

Embargo until 4.30 pm, Thursday, May 18, 2017



FONDAZIONE CENTESIMUS ANNUS
PRO PONTIFICE

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE

“THE HORIZON”

The 4th industrial revolution is under way. New innovative business models, advanced digital technologies are being developed. Acknowledging this new reality the Milan Group of the Centesimus Annus pro Pontifice Foundation drafted its contribution to the first session of the Conference addressing the theme “*Confronting youth unemployment, education, skills and opportunities in the digital era*” on the first day of the international conference on “*Constructive alternatives at a time of global turmoil. Jobs and human dignity in the digital era. Incentives to solidarity and civic virtue*”, May 18 and 19, New Synod Hall and Palazzo della Cancelleria (Vatican City).

A new vision of industry. The paper, drawing on practical business experience, notes: “Organizational models, roles and traditional skills in big companies are no longer able to provide effective answers to the changes imposed by technology”. We are entering an era of industrial craftsmanship that combines characteristics typical of an industrial society and old time artisan skills. Within an industrial cycle, be it physical or virtual, individuals will have the means and opportunity to contribute their knowledge, skills and originality.”

Cooperation and synergy. Reality tells us that “customers are radically changing their relationship with the companies they are dealing with, the definition and development of products and services. The term *codesign* is being used more and more frequently. Many roles, both in production and servicing, once at the bottom of an overtiered organization, are now front line and become vital to success. The traditional value chain around which our businesses used to be organized is no longer adequate. Processes must be reviewed and radically changed, focusing on the contribution of individuals acting in cooperation with other employees even from no matter which organizational unit. **This the basis of industrial craftsmanship**”

Interpersonal relations are fundamental. “Of course all big changes involve risks, first of all that the employee instead of providing innovative leadership may become again an exploited cog” The paper warns that “it is essential to understand and anticipate these phenomena, develop industrial and economic models based on the principles of the **Social Doctrine of the Church.**” Many such principles must be retrieved, highlighted and promoted: solidarity and subsidiarity, workers participation, cooperation, the concept of fair profit, etc. The section of the Encyclical **Laudato Si** that deals with work can be of help. Pope Francis states that “underlying every form of

work is a concept of the relationship which we can and must have with what is other than ourselves.” **Therefore the challenge lies in how interpersonal relations are set.** This is fertile ground because there is a strong desire for true humanity at the roots of many of the new models being developed. “We must also stress the concept that in the digital era fair appreciation of an individual’s contribution, that eschews exploitation, translates into notable competitive and economic advantages”.

Virtuous examples. Let us think, for instance, of *peer to peer lending* organizations, often born out of solidarity and the need for mutual aid in communities that have poor access to credit. *Crowdfunding*, where entrepreneurs, mostly young ones, pledge in advance to buy a product allowing a nascent business, that does not have seeding capital, to reach its initial target and begin expanding. A *sharing economy*, capable of responding to crises and declining demand for goods and services through the promotion of forms of consumption based on re-use instead of purchase and access rather than ownership, exploiting the full potential of new technologies.

Communities of persons. Dynamic and relying on a mutual approach, these communities have as their founding value the concept of sharing and mutual trust. In consumerist and materialistic societies sharing is seen as a diminution: if I share I give up something. On the contrary if I share something with a community I put it at the disposal of all its members, without losing anything, and create new value for me and for others.

Contamination and generational pact. Given the changes that are occurring, the economic system cannot possibly function at two different speeds, two separate modes: the traditional one, doomed to a slow and progressive decline, and that of the digital economy. To give just value to the human person it is necessary to develop a mechanism of contamination between the two modes, to multiply the opportunities of creating mutual value. In particular traditional systems would greatly benefit from borrowing ideas from the digital economy (organizational models, knowhow and new tools); the latter would benefit from the managerial experience of traditional businesses. The value that would be created by a generational pact, a convergence of innovation and experience, is just as obvious.

Accreditation

Press and media operators who wish to attend the Conference should fill and mail the form available online in the accreditation section of the Holy See’s Press Room website: press.vatican.va/accreditamenti

Accreditations can be collected at the Holy See’s Press Room, via della Conciliazione 54, Monday to Saturday 11.00 – 13.00.

Holders of permanent accreditation should follow the usual procedure.

All applications must be received within 48 hours from the event.

For special conditions or accreditation problems email accreditamenti@salastampa.va or call +39 06 698921 (Monday through Friday, 11.00 to 13.00).

For further information contact the Foundation's press office: Costantino Coros, +39 393 9396689, corospres@gmail.com

N.B. No media coverage on Saturday, May 20