

Berlin, 16 November, 2017 – International Conference

Christliche Sozialethik im Digitalen Zeitalter

Christian Social Ethics in the Digital Age

Opening Words

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In a long interview about Politics and Society, recently published in book form, French journalist Dominique Wolton insistently asks Pope Francis why the Catholic Church doesn't say much about the ethics of communication in our intensely intercommunicated world. The Holy Father admits that probably much more should be said in a field where believers in Jesus Christ have a wonderful, a monumental heritage: we are talking about understanding persons as *subjects* – in a world where only *objects* seem to matter –, about *my* unique capacity as a person to recognize *you* as a person. Dimensions which seem to disappear from our family life – everybody looking at a smart phone instead of talking to each other – or from company relationships, where people are often accounted for as tools which can be used and let down when not useful anymore.

To reflect on these urgent questions is precisely what the *Centesimus Annus pro Pontifice* Foundation is trying to do, here as well as in previous meetings in Madrid (last January), the Vatican (May), Turin (last September), and also in New York next March. Many of us have a business background, and thus know about the huge new possibilities and growth opportunities in the present technological revolution. We also know how difficult it is sometimes for companies to change and convert a large part of their personnel to the new ways of working and to the unknown evolution of future jobs. But the question is not only technical or economic, it is also about perception, culture, anthropology and the organisation of society.

I feel very proud and honoured to open this conference and would like in the first place to congratulate our colleague on the Board of the Foundation, Dr Dr Thomas Rusche and the whole team of CAPP Germany for setting up a very exciting program. May I also express special greetings to ... (check against delivery)

And now I am very happy to declare this conference open and to cede the floor to His Excellency Archbishop Eterovic, Apostolic Nuncio in Germany.