming men and women who are able to engage in critical thinking, who are endowed with high level professionalism but also with rich humaneness, through which their skills are put to the service of the common good.” (CEC, 2014, 2 f)

“In particular, schools would not be a complete learning environment if, what pupils learnt, did not also become an occasion to serve the local community. (...) when students have the opportunity to experience how important what they learn is for their lives and their communities, their motivation does change. It would be advisable for teachers to provide their students with opportunities to realize the social impact of what they are studying, thus favoring the discovery of the link between school and life, as well as the development of a sense of responsibility and active citizenship.” (CEC, 2014, II 4)

“Teaching that only promotes repetitive learning, without favoring students’ active participation or sparking their curiosity, is not sufficiently challenging to elicit

motivation. Learning through research and problem-solving develops different and more significant cognitive and mental abilities, whereby students do more than just receiving information, while also stimulating teamwork.” (CEC, 2014, n. 3)

“A humanized education, therefore, does not just provide an educational service, but deals with its results in the overall context of the personal, moral and social abilities of those who participate in the educational process. (...). It is an education – at the same time – that is sound and open, that pulls down the walls of exclusivity, promoting the richness and diversity of individual talents and extending the classroom to embrace every corner of social experience in which education can generate solidarity, sharing and communion.” (CEC, 2017, n. 10)

“Education to fraternal humanism has the weighty responsibility of providing a formation of citizens so as to imbue them with an appropriate culture of dialogue. Moreover, the intercultural dimension is frequently experienced in classrooms of all levels, as well as in universities, so it is from there that we must start to spread the culture of dialogue. The framework of values in which a citizen properly formed to dialogue lives, thinks and acts is supported by relational principles (spontaneity, freedom, equality, consistency, peace and the common good), which beneficially and decisively become part of educational and formation programmes of those institutions and agencies that nurture fraternal humanism.” (CEC, 2017, n. 14)

“Globalizing hope is the specific mission of education to fraternal humanism. A mission that is fulfilled through establishing educational and pedagogical relationships that form to Christian love, that create groups based on solidarity, in which the common good is connected virtuously to the good of each of their components, transforming the contents of knowledge in line with the full realization of the person and his or her belonging to humanity. It is precisely Christian education that can perform this most important task, because it ‘gives birth, it makes grow, it is part of the dynamics of giving life. And the origin of life is the most gushing spring of hope’” (CEC, 2017, n. 18)

“(...) it is important that catechesis and preaching speak more directly and clearly about the social meaning of existence, the fraternal dimension of spirituality, our conviction of the inalienable dignity of each person, and our reasons for loving and accepting all our brothers and sisters.” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 86)

2. Pope Francis Teachings Related to Service-Learning Pedagogy:

On Integral Education

"There are three languages: the language of the head, the language of the heart, the language of the hands. Education must move on these three avenues. To teach how to think, to help how to develop good affections, and to accompany in doing."⁸⁹ (Papa Francesco, 2015)

"... harmonize the language of the mind with the language of the heart and the language of the hands so that a person, a child, a youth may think what he feels and what he does; may feel what he thinks and what he does; may do what he feels and what he thinks. Combine this harmony within the very person, in the student, and in universal harmony, so that we all undertake the educational pact and, in so doing, emerge from this crisis of civilization that we are living in, and take the step that civilization itself demands of us." (Papa Francesco, 2015a)

A Church going forward to the peripheries

"When the Church is closed, she falls sick. Think of a room that has been closed for a year. When you go into it there is a smell of damp, many things are wrong with it. A Church closed in on herself is the same, a sick Church. The Church must step outside herself. To go where? To the outskirts of existence, whatever they may be, but she must step out. Jesus tells us: "Go into all the world! Go! Preach! Bear witness to the Gospel!" (cf. Mk 16:15). But what happens if we step outside ourselves? The same as can happen to anyone who comes out of the house and onto the street: an accident. But I tell you, I far prefer a Church that has had a few accidents to a Church that has fallen sick from being closed. Go out, go out!" (Pope Francis, 2013a)

"Each Christian and every community must discern the path that the Lord points out, but all of us are asked to obey his call to go forth from our own comfort zone in order to reach all the "peripheries" in need of the light of the Gospel." (Pope Francis, 2013, EG 20)

"Here is my first challenge to you: leave the places where there are many educators and go to the outskirts. (...) Look there for the needy, the poor. And they have one

⁸⁹ English version retrieved from:
<https://www.stmarys-belfast.ac.uk/infoserv/news/inthepicture195.asp?cid=145250962045>

thing that the young people in the richer neighbourhoods don't have: it's not their fault, but it's a sociological reality: they have the experience of survival, even cruelty, even hunger, even injustice. They have a wounded humanity. And I believe that our salvation comes from the wounds of a wounded man on the cross. They, from those wounds, draw wisdom, if there is a good educator to carry them forward. It is not a matter of going there to do charity, to teach how to read, to give something to eat... no! This is necessary, but temporary. This is the first step. The challenge - and I encourage you - is to go there to make them grow in humanity, in intelligence, in values, in habits, so that they can move forward and bring to others experiences that they do not know." (Pope Francis, 2015)⁹⁰

"The greatest failure an educator can have is educating within the walls. Educating within the walls of a selective culture, the walls of a culture of security, the walls of an affluent social sector that does not advance". (Papa Francesco, 2015)⁹¹

Solidarity

"The university as a place of formation in solidarity. The word solidarity does not belong solely to a Christian vocabulary. It is a word that is fundamental to human vocabulary. As I said today it is a word which in the present crisis, risks being eliminated from the dictionary. The discernment of reality, by taking on the moment of crisis, and the promotion of a culture of encounter and dialogue, orientate us to solidarity as a fundamental element for a renewal of our societies. (...) There is no future for any country, for any society, for our world, unless we are able to show greater solidarity. Solidarity, then, as a way of making history, as a vital context in which conflicts, tensions, and even those who oppose one another attain a harmony that generates life." (Pope Francis, 2013b, 2c)

"To you, young people, I especially entrust the task of restoring solidarity to the heart of human culture. Faced with old and new forms of poverty – unemployment, migration and addictions of various kinds – we have the duty to be alert and thoughtful, avoiding the temptation to remain indifferent. We have to remember all those who feel unloved, who have no hope for the future and who have given up on life out of discouragement, disappointment or fear. We have to learn to be on the side of the poor, and not just indulge in rhetoric about the poor! Let us go out to meet them, look into their eyes and listen to them. The poor provide us with a concrete opportunity to encounter Christ himself,

⁹⁰ Own translation.

⁹¹ Own translation.

and to touch his suffering flesh. However (...) the poor are not just people to whom we can give something. They have much to offer us and to teach us. How much we have to learn from the wisdom of the poor!" (Pope Francis, 2014)

"Education to fraternal humanism has the weighty responsibility of providing a formation of citizens so as to imbue them with an appropriate culture of dialogue. Moreover, the intercultural dimension is frequently experienced in classrooms of all levels, as well as in universities, so it is from there that we must start to spread the culture of dialogue. The framework of values in which a citizen properly formed to dialogue lives, thinks and acts is supported by relational principles (spontaneity, freedom, equality, consistency, peace and the common good), which beneficially and decisively become part of educational and formation programmes of those institutions and agencies that nurture fraternal humanism." (CEC, 2017, n. 14)

"I would like especially to mention solidarity, which, "as a moral virtue and social attitude born of personal conversion, calls for commitment on the part of those responsible for education and formation." (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 114)

Youth engagement

"You know, dear young university students, that we cannot live without facing challenges, without responding to challenges. Whoever does not face challenges, whoever does not take up challenges, is not living. Your willingness and your abilities, combined with the power of the Holy Spirit who abides in each of us from the day of Baptism, allow you to be more than mere spectators, they allow you to be protagonists in contemporary events. Please do not watch life go by from the balcony! Mingle where the challenges are calling you to help carry life and development forward, in the struggle over human dignity, in the fight against poverty, in the battle for values and in the many battles we encounter each day." (Pope Francis, 2013c).

"At times, seeing a world so full of violence and selfishness, young people can be tempted to withdraw into small groups, shunning the challenges and issues posed by life in society and in the larger world. They may feel that they are experiencing fraternity and love, but their small group may in fact become nothing other than an extension of their own ego. This is even more serious if they think of the lay vocation simply as a form of service inside the Church: serving as lectors, acolytes, catechists, and so forth. They forget that the lay vocation is directed above all to charity within

the family and to social and political charity. It is a concrete and faith-based commitment to the building of a new society. It involves living in the midst of society and the world in order to bring the Gospel everywhere, to work for the growth of peace, harmony, justice, human rights and mercy, and thus for the extension of God's kingdom in this world.” (Pope Francis, 2019, ChV, n. 168)

“I ask young people to go beyond their small groups and to build “social friendship, where everyone works for the common good.” (Pope Francis, 2019, ChV n. 169)

“The Synod recognized that “albeit in a different way from earlier generations, social commitment is a specific feature of today's young people. Alongside some who are indifferent, there are many others who are ready to commit themselves to initiatives of volunteer work, active citizenship and social solidarity. They need to be accompanied and encouraged to use their talents and skills creatively, and to be encouraged to take up their responsibilities. Social engagement and direct contact with the poor remain fundamental ways of finding or deepening one's faith and the discernment of one's vocation... It was also noted that the young are prepared to enter political life so as to build the common good.” (Pope Francis, 2019, ChV n. 170)

Catholic Universities have to go beyond the classroom, to use curriculum and research to engage their students in solving real world problems

“My question to you, as educators, is this: Do you watch over your students, helping them to develop a critical sense, an open mind capable of caring for today's world? A spirit capable of seeking new answers to the varied challenges that society sets before humanity today? Are you able to encourage them not to disregard the world around them, what is happening all over? Can you encourage them to do that? To make that possible, you need to take them outside the university lecture hall; their minds need to leave the classroom, their hearts must go out of the classroom. Does our life, with its uncertainties, its mysteries and its questions, find a place in the university curriculum or different academic activities?” (Pope Francis, 2015b)

“The classic methods of research are experiencing certain limits, more so when it is a question of a culture such as ours, which stimulates direct and immediate participation by all. Present-day culture demands new forms that are more inclusive of all those who make up social and hence educational realities. We see, then, the importance of broadening the concept of the educating community.

The challenge for the community is to not isolate itself from modes of knowledge, or, for that matter, to develop a body of knowledge with minimal concern about those for whom it is intended. It is vital that the acquisition of knowledge lead to an inter-play between the university classroom and the wisdom of the peoples who make up this richly blessed land.

Knowledge must always sense that it is at the service of life, and must confront it directly in order to keep progressing. Hence, the educational community cannot be reduced to classrooms and libraries but must progress continually towards participation. This dialogue can only take place on the basis of an episteme capable of “thinking in the plural”, that is, conscious of the interdisciplinary and interdependent nature of learning.” (Pope Francis, 2018)

“It is fair to ask ourselves: How do we help our students not to look at a university degree as synonym for more status, more money or more social prestige? They are not synonyms. Do we help them to see this preparation as a sign of greater responsibility for today’s problems, for the needs of the poorest, for the care of the environment? It is not enough to make analyses and descriptions of reality; it is necessary to generate spaces for real research, debates that generate alternatives to today’s problems. How necessary it is to get down to the concrete!” (Pope Francis, 2017, n.1)⁹²

“The basic mission of a University is a continuous quest for truth through its research, and the preservation and communication of knowledge for the good of society. A Catholic University participates in this mission with its own specific characteristics and purposes.” (John Paul II, 1990, ECE 30)

“One could object that such a university lecturer draws conclusions from faith and therefore cannot claim that they are valid for those who do not share this faith. But while it is true that they do not share the faith, they can recognise the ethical reason proposed to them. Behind the Catholic teacher stands a community of believers, in which, over the centuries of its existence, a certain wisdom of life has matured; a community that holds within itself a treasure trove of knowledge and ethical experience, which is important for the whole of humanity. In this sense, the teacher speaks not so much as a representative of a belief, but above all, as a witness to the validity of ethical reason.” (Pope Francis, 2017, n.2)⁹³

92 Own translation.

93 Own translation.

3. Service-Learning in the Global Compact on Education

“3. Educating to Serve, Educating is to Serve. Lastly, the third act of courage Pope Francis calls for is to form individuals who are willing to put themselves at the service of the community. To be honest, this indication sheds an apt light on a truly decisive element of every educational action: educators cannot succeed fully in their educational action unless they commit to forming and shaping – in the people entrusted to their care – a full and real openness to the service of others, of all others, of the whole human community, starting with those who find themselves in the most exhausting and challenging situations. The true service of education is education to service. Moreover, educational research also increasingly recognizes the central dimension of service to others and the community as a tool and as an end of education itself. Think for example about the great development of Service Learning. This kind of research shows how service can be not only be a training activity among others (the importance of volunteer work in the training of young people is well recognized), but more radically how it can become the fundamental method through which all knowledge and skills can be transmitted and acquired. We could point to this process as a development from education to service to education as service, whereby our brethren are both the way and the goal of education.” (CEC, 2020, p. 16)

“No authentic, profound and enduring change is possible unless it starts from the different cultures, particularly those of the poor. A cultural covenant eschews a monolithic understanding of the identity of a particular place; it entails respect for diversity by offering opportunities for advancement and social integration to all” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 220).

4. Education and fraternity

“It is my desire that, in this our time, by acknowledging the dignity of each human person, we can contribute to the rebirth of a universal aspiration to fraternity. Fraternity between all men and women. “Here we have a splendid secret that shows us how to dream and to turn our life into a wonderful adventure. No one can face life in isolation... We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead. How important it is to dream together... By ourselves, we risk seeing mirages, things that are not there. Dreams, on the other hand, are built together”.^[6] Let us dream, then, as a single human family, as fellow travelers sharing the same flesh, as children of the same earth which is our common home, each of us bringing the richness of his or her beliefs and convictions, each of us with his or her own voice, brothers and sisters all.” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 8)

“A love capable of transcending borders is the basis of what in every city and country can be called “social friendship”. Genuine social friendship within a society makes true universal openness possible. This is a far cry from the false universalism of those who constantly travel abroad because they cannot tolerate or love their own people. Those who look down on their own people tend to create within society categories of first and second class, people of greater or lesser dignity, people enjoying greater or fewer rights. In this way, they deny that there is room for everybody.” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 99)

“Education and upbringing, concern for others, a well-integrated view of life and spiritual growth: all these are essential for quality human relationships and for enabling society itself to react against injustices, aberrations and abuses of economic, technological, political and media power. Some liberal approaches ignore this factor of human weakness; they envisage a world that follows a determined order and is capable by itself of ensuring a bright future and providing solutions for every problem.” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 167)

“Authentic social dialogue involves the ability to respect the other’s point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and concerns. Based on their identity and experience, others have a contribution to make, and it is desirable that they should articulate their positions for the sake of a more fruitful public debate. When individuals or groups are consistent in their thinking, defend their values and convictions, and develop their arguments, this surely benefits society. Yet, this can only occur to the extent that there is genuine dialogue and openness to others. Indeed, “in a true spirit of dialogue, we grow in our ability to grasp the significance of what others say and do, even if we cannot accept it as our own conviction. In this way, it becomes possible to be frank and open about our beliefs, while continuing to discuss, to seek points of contact, and above all, to work and struggle together.” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 203)

“What is important is to create processes of encounter, processes that build a people that can accept differences. Let us arm our children with the weapons of dialogue! Let us teach them to fight the good fight of the culture of encounter!” (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 217)

“The different religions, based on their respect for each human person as a creature called to be a child of God, contribute significantly to building fraternity and defending justice in society. Dialogue between the followers of different religions does not take place simply for the sake of diplomacy, consideration or tolerance. In the

words of the Bishops of India, “the goal of dialogue is to establish friendship, peace and harmony, and to share spiritual and moral values and experiences in a spirit of truth and love”. (Pope Francis, 2020, FT, 271)

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Uniservitate is a global programme for the promotion of service-learning in Catholic Higher Education. Its objective is to generate a systemic change in Catholic Higher Education Institutions (CHEIs) through the institutionalisation of service-learning (SL) as a tool to achieve its mission of offering an integral education and training of agents of change committed to their community.

“We will not change the world, if we do not change education”

Pope Francis

3 Spirituality and Higher Education: Perspectives from Service-Learning

A research topic that is increasingly attracting the attention of the academic world is the link between teaching and spirituality, understood in its broadest sense. This will be the focus of the volume that we present to our readers today. The aim is to provide, both for Catholic Institutions of Higher Education and universities at large, a space for reflection in their itinerary of discernment about their identity and specific mission.

This book, the third of the Uniservitate collection, explores these topics, bringing together research and experiences of international scope, from the Catholic university world as well as of other creeds and non-religious convictions, which delve into service-learning from the ethics of care and fraternity.

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ISBN 978-987-4487-30-8



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Published in June 2022

ISBN 978-987-4487-28-5