

**Reinhard Cardinal Marx, Archbishop of Munich and Freising / Chairman of the jury of the International “Society and Economy” Award of the *Centesimus Annus – Pro Pontifice* Foundation:**

**Laudatio for the winners of the International Award of the Pontifical Foundation *Centesimus annus – Pro Pontifice 2021***

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*Spoken word applies.*

As chairman of the jury of the International "Society and Economy" Award of the *Centesimus Annus - Pro Pontifice* Foundation, I am happy to present today, on this solemn occasion, the winners of the fifth edition of the award.

Among 30 works submitted from 13 countries and 4 continents, it is my special pleasure to announce that this time the jury has chosen the texts of two Jesuits as winners of the prestigious International Book Award:

- Patrick Riordan, *Recovering Common Goods*, Dublin, Veritas 2017 (166 pp.).

and

- Jaime Tatay, *Ecología integral. La recepción católica del reto de la sostenibilidad. 1891 (RN)[Rerum Novarum] – 2015 (LS) [Laudato sì]*, Madrid, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos BAC 2018 (566 pp.).

1.

Patrick Riordan received in 1981 a MA from the Hochschule für Philosophie in Munich and in 1985 a doctorate in philosophy from the University of Innsbruck. For many years he taught political philosophy at Heythrop College, University of London. He is now Senior Fellow of Political Philosophy and Catholic Social Thought at Campion Hall, University of Oxford.

Riordan was a student when Paul VI published the *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, which had a huge impact on him. The Pope insisted on the fact that evangelization calls for conversion not only of individuals, but of collective consciences. This was the starting point for his study on the notion of common good.

He has already published three books on the common good, addressed primarily to specialists or students of Political Philosophy<sup>1</sup>. In the book we are awarding today, *Recovering Common Goods*, Professor Riordan offers a synthesis of his teaching. This book is a lighter, although interesting, publication without footnotes and with abundant examples and references to everyday life. Riordan links his philosophical analysis with reflections on the Gospels and on the Scriptures, and with many insights from the Catholic social teaching. One of the founding principles of this book is indeed that the concept of common good, despite being a key element of Catholic social teaching, is not an exclusive Catholic possession.

In the book Riordan offers two important contributions: First, he explains the notion of common good and indicates some difficulties around it. Secondly, he expresses the importance of this notion for an adequate approach to the different dimensions of our life: economy, human rights, democracy, education, and politics (exemplified by a reflection on the European Union).

What is the common good? Following Aristotle, Riordan indicates two general criteria to define it. First of all, for it to be *common*, it cannot exclude anybody from partaking in it: a common good does not admit discrimination. Moreover, to be really a *good*, it cannot systematically exclude or denigrate any genuine dimension of humanity. The concept of common good implies therefore a certain reference to human nature. In *Populorum progressio* Paul VI summed up these two criteria affirming that the pursuit of the common good involves “the development of each man and of the whole man” (PP 14).

Many people today accuse the concept of common good to be empty or vague. Riordan argues instead that this concept is open and programmatic, “naming something we are still in the process of discovering”. This observation becomes very clear if we contemplate the reality that the Christian tradition identified with the common good: the vision of the Lord face-to-face in heaven. This is clearly a goal which “no eye has yet seen, nor ear heard, something beyond our wildest dreams and imaginings, the good that God has prepared for his people” (1 Cor 2,9). Following Riordan, this openness is true not only of the religious concept of common good, but also of the economic and political good.

Another interesting observation of Riordan about the common good in the Catholic social thought involves the shift that Pope John XXIII made in *Mater et Magistra*. John XXIII did not speak anymore of the common good as the ultimate goal of human striving, but rather as the

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<sup>1</sup> *A Politics of the Common Good* (1996); *A Grammar of the Common Good* (2008); *Global Ethics and Global Common Goods* (2015).

totality of “all those social conditions which favor the full development of human personality” (MM 65), that is to say peace, justice, well fare. Riordan is however profoundly convinced that this shift causes some confusion: whoever wills the end wills also the means.

How is the concept of common good relevant today? Riordan dedicates six very interesting chapters to six different fields. I will mention here two of them:

- First, the field of economy. It seems that, generally speaking, economy works if everyone pursues his own private good. Karl Marx rightly highlighted the huge injustices present in capitalist society, but his answer to the problem, the communist solution, does not work. What solution does Riordan propose? He suggests to start from a proper reading of Adam Smith. Smith indeed did not think that the market automatically produces the best outcome for everyone, but that only a *competitive* market can do that. Cartels and monopolies, on the contrary, destroy the market. “The tendency towards monopoly, the interest of the merchants in artificially increasing their own rewards from the market, must be resisted. So Smith argued that the public authorities must take steps to oblige the merchants to compete” (p. 79). This insight of Smith is regularly repeated by the Popes. Pius XI wrote: “Free competition, and especially economic domination, must be kept within definite and proper bounds, and must be brought under effective control of the public authority, in matters pertaining to the latter’s competence” (QA 110). Injustices in our societies are not so much the result of individual greed, but rather of the absence of a “disciplined regime in which greed might be kept in check and the pursuit of genuine goods for all could be fostered” (p. 93).
- A second field I wish to reference today is political community. Riordan devotes his last chapter to the European Community and to the phenomenon of Brexit. In the last decades we observe everywhere the growth of nationalist movements appealing to national sovereignty. It seems to become more and more common to look out only for personal and national interests. On the contrary however, many politicians argue that belonging to the European Union is beneficial. The question arises: is the European Community a community of interests or of values? Of deals or of ideals? Riordan answers that the two alternatives are not exclusive. Values are always at stake in the interests pursued by people. Politicians also have the great responsibility of highlighting the inherent values of international communities, even when these communities are less

than perfect. To work for their perfection is to assume one's responsibility for the international community and for the single country. "The Brexit decision did not arise out of thin air: it was the result of decades of neglect by the political establishment in the UK that had never seriously engaged with the positive values of the EU" (p. 149).

These few examples should illustrate why I recommend reading *Recovering common goods* by Prof. Patrick Riordan. Reading this book, we can understand better why the notion of common good is so fundamental for the Catholic Social Teaching.

2.

The second winner of the Book Award is Jaime Tatay Nieto, with his research *Ecología Integral. La recepción católica del reto de la sostenibilidad, 1891 (RN) – 2015 (LS)*, Madrid, BAC, 2018:

Jaime Tatay is a Jesuit too. He studied Forest Engineering at the University of Lleida (Spain), received a bachelor's degree in Moral Theology at Boston College and a Doctorate in Theology at the Pontifical University Comillas in Madrid, where he now teaches Theology, Ethics and Sustainability.

While the book of Riordan treats an everlasting principle of social life – the common good –, the book of Tatay focusses on an ever more urgent issue: the ecological problem. Whoever has opened a newspaper in the last years is confronted with the problem of climate change. Germany, for example, suffered this summer under extreme heavy rains, which caused nearly 200 deaths. Natural disasters are increasing everywhere in the world.

Four years ago, the *Foundation Centesimus annus – Pro Pontifice* awarded a German book on this same topic: Markus Vogt, *Prinzip Nachhaltigkeit. Ein Entwurf aus theologisch-ethischer Perspektive*. The book of Vogt appeared before Francis's encyclical *Laudato si'*. His final intent was systematic: the promotion and explanation of the principle of sustainability. Vogt is indeed one of the most important scholars of this principle.

The research of Tatay comes instead after the publication of *Laudato si'*. His main question revolves around the sources of Pope Francis's reflection on ecology and the method that guides his thought. Tatay's response to this question is, in many regards, encyclopedic:

- A first aspect worth noting is the multiplicity of literary sources in his analysis. We can find all the papal pronouncements on ecological themes, from *Rerum Novarum* (1891)

to the encyclical *Laudato si* of Pope Francis in 2015, as well as all the most important pronouncements of bishops and episcopal conferences, the important studies of the Pontifical Accademia of Sciences and the contribution of other Pontifical Councils. We also find the important pronouncements of other Christian Churches, the Orthodox Churches, the World Council of Churches, the Evangelical Environmental Network and the Anglican Communion. Tatay illustrates that the ecological preoccupation has been in the last decades an important occasion for ecumenical dialogue: a few months ago for example, on September 7<sup>th</sup>, the Holy Father signed a joint document for the protection of Creation together with His Holiness Bartholomew I, Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople, and His Grace Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury.

The mentioned documents and deliberations are interpreted in light of the most important moments of the philosophical and political reflection on ecology, in particular the ecological conferences organized by the United Nations: Stockholm 1972, Rio de Janeiro 1992, Johannesburg 2002, Rio+20 and the 20<sup>th</sup> Global Climate Summit of 2016. In facing the ecological problem, the Church established a dialogue with everyone. Following the not merely deductive method indicated by John XXIII, in *Mater et magistra*, with the formula “look, judge, act”<sup>2</sup>, the first step, *looking*, requires a dialogue with a multitude of actors. The second step is *judging*. The ecological problem is important and urgent, but not every proposition to resolve it is acceptable. The Church criticizes, above all, the pantheistic ecology of New Age Movements, which contradicts the biblical vision of the centrality of the human being. Pope Francis insists repeatedly on this point: “there can be no ecology without an adequate anthropology” (*Laudato si*, 118).

- Another aspect of the encyclopedic character of Tatay’s book is the multiplicity of ecological issues he touches upon. In recent years we have witnessed a continuous shift of problems. Until the ’60s, people faced the pollution of some geographical areas and the possible depletion of finite resources; in the ’60s we assisted to the growing conscience of the dangers of nuclear war and of using nuclear energy; in more recent years we became aware of the dangerous loss of biodiversity and of climate change. In the future we can already glimpse at the danger of an irresponsible use of nanotechnology and bioengineering.

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<sup>2</sup> John XXIII, *Mater et magistra*, 236.

Based on his historical analysis of the genesis of the Church's conscience of ecological problem, in the second part of the book Tatay reads pope Francis's encyclical *Laudato si'*. In the first place he is looking for extra-ecclesial sources of this text: the contribution of science; the contribution of philosophers like Romano Guardini; the secular reflection on environmental ethics; the international agreements, conventions and declarations; the ecumenical and interreligious dialogue. He then highlights the ecclesial sources of *Laudato si'*: the biblical citations; the reference to prior papal teaching; other reference to the great tradition of the Church; the contribution of local Christian experiences and actions, with special regard to theology of liberation and the Argentine theology of the People.

Tatay's book, with his historical overview, highlights in a very unique way the capacity of the Catholic social magisterium to dialogue with extra-ecclesial actors. In Tatay's view, integrating the ecological problem in the Catholic Social Teaching is not only a thematic extension, but also a methodological one: it implies the dialogue between many actors inside and outside the Church.

This book is a precious resource for those who wish today to deepen their understanding of the ecological problem.

3.

In this sixth edition of the International Award, the Foundation has instituted and granted for the first time two Scholarships for the study and application of new models of socio-economic development which, in line with the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church, have to be inclusive, supportive and sustainable. This initiative was generously supported by Arca Fondi SGR SpA, Banca Popolare di Sondrio, Federazione Lombarda delle Banche di Credito Cooperativo and UBI Banca.

Among the applications coming from 5 countries and 4 continents the Jury has selected the work of two Italian scholars: Erminia Florio and Sofia Horsfall.

Erminia Florio studies at HED Montréal, where she is completing a research with the title *The effect of information campaigns on student's intention to migrate. Evidence from Senegal*.

She is member of the *Sophia Cooperation*, which, cooperating with the *Migrantes Foundation*, works on developing programs to raise awareness on the issue of migration. Since 2020 *Sophia Cooperation* has been implementing a program in Senegalese high schools informing students about the dangers of irregular migration and illustrating the proper opportunities to migrate.

Sophia is collaborating with the Diocese of Dakar and the National Ministry of Education to implement this program in Senegal.

In her exposé Dr. Florio points out that “The Social Doctrine of the Church strongly emphasizes the importance of freedom for humans which goes beyond the national borders. For potential migrants from the main origin countries, one can consider this right to freedom as the right to choose whether to leave or stay. Pope Francis, in his encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* (All Brothers) recognizes the right to dream of a better future, but what this better future is shall be consciously decided by potential migrants.” She continues: “Too often they leave being unaware of the dangers of the journey and having high expectations from destination countries (e.g., Europe and North America). Sadly, – says the Pope referring to migrants – some ‘are attracted by Western culture, sometimes with unrealistic expectations that expose them to grave disappointments. Unscrupulous traffickers, frequently linked to drug cartels or arms cartels, exploit the weakness of migrants, who too often experience violence, trafficking, psychological and physical abuse and untold sufferings on their journey’. [...] For this reason, ‘there is also a need to reaffirm the right not to emigrate, that is, to remain in one’s homeland’ (Pope Francis, 2020). This may be achieved through information campaigns showing the real conditions and the risks linked to the journey and the opportunities at home vs. abroad. The aim of these campaigns is to provide the migrants with the instruments to make a choice which is truly free and respectful of their aspirations, dreams, talents, namely the best they might achieve for both themselves and their communities.”

Sofia Horsfall, the second winner of the Scholarship, studies at Sapienza University of Rome. Her project’s title is *The role of financial institutions in promoting ESG integration towards an holistic impact assessment*. She will deepen the connection between environmental, social and corporate aspects in economic life.

In the fourth chapter of *Laudato si* Pope Francis invites us to start thinking in terms of an “integral ecology”, that is to say, an “environmental, economic and social ecology”, because “All things are connected” (*Laudato si*, 138). In the long run, the economy will not flourish without a healthy environment and without resolving the issue of poverty. This is equally true for the other two dimensions: it will be impossible to safeguard the environment without a functioning economy and without offering everyone the opportunity to develop their gifts. In a similar way, the problem of poverty cannot be tackled with a weak economy and without proper care for the environment.

The aim of the research of Sofia Horsfall is to contribute to the debate on the measures of social and environmental impacts, specifically on the possible ways to enhance the capacity to measure and to forecast impacts; this is still underdeveloped on both theoretical and empirical grounds. Her goal is to provide methodological insights for the adoption and diffusion of reliable impact assessment frameworks, as ways for incorporating into any economic action or decision the positive and negative externalities generated on society as a whole.