



RESTORATION TO NORMAL LIFE



CROSS OVER

CAMILLIAN DISASTER SERVICE INTERNATIONAL
Quarterly Bulletin No.19 April-June 2020



i n t h i s i s s u e

	Editorial	3
COVID 19 a critical issue of mental health and psycho-spiritual preventive equipment		
	Article	4
The psychosocial approach of CADIS interventions		
	Testimony	6
Continuing the vision of Saint Camillus		
	Report	8
CADIS interventions during COVID 19 pandemic		
	Analysis	9
Laudato Si' five years after		



CROSSOVER is the quarterly news bulletin of the Camillian Disaster Service International. The name CROSSOVER was inspired by the gospel of Mark (4:35-41) when Jesus invited his disciples to cross over to the other side of the lake, and then a massive storm battered their boat that it almost sank. Fear had overshadowed them; Jesus rose from sleep and calmed the sea. St. Camillus himself had crossed over the confines of the hospitals when he learned about the plague-stricken people, and the victims of floods, war, and pestilence. The enormous strength and enduring compassion of the Camillians are displayed during these difficult historical moments.

Director: Fr. Aristelo Miranda, MI
Chief editor: Fr. Emmanuel Zongo, MI
Design & Layout Fr. Sibi Augustin Chennatt, MI



Fr. Aristelo Miranda MI
Director, CADIS

COVID 19 A CRITICAL ISSUE OF MENTAL HEALTH AND PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL PREVENTIVE EQUIPMENT

In the midst of this global pandemic, people are anxious about the urgent and critical need for personal protective equipment. They are sharing concerns about the impending lack of respirators and the need for testing. And they are encouraging people to flatten the curve through social distancing. But no one is talking about a potential psycho (mental) - spiritual health crisis facing everybody of this pandemic.

COVID 19 generates fear and stress of different intensity due to real risks and stigma to persons with COVID 19, frontliners and the general population. The IASC (Inter-Agency Standing Committee) of the key UN and non-UN actors warns that “constant fear, worry, uncertainties, and stressors in the population during the COVID-19 outbreak can lead to long-term consequences within communities, families, and vulnerable individuals.” Moreover, rabbi Warren Goldstein believes that this pandemic is reminding us of our “shared humanity” and “collective fragility”. Whatever social status and societal function you may have, everybody is affected and reacted with different capacities and qualities. “Despite our grand 21st-century advancements in medicine and technology, a stealthy and invisible virus has demonstrated our weakness. We recognize and express in prayers our fundamental vulnerability, and acknowledge that we are, after all, in God's hands.”

COVID has brought serious interference to social networks, local dynamics, socio-familial relations and economies. The inability or deliberate ignorance of some state leaders arouse higher emotional state, anger and aggression which in some cases are misdirected to innocent actors such as the stigma to medical frontliners and surviving patients. Women and domestic violence is making unprecedented records. Some health care workers described their unexpected experience of betrayal and coercion and moral injury. They feel betrayed by their employers, the health care system, and the government, all of which were woefully unprepared for a pandemic and then chose to ignore their warnings.

Mental, emotional and spiritual health intervention is a cross-cutting issues that should not be ignored in all sectors of intervention in this pandemic. We named it, a holistic approach intervention. Our common humanity and collective experience of fragility are fundamental truths that any intervention should not ignore, otherwise, its long-term serious impact will become a barrier to integral human development. To achieve our goal of overcoming the pandemic, a well-coordinated and shared response is essential.

Our shared humanity reveals our interconnectedness to everything that exist in this world. Pope Francis has reminded humanity of this truth in his social encyclical *Laudato Si*. Science employs measures that can prevent or contain the spread of the coronavirus such as social distancing, quarantine and lockdown. All these measures are intended to isolate persons, places, cases and relations. But this comes only after contact tracing of peoples, places and objects. Everything is traceable because of our fragile interconnections. The rupture of our interconnectedness can be redeemed only by human (personal and collective) responsibility. Thus, the ultimate goal of any intervention in this pandemic should aimed at restoring humanity in the world where he/she lives and realizes his/her divine gifts to make this world truly humane and real protagonist of integral human development.



THE PSYCHOSOCIAL APPROACH OF CADIS INTERVENTIONS

By Consuelo Santamaria Repiso

Humanity experiences many and varied problems. Among the most significant are those related to natural disasters. As they generate gross damages, they cannot be addressed from a single perspective. It is necessary to carry out comprehensive actions and proposals for a correct rehabilitation, i.e., psychosocial interventions aim at helping each person as a unique being and an individual who is part of a society damaged by trauma.

CADIS is always keen to this approach. It has been developing programs following a holistic perspective, always keeping in mind a psychosocial approach which is complex and requires a great deal of coordination and attentive preparation. This perspective requires diagnosis and analysis of the situation altered by trauma without neglecting the emotional damage and behavioral changes caused by the disaster. CADIS considers of vital importance the personal rehabilitation to prevent disorders related to mental health, as well as the recovery of the social fabric damaged by the disaster.

CADIS approach in any intervention gives importance to the psychosocial dimension. Aware of the necessity to mitigate the effects of disaster to the person and the community, CADIS establishes a "planning aid" which aims at offering professional help to people in situation of vulnerability and extreme risk due to any kind of disaster.

The word **approach** refers to a way of understanding the different situations and actions of the affected persons using certain psychosocial criteria. This approach is important, at the operational and strategic levels.

CADIS understands the person from a holistic perspective applied in the disaster management strategies. All its intervention considers the person in its integrity and not compartmentalized. It always attends to the physical, cognitive, social, emotional and spiritual personal dimensions. These actions are realized within a communitarian context, considering not only the immediate familial social relations, but also the person's relation with others as a social being.



Dr Consuelo doing psychosocial training in Nepal

CADIS understands the person from a holistic perspective applied in the disaster management strategies.

From this perspective, we consider that there is no better intervention than the psychosocial one.

In any types of disasters, human-made or natural, there is always suffering, damage, pain, destruction, despair and fear. Being aware of these consequences, CADIS plans all actions with the following objectives: to mitigate risks, confronting social problems, to utilize available resources in caring for the mental health of each individual, to provide psychological and social attention. In the process, it keeps in mind both the family as a social group and the community, and it does so from a preventive, curative, formative and therapeutic perspective. With this approach, CADIS achieves the objectives of psychosocial intervention and improve the quality of personal and social life.

This is very significant, because this approach has enabled us to work with trauma in a multidimensional way. By multidimensional, we mean psychosocial interventions that use psychological, behavioral, cognitive, social and systemic techniques, among others.

The psychosocial paradigm seeks to alleviate individual and social suffering. To do so, its starting point is always the analysis of reality. I remember the hours, weeks and months that Fr. Aris Miranda, Fr. Sam Cuarto and Bro. Luca Perletti, dedicated to understand the life, culture and customs in Sierra Leone in planning its psychosocial program for the EBOLA survivors. This was also done in Nepal, the Philippines, India, and all other places where CADIS has operated. The interventions were aimed at helping individuals, families and communities.



CADIS follows this paradigm. It is aware that a person is not isolated but develops in a social environment. For this reason, the interventions have been developed on two basic levels: the person and the community. These are the basis of all psychosocial intervention.

Why is psychosocial intervention necessary after a disaster? CADIS assumes that any type of disaster affects the people and their environment. It has always psychological and social consequences that affect the environment and the social structures. There are psychological damages to individuals and the social fabric.

Dr. Santamaría Repiso, C and Dr. Biju Sebastian K. B. (2019) affirmed: "Among the psychological damages that affect the person individually the following are the most significant:

- Traumatic stress
- Grief
- A cluster of mental disorders such as anxiety, post-traumatic stress, fear, loneliness and depression
- Eating disorders
- Sleep disorders
- Suicidal thoughts
- Others

That is to say, during and after the disaster, the personal, economic and social damages are numerous and very diverse.

The most frequent social problems are:

- ✓ Diseases
- ✓ Family problems as a result of the disaster
- ✓ Family breakup
- ✓ Family imbalance due to death of parents, children, close relatives...
- ✓ Rupture of family dynamics
- ✓ Family roles alteration
- ✓ Ability to protect or check out
- ✓ Economic problems derived from the disaster:
 - ✓ Devastation
 - ✓ Higher poverty rate
 - ✓ Environmental destruction
 - ✓ Infrastructures destruction
 - ✓ Damage to basic services
 - ✓ Lack of minimal resources
 - ✓ Organizational lack

"The main objective of psychosocial program is to restore normal life, facilitate participation of those affected in the personal and social recovery, and prevent serious psychological consequences due to trauma".

Psychosocial support, in this context aims at encouraging victims to be able to develop not only individual strategies but to build up a resilient community." (pp. 10 -11).

Therefore, the main objective of psychosocial program is to restore normal life, facilitate participation of those affected in the personal and social recovery, and prevent serious psychological consequences due to trauma.

CADIS upholds that there is a connection between the psychological and the social processes; both constantly interact - one influences the other and are inseparable. For this reason, we consider that personal and community well-being can only be achieved by taking care of the psychological and social needs of the individuals.

There is a close and direct relationship between the personal and the social spheres. Humans are social beings and their integration and participation in society can be a source of well-being or marginalization. When society is damaged by any circumstance, the individual feels insecurity and abandonment, which may influence his or her physical and mental health (Ellen, Dillman, & Mijanovich, 2001).

Hence, Schwarzer et al (2003) have stated categorically: "Health is determined not only by biological, but also by social network, thus indicating that social factors have a beneficial effect on longevity" (p. 2). Likewise, when there are social problems, physical illness emerges, as Berkman and Symes (1979) affirm.

For this reason, in the context of social disaster we may have to face mental illness, such as depression and neurosis, as well as feelings of unhappiness, sadness, downheartedness and melancholy. And, of course, we can also include social consequences, such as isolation, poverty, weakening of social networks, fewer exchanges of resources and non- reciprocal relationships, among others.

At all times CADIS has made an analysis of both reality and consequences often from a psychosocial perspective, because, as we have said previously, to understand the consequences of the disaster, it is impossible to separate the individual (personal and psychological dimension) from the collective (social dimension).

This perspective makes it possible to talk about psychosocial impacts and enables us to evaluate correctly the damage and trauma caused by the disaster, both in the person and in the community. We can also deal with individual and social grief because of human and material losses caused by the disaster. Thus, this approach helps us rebuild people and communities.

References

- Ellen, I. G., Dillman, K., & Mijanovich, T. (2001). Neighborhood effects on health: exploring the links and assessing the evidence. *Journal of Urban Affairs*, 23, 391–408. (Take from: Santamaría & Sebastian, 2019)
- Santamaría Repiso, C & Sebastian, B (2019) *Handbook of Community-Based Psycho-Social Support for People Affected by Disasters*. Rome. CADIS Publications.
- Schwarzer, R., Sniehotta, F.F., Lippke, S., Luszczynska, A., Scholz, U., Schüz, B., Wegner, M., & Ziegelmann, J.P. (2003). On the assessment and analysis of variables in the health action process approach: conducting an investigation. Retrieved from http://userpage.fu-berlin.de/gesund/hapa_web.pdf (Take from: Santamaría & Sebastian, 2019).



CONTINUING THE VISION OF SAINT CAMILLUS AND THE LEGACY OF THE CAMILLIAN MARTYRS OF CHARITY

By Aristelo Miranda M.I

“Everyone, therefore, who would like to join our Institute, should know, that he must die to himself, if he is given such a great grace by the Holy Spirit and should not worry about death nor life, neither infirmity nor health, but entirely dead to the world, he should give himself completely to the will of God, under perfect obedience to his superiors, giving up totally of his will. He should consider it a great gain to die for the crucified Jesus Christ our Lord, who says: “there is no greater love than to give one’s life for one’s friends...”, for the glory of God, the salvation of one’s soul and that of our neighbor.”

(Prologue, the Constitution of the Order of the Ministers of the Infirm)

CADIS is taking the prophetic call of being a Camillian in the new Millenium by storm, growing leaps and bounds on an international level seriously. CADIS is becoming bold in its global intervention of building a resilient community where people are affected or exposed to natural and human-made disasters. It is growing a lot in its mission of promoting the development of community-based integral health programs for the well-being of disaster-stricken communities through compassionate, competent and coordinated interventions. It is a leap from the top-down to the bottom-up approach of ministering to the suffering humanity.

We can dedicate this success to the diligent work of our active and passionate members - confreres, priests, religious and lay - who continue to support our mission and participate actively in the various projects and emergency interventions. CADIS engagement in the humanitarian world began with a selected group of Camillians and lay collaborators. At present, the seed that was planted has grown into a tree where its branches are bearing fruits of a significant number and diverse participation of Camillians, lay, priest and religious forming into CADIS or CTF provincial or delegation based organization and the local and international partner organizations engaged in humanitarian and development work.

A Past Revisited

Our mission began formally in 2000 when the Consulta has formed the Camillian Task Force (CTF), an emergency team formed by religious and lay collaborators specialized in humanitarian emergency intervention ready to respond anywhere in the world, especially in countries where the Camillians have their mission. CTF has counted on the readiness of the religious with the mandate of their respective superior to respond to the emergency call. Following the inspiration of its predecessors and the new signs of the times, the CTF has evolved into a Foundation called the Camillian Disaster Service (CADIS) in 2014. A highly specialized international team no longer composes CADIS but of a nationally-based CADIS or CTF organization whose members are trained confreres, religious and lay volunteers whose primary mission is to build a fully resilient vulnerable community to disaster through empowerment.

CADIS approach in disaster interventions passed through different stages of maturation. The initial stage (2000 - 2009) is defined by a specialized team of Camillian religious and lay persons who are trained to respond in times of natural disaster particularly in countries where there is a Camillian mission. It could be likened to the International Red Cross (IRC) or Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) but distinguished itself by its holistic and spiritual (or pastoral) approach.

Its primary focus of intervention is emergency response (medical, humanitarian, pastoral). The second stage (2009 – 2014) is defined by a multi-player approach with other like-minded organizations. It opened itself for structured collaboration with other like-minded humanitarian organizations in responding to disasters not only in terms of funding but of program implementation. It is the moment of opening the table of a partnership of equals sharing a joint mission. Its focus on intervention is emergency and rehabilitation. The third stage (2014 up to the present) of its development is characterized by a multi-stakeholder and community-based approach intervention. The third stage distinguished itself from the previous stages of being a vision-oriented organization, i.e., to build a fully resilient community. It considers the disaster-affected communities as inevitable partners and primary stakeholders in any CADIS' response to the situation of emergency. Furthermore, CADIS does not only intervene when a disaster occurs but it took into consideration the different cycles as against a linear approach of disaster response, namely, relief, rehabilitation, resilience and rights (4Rs). Thus, the key to our response depends on a firm analysis of the community's vulnerability.



Key to the Reading of Disasters

A new concept that has been espoused by CADIS in their disaster response is the concept of vulnerability. "Vulnerability is the human dimension of disasters and is the result of the range of economic, social, cultural, institutional, political, and psychological factors that shape people's lives and the environment that they live in (Twigg, 2004)." It also concerns the wider environmental and social conditions that limit people and communities to cope with the impact of disaster (cf. Birkmann, 2006)." More often, the susceptibility of people and their economic assets help to explain why some non-extreme hazards can lead to extreme impacts and disasters, while some extreme events do not. (cf. IPCC, 2012).

A classic example was the earthquakes in Chile in February 2010 and Haiti in January 2010. The earthquake in Chile with a magnitude of 8.8 has killed more than 500 people, while the 7.0 magnitude earthquake in Haiti had an estimated death of 250,000. Thus, Haiti is more vulnerable than Chile. Therefore, in responding to disasters, CADIS is applying the vulnerability principle of analyzing the impact of a particular event.

"Vulnerability analysis involves understanding the root causes or drivers of vulnerability, but also people's capacities cope and recover from disasters. Since we cannot reduce the occurrence and severity of natural hazards, reducing vulnerability is one of the main opportunities for reducing disaster risk. Vulnerability changes over time because many of the processes that influence vulnerability are dynamic [...] (Twigg, 2004)." On the other hand, vulnerability is also an essential key to the mitigation of the impact of disasters. "Vulnerability is the birthplace of love, belonging, joy, courage, and creativity. It is the source of hope, empathy, accountability, and authenticity. If we want greater clarity in our purpose or deeper or more meaningful spiritual lives, vulnerability is the path (Brene Brown, 2012)."

The vulnerable and fragile human condition is the driver for human solidarity and humanity. When a person is aware of his vulnerability, he becomes conscious of the others. It is here that one realizes that he is a being for and with others. Thus, he becomes spiritual, an authentic search for a sense of meaning, purpose, moral frameworks and connection with what they believe is most profound or sacred in their life. (cf. Perry Benson et al.)

The Way Forward

Thanks to the collaboration of the Provinces and Delegations of the Order. It responded to humanitarian emergencies not only in countries where the Camillians are present but elsewhere as long as there is a need for our presence and possibilities to serve. Today, we follow in their footsteps as we continue to raise the bar and set firm goals striving to offer better and qualified services with a clear vision of establishing a fully-resilient community.

The complex situation of our era demands a bold, organized and strategic humanitarian response to the new disasters. Every year, CADIS members are provided with professional and technical training on disaster management which commonly called the Bangkok Conference. We availed to our members team-building strategies, strategic planning, training for organizational, personal and spiritual growth, linking and establishing a partnership with like-minded individuals and organizations across the world. Currently, our strength consists of over 50 members worldwide, and we have managed over 24 projects in 12 countries with a total amount of 2.474.996,19 million euros in six years (2014-2020). Over 500 volunteers have been mobilized in the different intervention with the direct participation of around 50 Camillian religious. We have experienced significant growth in Asia and America, particularly in the USA in terms of mobilization of human and financial resources. Furthermore, we continue to grow our presence internationally as we are developing Chapters in Africa and Latin America.

When I first joined CADIS in 2010, taking my first mission abroad in Pakistan, I joined right away as I was moved by the witnessing of my predecessors especially St. Camillus de Lellis and the Martyrs of Charity and the prophetic challenge of the time to journey with the most vulnerable in the peripheries (geographical and existential). I told myself my plate was full and that there was no room to get too involved. Today I am taking on the wonderful honor of Director and enjoying every aspect of being involved with this amazing organization that has allowed me personal growth in mentoring, accompanying and working with the team.

A good confrere of mine has asked: "what makes CADIS different from other humanitarian organizations"? I answered: "while the nature of our projects is almost identical but the way we do it is unique!". CADIS upholds its belief that to make our intervention more impactful and meaningful. We always take into consideration the participation of the survivors as primary stakeholders and drivers to the success of the projects. They felt valued and respected which strengthened their resilience and created a transformation in their lives in the community. I encourage you to become involved because what you give will make a difference in the life of survivors, our Order as well as your life. This is a concrete expression of our prophetism, an action that is not only armored and motivated by sheer feeling of being charitable but above all by the desire for authentic empowerment and transformation of the most vulnerable communities.

The journey is still far and we have not yet reached our vision. The biggest obstacle to this mission is the lack of openness and incapacity and even resistance to reading the signs of the times. We need to overcome our evangelical illiteracy. For us Camillians, we need to be reminded of the radicality of our fourth vow. This radicality literally from the conviction of Saint Camillus and our predecessors, the martyrs of charity, means the willingness to confront death when it is necessary for the good of the sick person. It means the possibility and not just probability.

This is the original spirit of the fourth vow of St. Camillus, which in our Constitution translated into "even at the risk of life." (cf. Brusco and Alvarez eds., *The Camillian Spirituality*, pp. 94-95).



REPORT

CADIS INTERVENTIONS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

WHERE ARE WE DURING THE PANDEMIC?

PSYCHO-SPIRITUAL SUPPORT

When COVID-19 reaches its peak of contagion, panic, anxiety, fears, paranoia, distress, stigma, violence, etc are just among the predominantly hidden concerns. CADIS joined coronacare group from India offering **online psychosocial-spiritual assistance** to anyone affected by the pandemic. 30 volunteer professionals have offered their services to CADIS. Follow this: (<https://coronacare.life/>)

To sustain our psycho-spiritual intervention, a series of philosophical, theological, anthropological, psychological and spiritual reflection **webinar** is organized: **#tempi che stiamo vivendo** (<https://www.camilliani.org>)

When Italy became the hotspot of coronavirus, the Camillians in Taiwan launched a global aid campaign. PPEs were distributed to the religious healthcare facilities. CADIS alone has distributed 30,000 surgical masks, and 400 overall medical gowns. It was an unprecedented act of solidarity and compassion.

PROTECT & SAVE LIFE

To sustain our medical efforts, **7 Camillian healthcare facilities** received a grant from the Episcopal Conference of Italy (CEI) for medical supplies & PPEs.

MITIGATE ECONOMIC IMPACT

To ease the economic burden of the most vulnerable population in the least developed countries, **9400 families** received food & non-food packages in 18 countries.

ANYONES LIVES MATTERS

CADIS upholds solidarity, justice and sacrifice even at the risk of our own lives. In moments of fear and trembling, you will never miss the heroes at the frontline of our lives. All of them work hard to make these values felt and tangible. Your being with us is a priceless blessing because you believe everyone's lives matters.

THE CHALLENGE CONTINUES

Where the Camillians are during the pandemic.



CTF INDIA



CADIS THAILAND



CADIS BURKINA



CROSS OVER

8

April-June 2020

Laudato Si', five years after

It remains an open challenge, the most difficult: from 'my' home to the 'common' home

By Fr. Gianfranco Lunardon MI

Five years have passed since the publication of the encyclical of Pope Francis *Laudato Si'* (LS) on the "care of the common home" (May 24, 2015).

The analysis of this anniversary, in its aspects of its lights and shadows, of achievements and challenges, still beyond even being understood, cannot disregard the current epidemic season of Covid-19, which is involving us deep down into the fibers of our being human. It is precisely with the magnifying glass offered by this historical contingency that I would like to go back through the human, spiritual, ethical, and civil experience that the encyclical urges us.

On the evening of March 27, 2020, during the peak of the coronavirus deaths, Pope Francis, alone at St. Peter's Square, under a dark sky, full of water, squeezed between the miraculous Crucifix of St. Marcellus of Corso and Our Lady Salus Populi Romani reminded us, globally, that we are all in the same boat; we are one big human family looking for a new balance to inhabit the earth that hosts us responsibly. We all seek together with a sustainable development that contrasts the "culture of waste."

The adventure, therefore, is even more stimulating precisely in times of coronavirus. The pandemic shows us once again how powerful were the words of the Pope who already five years ago highlighted the risk of globalizing indifference and the strong interconnection between the natural environment and the survival of the



inhabitants and at the same time offered an antidote in the reference, or rather in the conversion to the "Creator who can say to each of us: "Before forming you in the womb, I knew you" (Jer 1:5)". (LS 65).

'Every coin always has two sides. Some of its expressions have won formidable attention, becoming real paradigms for reflection and comparison: "integral ecology" (to which the entire chapter IV is dedicated), *"everything is connected"* (LS 117 & 138), *"there are not two separate crises, one environmental and another social, but a single and complex social-environmental crisis"* (LS 139). Unfortunately, it ended up in journalistic fashion slogans, with the risk of trivializing their very meaning.

Even an encyclical can remain a victim of the culture of the disposable and sensationalism.

It is well known that every encyclical was not created to embellish libraries. In fact, through interdisciplinary hermeneutics - LS itself suggests the interdisciplinary methodology of knowledge and knowledge to be combined with the practice of discernment - should be translated into constructive action.

It is not merely a "green" encyclical, as it has often been too quickly robbed, but a message that places the social concern, "of conscience," of the Church at the center.

The biggest challenge to take up, really putting the LS itself into practice, is to analyze reality and act integrally.



To better clarify the concept of an integral approach, it is good to ask practical questions. According to the logic that structures LS, will a pro-life team be able, perhaps, to disinterest in ecology? Whoever fights against the trafficking of animals at risk of extinction will be able to disregard the poor, the trafficking of people, the destruction of a human being, abortion? Who practices the criterion of reality, which implies accepting one's existence as a gift from God, can do without appreciating one's body in its femininity or masculinity to be able to recognize oneself in the encounter with the other who is different from oneself? Can those who promote the family, based on marriage between man and woman, remain indifferent to questions concerning the functioning of neighborhood communities, the city, democracy? Will those who are Christian and militant for integral ecology be able to ignore the importance of celebration, prayer, and Christian spirituality?

Knowledge of LS makes it easier, but not simpler to answer questions because everything is connected to it. For LS, there can be no serious and convinced concern for the environment without sincere love for human beings and a constant commitment to the problems of society.

In this luster, the encyclical has received great 'secular' recognition: first at the Universal Food Expo in Milan, in June 2015, but also during the 21st Conference in Paris on climate change (30 November-11 December 2015).

But, in these five years, we can above all say that the Church itself has grown together with the LS.

LS has stimulated the birth of ecclesial initiatives for the protection of the environment on a regional or national level, or the creation of places and programs to experience integral ecology. It has inspired proposals for finance attentive to energy transition and initiatives of spirituality, such as the annual Season of Creation (September 1 - October 4). It has innovated the cornerstones of religious piety, since the care of the common house has been included among the works of mercy and is the theme of the

annual World Day of Prayer on September 1.

The special synod for the Amazon region.

Limiting attention to ecclesial processes of global significance, the path of the Special Synod for the Amazon region stands out. It has a direct link with the LS, evident from the subtitle "New Paths for the Church and Integral Ecology." Its fruit, in the formulation given in the post-synodal exhortation *Querida Amazonia* (QA), is four dreams - social, cultural, ecological and ecclesial - that trace a path of concretization of integral ecology capable of questioning the whole world: "in this historical moment, the Amazon challenges us to overcome limited perspectives, pragmatic solutions that remain closed in partial aspects of the great questions, to seek broader and more courageous ways." (QA, 105).

The youth synod.

The encyclical had given space to the concern for intergenerational justice and the risk that the current pace of consumption threatens the opportunities of future generations, as well as recognizing the ecological sensitivity of young people, the commitment of some of them, and the demand for change that they are carrying. (cfr ad es. LS, 13 & 209). Just as the LS begins with contemplation of the beauty of creation and the cry of the earth and the poor for the evils they suffer, so the Church's concern for the young is born of listening to the questions they ask her, and sometimes of their real cry. If the encyclical proposes care as the basic attitude to be taken towards the common home, caring for each young person is the intention at the basis of the synodal process, which takes the form of accompaniment as an action of the ecclesial community.

The Document on Human Brotherhood

Dialogue is the link that most links the LS to the process that led to the drafting of the Document on Human Brotherhood for World Peace and Common Coexistence, signed on February 4, 2019, in Abu Dhabi by

"The majority of the inhabitants of the planet declare themselves believers, and this should push religions to enter into a dialogue between them oriented to the care of nature, to the defense of the poor, to the construction of a network of respect and fraternity" (LS, 201).

Pope Francis and Ahmad al-Tayyib, great imam of Al-Azhar, the mosque-university of Cairo. What the encyclical expresses directly in the political sphere, finds here a declination in the inter-religious sphere: "The majority of the inhabitants of the planet declare themselves believers, and this should push religions to enter into a dialogue between them oriented to the care of nature, to the defense of the poor, to the construction of a network of respect and fraternity" (LS, 201). Integral ecology does not fear diversity and pluralism, but enhances its richness, recognizing the imprint of the Creator's project.

Although the Church, in its institutional dimension, has perseveringly continued in these five years to relaunch the link between LS and all the other ecclesial initiatives, it must be said, however, that LS has been less valued in its overall impact, especially concerning integral ecology, of which it is the promoter, and to its method of discernment. LS cannot be reduced only to the individual points dealt with, such as climate, food, water, and the circular economy, even if they are essential.

I would like to present, without claiming to be exhaustive, some aspects of pregnant themes, which I believe have not been adequately understood, but above all have not been pervasively applied in the lives of all men of goodwill and which identify the twofold cause of their unspecified realization: a) a glance towards the HIGH (dimension of TRANSPARENCY: from I to GOD), supported, unfortunately, by b) a cynical glance towards the INNER (dimension of INTERIORITY: from MY TO OURSELF).



Fecundity of the method of discernment, as far as ecological justice is concerned

Faced with the serious problem of the ecological crisis, involving a question of justice not only about the fate of the planet, the rights of future generations, the "cry of the poor" but also concerning the future of the whole of humanity - connected with that of the environment - and in the face of a striking lack of thought and adequate culture, Pope Francis intends to offer a method of discernment, articulated according to the moments of seeing, judging, acting and celebrating. In this way, he makes available interpretative categories that are capable of establishing a more relevant anthropological and ethical evaluation.

It highlights first of all that human fulfillment in God, especially today, implies an integral ecology, thus underlining that in every person, there is a vocation (LS 217). Each person is called to growth, inevitably characterized by an integral, sustainable, inclusive human development. In LS, as a consequence, the first moral principle, that is, human fulfillment is put in ecological terms. This is not a plus of ethical, social, economic, and cultural commitments extrinsic to our moral being, to human fullness in Christ. Human beings are marked and intimately structured by a vocation to the care and custody of creation, beyond despotic anthropocentrism. They have been conceived by God and redeemed by Christ, called in Him to participate in the generation of "new heavens and a new earth," overcoming the destructive attacks underway, managing creation not as absolute masters but as wise stewards. Persons and peoples achieve their human fulfillment also through the care of the common home, collaborating to ensure that creation achieves the end for which it was set up: for humanity, certainly, but above all for the glory of God.

Again thanks to the method of discernment, outlined in the LS, Pope Francis qualifies the specificity of the contribution of believers in the solution to the ecological crisis by virtue of the convictions of their faith (LS 62ff) and, with this, highlights the theological, anthropological and ethical bases of the demands of justice implied therein. Believers have high motives, more than merely human, which lead them to seek hermeneutical and critical tools capable of providing relevant and effective solutions.

The non-recognition of man's surplus - as happens, for example, in the theories that disperse him in the biotic community - makes all moral discourse impossible, especially concerning the relationships of justice, which are involved in the relationship between God, creation, and person. If the anthropological and ethical parameters of the relationship with the environment were lost, absorbing the person into a vitalistic whole, it would be impossible to speak of ecological ethics and, consequently, of environmental ethics in terms of justice. This, according to Francis, finds its justification and conjugation foundations in the primacy of human ecology over environmental ecology (LS 155), as well as in the first moral principle, in the ecological field, which is integral ecology itself.

Justice cannot be concretely achieved without being articulated with the common good in mind, seen and thought out in close connection with the first moral principle of integral ecology. This postulates an analysis, a judgment, planning, in view of integral solutions. Put differently, environmental problems must be considered inseparably both by human, family, work, urban and rural contexts, by the common good of the human family, and by justice between generations. It is not possible to achieve an integral ecology without the common good, and vice versa. In other words, it is not possible to pursue integral ecology without intergenerational solidarity, the promotion, and protection of social ethics, institutions, and laws, which can primarily promote human ecology.

Multiple levels of justice

It is clear from the analysis of the guidelines and actions offered by the LS that, concerning the solution of the ecological crisis, there are more levels of justice, and that more than one level of justice is involved: supranational, national and local.

Such a framework urges believers and people of goodwill to engage in permanent dialogue and to commit themselves to several action plans. In this respect, one cannot fail to note the multiple responsibilities that affect all actors, not excluding religious communities and their various educational settings. Despite numerous commendable initiatives, much remains to be done. Perhaps it may seem naive, in a context in which there is still a lack of sufficient commitment at the grassroots level, to urge the Catholic Church not to renounce training people, so that they may be present, with competence and with the inspiration that characterizes them, also at the level of multilateral relations.

In the context of international and national policies, what Pope Francis says about legality and justice is of particular importance. (LS 164ss).

To influence decision-making processes, civil society must be able to organize itself into movements that cultivate new lifestyles, which bring together consumers in the promotion of collective goods through "portfolio choices." We must not lose hope in the effectiveness of small everyday gestures. It is necessary to invest in a great educational work (LS 209ff) because it is not possible to live legality without a good life. Ecological education is based on an adequate critical sense of the idols of technocracy and financial capitalism. In particular, a Christian ecological spirituality, capable of offering high and permanent motivation for constructive action, is urgently needed.

Discernment and "celebrating": the realism of integral ecology

The method of discernment, proposed by Pope Francis, also includes the moment of celebration (LS 233ff).



Such a moment, indicated in the last sentence, is not, however, to be considered marginal. In reality, in the body of the encyclical, such a moment is central and, in a certain way, original, structuring the other moments because of the emergence and importance of the more specific and innovative aspects of the whole discourse on integral ecology depends on it. In the life of the believer, the moment of celebration is not only the point of arrival of life but also the point of departure. Ultimately, the originality of LS erupts from the Christian experience of receiving, celebrating, and witnessing the mystery of the Incarnation, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, who assumes humanity and the universe to transfigure them with his love, to make them a "new creation." It is from participation in the mystery of the recapitulation of all things in Christ that the realist hermeneutics of the relationship between God, cosmos, and person, ecological conversion, universal fraternity, the primacy of human ecology over environmental ecology, the global truth of integral ecology, the poignancy of a transcendent humanism, prejudicial to the overcoming of the paradigm of technocracy and the idolatry of money, as well as of a consumerist and rapacious development, development, are strengthened.



For the Christian experience, all creatures find their true meaning in the Incarnate Word. The Son of God, by becoming a man in everything similar to us, has incorporated into his person part of the material universe and has introduced into it a seed of definitive transformation. In the Eucharistic Bread, creation is directed towards its divinization, towards unification with the Creator himself. Participation in the Eucharist makes it possible to heal the relationship of human beings with God, with themselves, with every other 'you,' with the whole of creation (LS 236). With the celebration of the Eucharist - the new Covenant - the Trinitarian imprint scattered throughout the universe ('semina Verbi')

with the creation and disfigured by sin is restored and strengthened.

Corresponding to our vocation to the care and development of creation, therefore, we must consider ourselves missionaries of integral ecology (LS 3). It is not enough to take an interest in the climate, drinking water, renewable energies, the circular economy, or anything else separately from the rest, to call ourselves ecologists according to the spirit of LS. One would risk reductionism, sectorialism, losing sight of a global vision. We must act and educate integrally in the light of equally integral ecology. Only in this way can the important encyclical of Pope Francis be fully appreciated and brought to life.



Help us to make our response effective.. Donate to CADIS emergency fund

DEUTSCHE BANK with the Account Name of
Fondazione Camillian Disaster Service
International – CADIS
Piazza della Maddalena, 53 – 00186 Roma
IBAN: IT13T 03104 03202 000000840270
BIC-SWIFT: DEUTITM1582
CODICE FISCALE : 97871950586