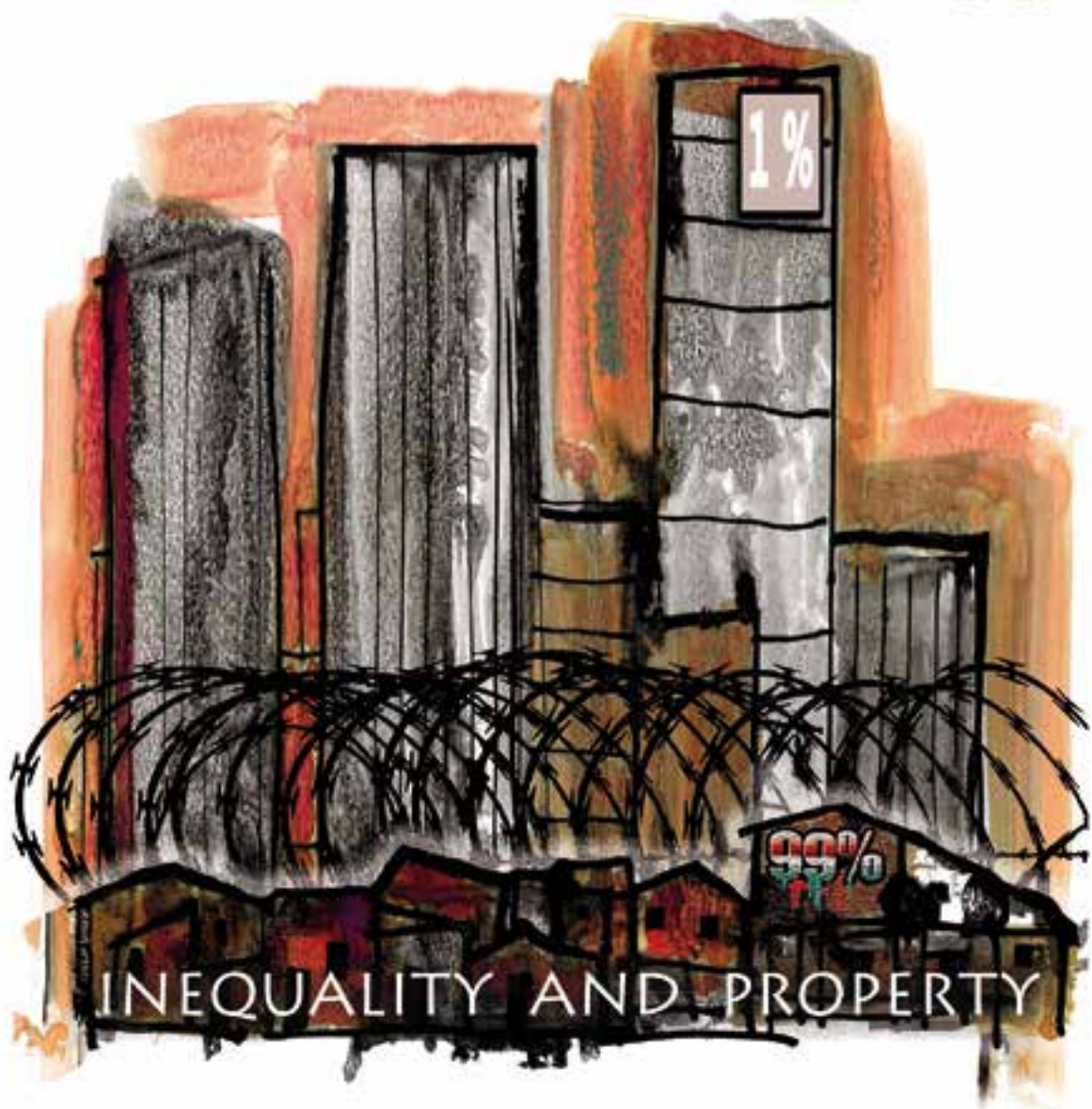


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Agenda

2016







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# Holistic Vision of our World-wide Latin American Agenda 2016

Translation by Justiniano Liebl

It is very interesting, how the theme for our 2016 Latin American Agenda is getting to be so aurant. Theoretical economists, renowned thinkers, social institutions, observers and opinion commentators, agree in their conclusions: for several decades social inequality in the world is reaching unsuspected heights and approaching levels of danger. It is an extremely urgent theme for our day.

Moreover, from what we might call the broad secular sectors of Latin American Liberation Theology, the issue runs deeply and transversally through its concern for human equality in society, including also economic equality, which means to assume a global concern: to question oneself about the possibility of a fundamental infrastructure for all those other basic values for which we struggle: justice, reduction of poverty and exploitation, the exercise of human rights and freedom. Perhaps the environmental concerns, which without failure we will address the coming year would vary only a wee bit away from this approach. So in our Agenda, "Equality" is the practically transcendental transverse axis, as has been fundamental to revolutionaries of every era – it's a matter of revolutionary tradition! So that's where we are headed.

Inevitably, convinced by history, ours will always be the Latin- American method to see - judge - and act.

For SEEING, we begin with a quick overlook of world-wide poverty and inequality -- and we are well satisfied, that there is an adequate amount of good materials available to clarify the issue.

For JUDGING the situation once clarified, we recur to recognized thinkers on and beyond our continent, to illuminate our reflection.

Some "hot spots" or suggestive cases carry us over into ACTING as we try to suggest conclusions, point out directions and clear paths -- but it's really up to every community, group or person to find the most adequate and applicable actions for their concrete situations.

With this issue of The Agenda we round out the 25 years of our Silver Jubilee.

We do it humbly, without any pomp or ostentation, but just faithfully celebrating our annual sharing with our readers -- constructors of the Great Homeland, already living in the World-wide Homeland and headed for the Supreme Fatherland...

Once again we have to admit: we don't consider our Agenda as discovering anything new when we are confronted with the prospect of such broad and deeply human issues. .. It simply continues in the line of it's charisma: to promote change in awareness, to help change our software, spread new "visions" that could lead to some new concrete

## THE AGENDA PLACES ALSO THESE RESOURCES AT YOUR DISPOSITION!

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practices and strategies. It's our "working capital" – the capital of the poor: penetrating analysis, critical awareness, creative hope, a boundless utopian courage for a conscience-raising militancy like that possessed by so many of our martyrs and companions battling to build the Great Homeland, the World-wide Homeland.

The following year, 2017, we hope to dedicate to the theme of "Integral Ecology". We already touched upon this issue in 2010, with an edition whose materials were very well received. The ecological situation of our Planet Earth has not improved, and

we are already hearing world-wide new emergency calls (there's even talk of it being the "last call"). Our Agenda does not want to fall short: we will be there, joining forces with all who share this visionary conviction and feel this strong priority that can not be postponed, attempting to offer theoretical suggestions that above all lead to practical actions.

It is always the same utopia that moves us and guides us as our north star; it is only the choice of our Themes and the concrete identification of the Obstacles that vary from year to year.

Sisterly/Brotherly yours,

José María VIGIL



### **Educational Use of the Agenda**

In addition to personal use, this Agenda is designed to be a pedagogical instrument for communicators, public educators, pastoral agents, group leaders, and activists...

The texts are always brief and agile, presented under the pedagogical concept of one page, formatted so that they can be directly photocopied and distributed as "work material" in schools, group meetings, adult literacy programs, or on literature tables. They can also be published in the bulletins of organizations or in local magazines.

The format of the texts is dictated by an "economic" criterion which possibly sacrifices aesthetics in the form of white spaces and illustrations in favour of a greater volume of message. This also allows us to keep the price lower so the Agenda is more accessible.

### **Ecumenicism**

The Agenda is aconfessional, and, above all, "macroecumenical." The world of common references, beliefs, values, and utopias among peoples and men and wom-

en of good will—which Christians call "the Reign"—is shared by all who are partners in this humble, serving, brotherly, and sisterly search.

This agenda is dictated by a "total ecumenicism," not a "remainder ecumenicism." Because of this, we do not eliminate what is only Catholic or only Protestant, but we unite the two. Thus, in the list of the Saints, the Protestant and Catholic commemorations have both been included. When they do not coincide, the Protestant commemoration is in cursive. For example, the Apostle Peter is celebrated by the Catholic Church on February 22 ("the Chair of Peter"), and for the Protestant Churches on January 18 ("the Confession of Peter"); the differences can be distinguished typographically.

Kindly, the Lutheran Bishop Kent Mahler, in an earlier version of the Agenda, presented us with the "Protestant Saints."

### **A Non-Profit Work**

In many countries, this Agenda is edited by popular and non-profit organizations that use the money received from the sale of

the agenda to support their work for popular service and solidarity. These centres ensure the non-profit character of each edition.

In its central coordination, the Latin American Agenda, is also a non-profit initiative. It was born and developed without help from any agency. The money generated by the Agenda, after adequately compensating the authors who write in its pages, is dedicated to works of popular alternative communication.

*Servicios Koinonia*, permanently maintained, constantly improved, and freely accessible around the world, the "Tiempo Axial" Collection, and some of the prizes financed by the Agenda are the most well-known.

### **A Collective Agenda**

This is a collective work. Because of this, it has gotten to where it is today. We continue to gladly receive suggestions, materials, documents...

In this way, it will continue being a "collective work, a community heritage, an annual anthology of the memory and hope of our spiritual Continent."





## **CORNERED BY INEQUALITY: IT'S TIME TO WAKE UP**

"Trends in income and wealth tell a clear story: the gap between the rich and poor is wider now than ever before and is still growing, with power increasingly in the hands of an elite few" (Oxfam, *Even It Up*, p. 28). If we can read or hear that without immediately reacting strongly we need to shake our head or pinch our arm to check whether we have lost all sensitivity, and/or shame.

The growth of inequality is far from those fateful decades of the 70s and 80s of last century, when the world powers imposed the conservative revolution of Thatcher and Reagan, strangling the economies of developing countries with rising interest rates on their foreign debt, demanding the reduction of social spending in health and education, the reduction of the state itself, dismantling of the "welfare state" in Europe, promoting job insecurity and worldwide marginalization of workers, and, of course, the drowning out of popular revolutions in Latin America -- all this with the conniving of the Vatican's bureaucracy in those decades, and the disqualification of liberation theology, their theologians, their bishops and the Church of the poor.

Four decades later we are reaping the harvest: humanity is mired in the greatest inequality of its history: 85 people have wealth equivalent to the assets of the poorest half of humanity. The richest 1% of the population in the year 2016, will break its own record of assets breaching the psychological barrier of having acquired 50% of the wealth in the world -- and this isn't stopping; the other half is left to be distributed among all other humanity, the 99% of the world population. One must live to believe it.

It has been an unarmed revolution, through political power, within some structures "supposedly" at the service of free trade, so that the sheep and the wolves could freely operate within a financial system designed simply for submission to an operation of accumulating money.

Gradually, we accepted governments that are only "supposedly" democratic... They engage in a "democratic sequestering" of a society in which the people choose and confide power to the plutocrats: the poor vote for the parties of the

*Translation by Richard Renshaw & Justiniano Liebl*



rich... It is the "hegemony" of capital: the lack of awareness of the poor, the inhibition of the majority, the triumph of individualism, the anesthetic of consumerism. So evil a system could not be maintained, if it were not for apathy of a large part of the population, which has its conscience held captive beneath the hegemony that the system exerts over minds and hearts.

As in the climate change crisis, this issue has us on the edge of an abyss. History affirms that such rates of "extreme wealth" and inequality, are not sustainable for long. Theorists are already wondering why there has still not been a social explosion in societies so strikingly unequal and unjust.

What is it that keeps us docile, passively watching while the extremely wealthy -- the 1% -- continue expanding their portion of the global pie every year, squeezing all the rest of us -- the 99% -- into a shrinking little slice of that same global pie? To what percentage of the pie will the extremely wealthy have to shrink us, before we wake and decide to put an end to this situation unworthy of humanity, and decide to change the economic system that has brought us here? When will we assume effective awareness that we are the overwhelming majority -- the 99% !?

It's time to wake up because it's urgent to change the rules. Although we are in a historical time of social resurgence, those who are more awake are seeing that it's high time to react, to open eyes and raise awareness; to develop a new hegemony, -- the hegemony of human humanity; to criticize the fundamentalism of the market; the hegemony of recovering sequestered democracy. It is time to plot a new course: that of the past three decades has already proven to be unsustainable and is leading us into social explosion and planetary crisis.

It's a matter of the urgent task of raising awareness, critical thinking and resistance. It's imperative to break the spell of that hegemony; to grind it down with alternate civil practices, and be coherent with a responsible, democratic, political participation. "When the poor believe in the poor, then we can sing Freedom!" we sing in "The Salvadoran Mass". What that means today is that when, with our vote, we stop putting the most wealthy elite and their representatives into congresses and parliaments -- when we "believe in the poor and the option for the poor" and vote accordingly, then our "sequestered democracy" will be freed and we will be moving into the egalitarian and just society that both our humanity and our planet deserve. This is the Utopia worth dreaming of and struggling for.

**PEDRO CASALDÁLIGA  
AND JOSÉ MARÍA VIGIL**





# 2016 MARTYROLOGY ANNIVERSARIES

## LATIN AMERICAN MARTYRS

### 1966: 50 años

15/02: Camilo Torres, sacerdote, mártir de las luchas de liberación del pueblo, Colombia.

22/06: Manuel Larraín, obispo de Talca, Chile, presidente del CELAM, pastor del pueblo, profeta de la liberación.

### 1971: 45 años

09/06: Héctor Gallego, sacerdote colombiano, 34 años, mártir de los campesinos panameños, Santa Fe de Veraguas, Panamá.

21/08: Mauricio Lefèvre, misionero oblató canadiense, asesinado durante el golpe de Estado en Bolivia.

01/09: Julio Expósito Vitali, estudiante, 19 años, militante cristiano, mártir de las luchas del pueblo uruguayo, asesinado.

### 1976: 40 años

02/02: José Tedeschi, sacerdote obrero, mártir de los inmigrantes y favelados de Argentina, secuestrado y muerto.

05/02: Julio San Cristóbal, hermano de La Salle, detenido y desaparecido. Córdoba, Argentina.

13/02: Francisco Soares, sacerdote, mártir de la justicia entre los pobres de Argentina.

23/03: María Del Carmen Maggi, profesora universitaria, mártir de la educación liberadora, Argentina.

24/03: Golpe militar en Argentina, que provocará el desaparecimiento de 30 mil personas.

03/04: Víctor Bonchenko y Lillian Jane Coleman, de la Iglesia Evangélica de Cosquín, Córdoba, Argentina.

05/04: Juan Carlos D'Costa, asesinado bajo la dictadura, Paraguay.

06/04: Mario Schaerer, profesor contra la dictadura, Paraguay.

14/05: Beatriz Carbonell de Pérez Weiss y esposo; María Marta Vázquez Ocampo y esposo; Mónica María Candelaria Mignone, María Esther Lorusso y Mónica, en Buenos Aires.

18/05: Héctor Gutiérrez y Zelmar Michellini, políticos y militantes cristianos, mártires de las luchas del pueblo uruguayo.

16/06: Aurora Vivar Vásquez, militante cristiana, sindicalista, mártir de las luchas obreras de Perú.

04/07: Alfredo Kelly, Pedro Dufau, Alfredo Leaden, palotinos; Salvador Barbeito y José Barletti, seminaristas, Buenos Aires, mártires de la justicia.

07/07: Arturo Bernal, Labrador cristiano, dirigente de las Ligas Agrarias, muerto bajo tortura, Paraguay.

12/07: Aurelio Rueda, sacerdote, mártir de los pobres sin vivienda, Colombia.

15/07: Rodolfo Lunkenbein, misionero, y Lorenzo Simão, cacique bororo, mártires del pueblo indígena en Brasil.

17/07: Mártires obreros del ingenio Ledesma, Argentina.

18/07: Carlos de Dios Murias y Gabriel Longueville, sacerdotes, La Rioja, mártires de la justicia, Argentina.

25/07: Wenceslao Pedernera, campesino, dirigente del Movimiento Rural Diocesano, mártir, en La Rioja, Argentina.

04/08: Enrique Angelelli, obispo de La Rioja, mártir. Argentina.

16/08: Coco Erbetta, catequista, universitario, mártir de las luchas del pueblo argentino.

01/09: Inés Adriana Cobo, militante de la Iglesia Metodista, mártir de la Causa de los pobres, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

03/09: Ramón Pastor Bogarín, obispo, fundador de la Universidad de Asunción, profeta de la Iglesia en Paraguay.

24/09: Marlene Kegler, estudiante y obrero, mártir de la fe y del servicio entre los universitarios de La Plata, Argentina.

04/10: Omar Venturelli, mártir de la dedicación a los más pobres, en Temuco, Chile.

11/10: Marta González de Baronetto y compañeros, mártires de la fe y del servicio, Córdoba, Argentina.

12/10: João Bosco Penido Burnier, misionero jesuita con los bakaris y xavantes, mártir en Mato Grosso, Brasil.

22/10: Ernesto Lahourcade, cooperativista, mártir de la justicia en Argentina.

20/11: Guillermo Woods, sacerdote misionero, veterano del Vietnam, mártir y servidor del pueblo de Guatemala.

28/11: Liliana Esther Aimetta, militante de la Iglesia Metodista, mártir de la Causa de los pobres, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

29/11: Pablo Gazzari, sacerdote, hermanito del Evangelio, secuestrado y desaparecido, Argentina.

08/12: Ana Garófalo, militante metodista, mártir de la Causa de los Pobres, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

### 1981: 35 años

02/01: José Manuel de Souza, "Zé Piau", Labrador, víctima de los grileiros de las tierras del Pará, Brasil.

03/01: Diego Quic, indígena, catequista, líder de las organizaciones populares de Guatemala, desaparecido.

07/01: Sebastián Mearim, delegado sindical y líder rural, asesinado por pistoleros. Vista Alegre, Pará, Brasil.

15/01: Estela Pajuelo Grimani, campesina, 55 años, 11 hijos, mártir de la solidaridad, Perú.

17/01: Ana María Castillo, militante cristiana, guerrillera, mártir de la justicia en El Salvador.

17/01: Silvia Maribel Arriola, enfermera, primera religiosa mártir en el frente de combate en Centroamérica, El Salvador.

18/01: José Eduardo, líder sindicalista del Acre, Brasil, asesinado por un grileiro.

21/01: Oscar Armando Ramos, catequista, joven salvadoreño asesinado. Decía: "Monseñor Romero es mi maestro".

04/02: Masacre de Chimaltenango, Guatemala: 68 lavradores muertos.



- 14/02: Franz de Castro Holzwarth, mártir da Pastoral Carcelaria, Jacareí, SP, Brasil.
- 15/02: Juan Alonso Hernández, misionero, mártir de los campesinos indígenas de Guatemala.
- 16/02: Albino Amarilla, líder campesino y catequista, mártir del pueblo paraguayo.
- 18/03: Presentación Ponce, delegado da Palabra, y compañeros, mártires de la revolución nicaragüense.
- 18/03: Centenas de mujeres, niños y ancianos campesinos, asesinados por el ejército, en Cabañas, El Salvador.
- 14/04: Mártires de la masacre de Morazán, El Salvador: 150 niños, 600 ancianos y 700 mulheres.
- 01/05: Raynaldo Edmundo Lemus Preza, de las CEBs, y Edwin Laínez, desaparecidos en Soyapango, El Salvador.
- 14/05: Carlos Gálvez Galindo, sacerdote, mártir en Guatemala.
- 16/05: Edgar Castillo, periodista asesinado, Guatemala.
- 20/05: Pedro Aguilar Santos, sacerdote, mártir de la causa de los pobres y perseguidos de su pueblo guatemalteco.
- 09/06: Toribia Flores de Cutipa, dirigente rural, víctima de la represión de la Guardia Civil, Perú.
- 12/06: Joaquim Neves Norte, abogado del Sindicato de los Trabajadores Rurales de Naviraí, Paraná, Brasil, asesinado.
- 01/07: Tulio Maruzzo, sacerdote italiano, y Luis Navarrete, catequista, mártires en Guatemala.
- 05/07: Emeterio Toj, campesino indígena, secuestrado en Guatemala.
- 15/07: Misael Ramírez, labrador, animador de comunidades, mártir de la justicia en Colombia.
- 20/07: Massacre de Coyá, Guatemala: trescientos muertos, entre mujeres, ancianos y niños.
- 25/07: Angel Martínez Rodrigo, español, y Raúl José Lager, canadiense, catequistas misioneros, mártires en Guatemala.
- 28/07: Stanley Francis Rother, estadounidense, comprometido con los pobres, Santiago de Atitlán, Guatemala.
- 02/08: Carlos Pérez Alonso, sacerdote, defensor de la justicia, desaparecido en Guatemala.
- 11/09: Sebastiana Mendoza, indígena, catequista, mártir de la fe y de la solidaridad en El Quiché, Guatemala.
- 15/09: Pedro Pío Cortés, indígena achí, catequista, delegado de la Palabra, Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala.
- 17/09: John David Troyer, misionero menonita estadounidense, mártir de la justicia en Guatemala.
- 30/09: Honorio Alejandro Núñez, celebrador de la Palabra y seminarista, mártir de las luchas del pueblo hondureño.
- 22/10: Eduardo Capiáu, religioso belga, mártir de la solidaridad en Guatemala.
- 23/10: Marco Antonio Ayerbe Flores, universitario, Perú.
- 26/10: Ramón Valladares, secretario administrativo de la Comisión de Derechos Humanos de El Salvador, asesinado.
- 01/11: Simón Hernández, indígena achí, catequista delegado de la Palabra, campesino, Rabinal, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala.
- 01/12: Diego Uribe, sacerdote, mártir de la lucha de liberación de su pueblo, Colombia.
- 07/12: Lucio Aguirre y Elpidio Cruz, celebradores de la Palabra y mártires de la solidaridad, Honduras.
- 12/12: Masacre de El Mozote. Más de mil campesinos asesinados por el batallón Atlacat en Morazán, El Salvador.

### 1986: 30 años

- 06/01: Julio González, obispo de El Puno, *en accidente*, Perú.
- 10/02: Alberto Königsknecht, obispo, Juli, *en accidente*, Perú.
- 16/02: Mauricio Demierre, colaborador suizo, y compañeras campesinas, asesinados por la contrarrevolución, Nicaragua.
- 15/03: Antonio Chaj Solís, pastor, Manuel de Jesús Recinos y compañeros, militantes evangélicos, Guatemala.
- 25/03: Donato Mendoza, delegado de la Palabra, y compañeros, mártires de la fe entre los pobres de Nicaragua.
- 11/04: Antonio Hernández, periodista y militante popular, mártir de la solidaridad en Bogotá.
- 14/04: Adelaide Molinari, religiosa, mártir de la lucha de los marginados en Marabá, Pará, Brasil.
- 10/05: Josimo Morais Tavares, asesinado por latifundistas, mártir de la pastoral de la tierra, en Imperatriz, Brasil.
- 15/05: Nicolás Chuy Cumes, pastor evangélico y periodista, mártir de la libertad de expresión en Guatemala.
- 24/05: Ambrosio Mogorrrón, enfermero español, y compañeros campesinos, mártires de la solidaridad internacional, en San José de Bocay, Nicaragua.
- 19/06: Masacre en las cárceles de Lima, Perú.
- 06/07: Rodrigo Rojas, militante, mártir de la lucha por la democracia del pueblo chileno.
- 28/07: Los cooperantes Yvan Leyvraz (suizo), Bernad Kobersstein (alemán), y Joël Fieux (francés), asesinados por la contrarrevolución en Zompopera, Nicaragua.
- 19/09: Charlot Jacqueline y compañeros, militantes mártires de la educación liberadora para su pueblo haitiano.
- 23/10: Vilmar José de Castro, agente de pastoral y militante de la causa de la tierra, asesinado en Caçu, Goiás, Brasil.
- 28/10/1986: Mauricio Maraglio, misionero, mártir de la lucha por la tierra, Brasil.

### 1991: 25 años

- 02/02: Expedito Ribeiro de Souza, presidente del Sindicato de los Trabajadores Rurales de Rio Maria, PA, Brasil, asesinado.
- 15/03: Ariel Granada, misionero colombiano, asesinado por guerrilleros en Mozambique.
- 19/03: Felisa Urrutia, carmelita, asesinada en Cagua, Venezuela, mártir del servicio a los pobres.
- 29/04: Moisés Cisneros Rodríguez, religioso marista, Guatemala.
- 03/05: Felipe Huerte, delegado de la Palabra, y 4 compañeros, mártires de la Reforma Agraria, en El Astillero, Honduras.
- 14/05: Porfirio Suny Quispe, mártir de la justicia y de la solidaridad en Perú.
- 21/05: Jaime Gutiérrez Alvarez, religioso, Colombia.
- 21/05: Irene McCormack, misionera, y compañeros, mártires por la causa de la paz, Perú.



# Premios otorgados por la Agenda'2016...

• El **Premio Antonio Montesinos al gesto profético en defensa de los Derechos Humanos** ha sido concedido este año a **Eduardo GALEANO**, por su trayectoria de trabajo intelectual a lo largo de su vida entera al servicio de las Grandes Causas en el ámbito de la Patria Grande Latinoamericana. Su grito en favor de las víctimas continua vivo.

• El Premio del **Concurso de Cuento Corto Latinoamericano** (350 euros) ha sido otorgado a **Noel Pérez García** (caseron@uneac.co.cu), de Santiago de Cuba, por su cuento «Bajo el Flanboyán». Lo publicamos en esta misma edición de la Agenda (págs. 238-239).

Convocamos para el año que viene la XXIIª edición del Concurso (pág. 17).

Una amplia antología de «Cuentos cortos latinoamericanos», no sólo los ganadores, sino los mejores de entre todos los que han sido presentados a concurso a lo largo de estos casi veinte años, está siendo puesta en línea como una sección de los Servicios Koinonía, en: [servicioskoinonia.org/cuentoscortos](http://servicioskoinonia.org/cuentoscortos)

• El premio del Concurso de **Páginas Neobíblicas**, dotado con 350 euros, ha sido concedido, ex aequo, a partes iguales, a **Cinthy Esther ALARCÓN MÚGICA** (via\_nihil@yahoo.com.mx), de Xalapa, Veracruz, México, por su página neobíblica «Macuilí», actualización del Salmo 27,10, y a **Agustín CABRÉ RUFAT**, de Santiago de Chile, por su «Simón de Cirene». Publicamos ambas páginas neobíblicas en esta misma edición de la Agenda (pág. 240), edición en la que también convocamos la XXIª edición de este Concurso (pág. 17).

Una amplia antología de «Páginas Neobíblicas» recibidas para el concurso en éste y otros años, continúa siendo publicada como sección de los Servicios Koinonía: [servicioskoinonia.org/neobiblicas](http://servicioskoinonia.org/neobiblicas)

• El jurado del **Concurso de Género** sobre el tema «Género y compromiso político», patrocinado por el **Centro de Comunicación y Educación CANTERA**, de Managua, Nicaragua, ha otorgado el premio, dotado con 500 US\$, a **Paula Luciana CONSOLI** (consoli.pau@gmail.com), de Santa Fe, Argentina, por su trabajo «Participación femenina: una deuda de años» (lo publicamos en esta Agenda en la página 242). Felicitaciones...

Con las mismas bases bajo un nuevo enfoque, queda convocado el certamen para el año que viene, con el tema «La equidad de género en el acceso a la propiedad y los recursos: un reto para el desarrollo integral de los pueblos» (pág. 17).

• El premio del concurso convocado por el **Col·lectiu Ronda**, de Barcelona, dotado con 2.000 euros, ha sido otorgado a la experiencia «Fraternidade, solidariedade de classe e defesa dos direitos humanos à luta emancipatória», presentado por el «Servicio Franciscano de Solidaridade», por su concreta actividad en las cárceles de São Paulo en Brasil. Véase el veredicto del Jurado en la página siguiente (15).

El concurso es convocado nuevamente para el próximo año, con nueva temática, en su ya XIVª edición (cfr pág. 18), con una dotación de 2000 euros.

Los premios que proclama esta página son los concedidos para los certámenes convocados por la Agenda'2015; véalos también en: <http://latinoamericana.org/2016/premios>

Las convocatorias de esta Agenda'2016, para 2017, véalas en: <http://latinoamericana.org/2016/convocatorias>



• En el **Concurso «Derecho Humano a la nacionalidad»**, convocado por **REDES**, de Puerto Rico (<http://redesperanza.org>), el Jurado ha otorgado el premio a **María M. LANDI**, uruguaya, activista de derechos humanos, por su trabajo «Sobre sionismo, nacionalismo y derechos palestinos».

Con una nueva temática, es convocado de nuevo este año 2016 para su ya Xª edición (cf. pág. 16).

• El **Premio a la Difusión de los Principios del Decrecimiento**, en su séptima edición (de 2014 para 2015) será anunciado en su fecha, 1º de noviembre, en [latinoamericana.org](http://latinoamericana.org)

Vuelto a convocar para su ya VIIIª edición (cfr. pág. 16), el concurso está dotado con 500 euros.

**FELICITACIONES** a todos los premiados, y nuestro **AGRADECIMIENTO** a todos los que han participado.

Les esperamos un año más. Los ganadores de premios de los concursos de cada año son dados a conocer en la edición siguiente de la Agenda Latinoamericana, y también, el primero de noviembre, en su sede virtual:

<http://latinoamericana.org>



## XIII PREMIO COL·LECTIU RONDA

Asesoría jurídica laboral económica social  
Experiencias en defensa del Derecho a la Fraternidad

### VEREDICTO

Al XIII Premio «Col·lectiu Ronda asesoría jurídica laboral económica social» correspondiente a la «Agenda Latinoamericana 2015», se han presentado cuatro participaciones al premio de «Experiencias en defensa del derecho a la fraternidad», como derecho –tantas veces vulnerado– y deber –no siempre ejercido por todas y todos–.

El «Centro de Proyección Social de la Universidad de San Buenaventura» de Bogotá en Colombia explica su trabajo en la construcción de sinergias entre el Estado y la Sociedad Civil, a través de redes interinstitucionales para la promoción de los derechos humanos, y la fraternidad.

La «Fundación Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo Emocional Mercedes Checo», (CENIDEMC) de Santiago de los Caballeros en la República Dominicana, propone conseguir un espacio físico para la realización de actividades vinculadas al desarrollo emocional y al desarrollo social mediante programas de prevención.

En el «El ruido de las voces calladas», de Camagüey en Cuba, suenan los ecos renovados de los indígenas, de los marginados, de las mujeres, de las luchas campesinas de la Madre Tierra...

El «Serviço Franciscano de Solidariedade», de São Paulo, en Brasil, relata sus vivencias en la cárceles en «Fraternidade, solidariedade de classe e defesa dos direitos humanos à luta emancipatória».

El Col·lectiu Ronda ha valorado el trabajo realizado por los participantes sobre el derecho a la fraternidad, valor proclamado prácticamente por todas las cosmovisiones, tal como se expresaba en la convocatoria, trabajo arduo y valioso y que seguramente es una simiente que fructificará.

Y el veredicto, adoptado por unanimidad, otorga el premio a la experiencia «Fraternidade, solidariedade de classe e defesa dos direitos humanos à luta emancipatória», presentado por el «Serviço Franciscano de Solidariedade», por su concreta actividad en las cárceles de São Paulo en Brasil, con especial atención a las mujeres, jóvenes y niños presos, para pasar de un proceso individual a una universalidad a partir de las construcciones colectivas que se dan cotidianamente.

Col·lectiu Ronda, Consejo Rector.

Barcelona, 22 de abril de 2015, [www.cronda.coop](http://www.cronda.coop)



## CONCURSO SOBRE «DESIGUALDAD Y PROPIEDAD»

Xª Edición

En la era de la globalización, la desigualdad se ha vuelto una característica dominante y, hasta podría decirse, consentida en la sociedad de los primeros años del siglo XXI. La brecha social ha ido en aumento, incluso en países desarrollados.

Ante este panorama, estamos llamados a plantearnos:

- ¿Se ha vuelto tolerable la desigualdad y la concentración de la propiedad en unos pocos?

- ¿Hasta qué punto somos cómplices de estas prácticas por no afectar nuestro "status quo"?

- ¿Se da una desmovilización de los movimientos populares en relación a la búsqueda de una sociedad de justicia y equidad?

- ¿Qué propuestas podemos presentar para promover cambios reales y viables para caminar hacia una sociedad global más equitativa?

Envíe su reflexión (de hasta 7.000 pulsaciones), personal o colectiva (con su comunidad, sus alumnos/as, sus vecinos, su grupo de amigos/as...), antes del 31 de marzo de 2016, a:

[inforedes@redesperanza.org](mailto:inforedes@redesperanza.org)

El premio está dotado con 500 dólares y un diploma acreditativo de participación.

**REDES, Red de Esperanza y Solidaridad**, Diócesis de Caguas, Puerto Rico.

## PREMIO A LA DIFUSIÓN DE LOS PRINCIPIOS DEL «DECRECIMIENTO»

VIIIª Edición

La «Comissió Agenda Llatinoamericana», de Girona, Cataluña, España,

**CONVOCA** este concurso, con las siguientes bases:

**Temática:** El «decrecimiento», como alternativa al crecimiento ilimitado, como un paso necesario para alcanzar una libertad viable para los seres humanos (todos, todas) y también para la entera comunidad de vida de este planeta.

**Contenido y formato:** Se premiará a la persona, comunidad o entidad que, mediante trabajos escritos, organización de cursos o conferencias, trabajos de investigación, realización de material audiovisual, creación de material pedagógico para adultos o escolares, ejecución de acciones directas, etc., realice una mejor difusión de los principios del «decrecimiento».

**Plazo y envío:** Los trabajos o memorias de las actividades organizadas tendrán que llegar antes del 30 de junio de 2016 a: Comissió de l'Agenda Llatinoamericana, Calle Mestre Francesc Civil, 3 bxs. / 17005-GIRONA / ☎ (34) 972 21 99 16. Correo-e: [llatinoamericana@solidaries.org](mailto:llatinoamericana@solidaries.org)

**Idioma:** En cualquiera de los idiomas en los que se publica esta Agenda: castellano, catalán, portugués, inglés o italiano.

**Premio:** 500 euros. El jurado lo podrá declarar desierto, pero también podrá conceder uno o más accesits de 100 euros. La decisión del jurado se hará pública el 1 de noviembre de 2016 en: [llatinoamericana.org](http://llatinoamericana.org)



## Concurso de «Páginas Neobíblicas», XXIª edición

La **Agenda Latinoamericana** convoca la XXIª edición del Concurso de «Páginas neobíblicas»:

1. Temática: tomando pie en alguna figura, situación o mensaje bíblico, sea del Primero o del Segundo Testamento, los concursantes intentarán una «relectura» desde la actual situación latinoamericana y mundial.
2. Los textos no deberán exceder de 9000 pulsaciones (caracteres más espacios). En castellano o portugués o catalán, en prosa o poesía, teniendo en cuenta

que, supuesta una calidad básica en la forma, lo que se premia es el contenido, el acierto y la creatividad en la «relectura» de la página bíblica escogida.

3. Los trabajos habrán de llegar antes del 31 de marzo de 2016 a: [agenda@latinoamericana.org](mailto:agenda@latinoamericana.org)
  4. Premio: 400 euros y su publicación en la Agenda'2017.
- Será hecho público el 1 de noviembre de 2016 en <http://latinoamericana.org>

## Concurso «Género y compromiso político», XXIª edición

El **Centro de Comunicación y Educación Popular CANTERA** ([www.canteranicaragua.org](http://www.canteranicaragua.org)), y la Agenda Latinoamericana, convocan la XXIª edición del concurso «Perspectiva de género en el desarrollo social»:

1. Temática para esta edición: «La equidad de género en el acceso a la propiedad y los recursos: Un reto para el desarrollo integral de los pueblos».
2. En estilo de ensayo.
3. Extensión e idioma: máximo de mil palabras, o

6000 pulsaciones.

4. En castellano, portugués, o en otros idiomas adjuntando una traducción al castellano.
5. Los trabajos habrán de llegar antes del 15 de marzo del año 2016 a: Cantera, Apdo. A-52, Managua, Nicaragua, [cantera@ibw.com.ni](mailto:cantera@ibw.com.ni), tel.: (505)-2277.5329
6. El texto ganador será premiado con 500 US\$. El jurado podrá declarar desierto el premio, pero podrá también conceder uno o varios accesits de 100 US\$.

## Premio Antonio Montesinos al gesto profético en defensa de la dignidad humana, XXIª edición

La Agenda Latinoamericana Mundial convoca esta XXIª edición del «Premio Antonio Montesinos al gesto profético en defensa de la dignidad humana en América Latina». Con las siguientes bases:

1. Se quiere significar con esta distinción a la comunidad, grupo humano o persona cuya defensa de los derechos humanos actualice mejor hoy el gesto profético de Antonio Montesinos en *La Española* cuando se enfrentó a la violencia de la conquista con su grito «Éstos,

¿no son seres humanos?».

2. Cualquier grupo, persona o comunidad puede presentar candidatos a este premio, razonando los motivos y acompañándolos con firmas si lo cree oportuno, antes del 31 de marzo de 2016, a la propia Agenda Latinoamericana: [agenda@latinoamericana.org](mailto:agenda@latinoamericana.org)
3. El jurado admitirá a concurso tanto acciones puntuales, cuanto trabajos duraderos o actitudes proféticas mantenidas a lo largo de mucho tiempo.
4. Premio: 500 euros. Podrá ser declarado desierto.

## Concurso de «Cuento Corto Latinoamericano», XXIIª edición

La **Agenda Latinoamericana** convoca esta vigésimo-segunda edición del Concurso, con las siguientes bases:

1. Puede concursar toda persona que sintonice con las Causas de la Patria Grande.
2. Extensión e idioma: máximo de 18.000 pulsaciones. En castellano o portugués.
3. Temática: el cuento debe tratar de iluminar, desde su propio carácter literario, la actual coyuntura espiritual de América Latina: sus utopías, dificultades, moti-

vaciones para la esperanza, alternativas, la interpretación de esta hora histórica...

4. Los textos deberán llegar antes del 31 de marzo de 2016 a: [agenda@latinoamericana.org](mailto:agenda@latinoamericana.org)
5. El cuento ganador será premiado con 400 euros, y será publicado en la Agenda Latinoamericana'2017 (en unos 18 países). El fallo del jurado será hecho público el 1 de noviembre de 2016 en <http://latinoamericana.org>
6. El jurado podrá declarar desierto el premio, pero también podrá conceder accesits de 100 euros.



PREMIO  
«COL·LECTIU RONDA»  
XIVª EDICIÓN

## DESIGUALDAD Y PROPIEDAD

### EXPERIENCIAS DE PROMOCIÓN DEL MEJOR USO DE BIENES PERSONALES Y COMUNITARIOS

El Col·lectiu Ronda de Barcelona, asesoría jurídica, laboral, económica y social al servicio de las personas y comunidades marginadas por el sistema imperante, fiel a su tradición de pensamiento y de compromiso, convoca la XIV edición del Premio Col·lectiu Ronda para el año 2016, año para el que se ha elegido como tema «DESIGUALDAD Y PROPIEDAD».

Somos conscientes de la dificultad de establecer unas bases ante un derecho (el de propiedad) que difícilmente ha tenido un consenso histórico. Desde la propiedad común, tanto de los medios de producción como de los bienes de consumo de las primeras comunidades humanas, hasta la formulación actual, diferenciando los primeros de los bienes de consumo, y consiguientemente estableciendo diversos tipos de propiedad: pública, colectiva, privada, estatal, social, comunitaria, personal, etc. En algunas constituciones se establece el registro de la propiedad intelectual de los derechos intangibles de las naciones y pueblos indígenas originarios respecto a sus saberes y conocimientos. Constatamos el ataque que sufren estos derechos en la medida que son objeto de especulación capitalista.

Valoraremos cualquier experiencia comunitaria o individual sobre estos derechos: los bienes naturales, los medios de producción y los bienes para la vida diaria.

Por todo ello, el Col·lectiu Ronda,

#### CONVOCA:

A las entidades, grupos, colectivos o análogos que actúen en defensa de las formas de uso y propiedad sobre las siguientes

#### BASES:

Presentación de un **informe claro y concreto** sobre las experiencias con un mínimo de tres años que cuenten con todas o alguna de las siguientes características:

Que combatan la desigualdad ante el acceso, uso, disfrute y mantenimiento y mejora de los bienes necesarios para el buen vivir, minimizando la huella ecológica.

Que preserven la propiedad intelectual colectiva de los saberes, ciencias y conocimientos, y fomenten su valoración, uso, promoción y desarrollo.

Que empoderen a la ciudadanía y contribuyan a la desaparición de las distintas formas de explotación y dominación, incluidas las capitalistas.

El informe deberá referir el contexto, la composición y la motivación de la entidad concursante, así como las actividades realizadas y la evaluación de los resultados obtenidos. Se deberá incorporar la presentación de la entidad y una memoria explicativa de sus actividades (máximo 20 páginas).

**Idioma:** castellano, portugués, catalán o cualquier otro de aquéllos en los que se publica la Agenda, acompañado de una traducción a cualquiera de los tres idiomas citados en primer lugar.

**Envío y plazos:** se deberá presentar antes del 31 de marzo de 2016 a las siguientes direcciones de correo electrónico: [jpujol@cronda.coop](mailto:jpujol@cronda.coop) y [agenda@latinamericana.org](mailto:agenda@latinamericana.org). Se puede consultar otra forma de envío a las mismas direcciones.

**Premio:** 2.000 (dos mil) euros. Se podrá declarar desierto. O también, conceder algún accésit.



# FOR 2100: 25 BILLION HABITANTS

URGENT TO TAKE STEPS TO REDUCE CONSUMPTION OF NATURAL RESOURCES

**STEVE CONNOR**

*The Independent, London, UK*

The global human population is “locked in” to an inexorable rise this century and will not be easily shifted, even by apocalyptic events such as a third world war or lethal pandemic, a study has found.

There is no “quick fix” to the population time-bomb, because there are now so many people even unimaginable global disasters won’t stop growth, scientists have concluded.

Although measures designed to reduce human fertility in the parts of the world where the population growth is fastest will eventually have a long-term impact on numbers, this has to go hand-in-hand with policies aimed at reducing the consumption of natural resources, they said.

Two prominent ecologists, who normally study animal populations in the wild, have concluded that the number of people in the world today will present one of the most daunting problems for sustainable living on the planet in the coming century – even if every country adopts a draconian “one child” policy.

“The inexorable demographic momentum of the global human population is rapidly eroding Earth’s life-support system,” say Professor Corey Bradshaw of the University of Adelaide and Professor Barry Brook of the University of Tasmania in their study, published in the journal *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*. “Assuming a continuation of current trends in mortality reduction, even a rapid transition to a worldwide one-child policy leads to a population similar to today’s by 2100,” they say. “Even a catastrophic mass mortality event of 2bn deaths over a hypothetical window in the mid-21st century would still yield around 8.5bn people by 2100,” they add.

There are currently about 7.1bn people on Earth, and demographers estimate that this number could rise to about 9bn by 2050 – and as many as 25bn by 2100, although this is based on current fertility rates, which are expected to fall over the coming decades.

Professor Bradshaw told *The Independent* that the study was designed to look at human numbers with the insight of an ecologist studying natural impacts on animals to determine whether factors such as pandemics and world wars could dramatically influence the population projections. “We basically found that the human population size is so large that it has its own momentum. It’s like a speeding car travelling at 150mph. You can slam on the brakes but it still takes time to stop,” Professor Bradshaw said. “Global population has risen so fast over the past century that roughly 14 per cent of all the human beings that have ever lived are still alive today – that’s a sobering statistic,” he said.

“We examined various scenarios for global human population change to the year 2100 by adjusting fertility and mortality rates to determine the plausible range of population sizes at the end of the century.

“Even a worldwide one-child policy like China’s, implemented over the coming century, or catastrophic mortality events like global conflict or a disease pandemic, would still likely result in 5bn to 10bn people in 2100,” he added.

The researchers devised nine different scenarios that could influence human numbers this century, ranging from “business as usual” with existing fertility rates, to an unlikely one-child-per-family policy throughout the world, to broad-scale global catastrophes in which billions die.

“We were surprised that a five-year WWII scenario mimicking the same proportion of people killed in the First World War and Second World War combined, barely registered a blip on the human population trajectory this century,” said Professor Brook.

Measures to control fertility through family planning policies will eventually have an impact on reducing the pressure on limited resources, but not immediately, he said. “Our great-great-great-great-grandchildren might ultimately benefit from such planning, but not we,” Professor Brook said.



# POVERTY AND INEQUALITY IN LATIN AMERICA

GUILLERMO FERNÁNDEZ MAÍLLO AND MÓNICA GÓMEZ MORÁN

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Poverty is a complex phenomenon which is influenced by *many factors that can be studied from different perspectives*. The different methods for identifying impoverished people vary from those measuring the situation of households in *absolute terms* i.e. to measure the extent that a number of basic needs are not covered regardless of the place; and to those using relative terms i.e. to measure by observing the *degree to which households meet their needs* according to their disadvantage compared to the rest of people surrounding them.

The perspective of “absolute poverty”, we take as *a situation in which a person's income is below a certain threshold*, which would prevent obtaining sufficient resources to meet the basic needs of survival. That's how so-called “lines of poverty” are used to classify people as poor or not, depending on which side of the line or barrier they find themselves.

In 2005 the World Bank set the threshold at USA \$1.25 per day for *extreme poverty*, and the \$2 per day as *in risk of poverty*, translated into the local currency and prices, and adjusted to the threshold of the related currency taking into consideration prices of essential goods in each country. The poverty line of \$1 is the “average national poverty line” adopted by countries with lowest levels of income per capita in the world.

In the decades of 1980 and 2000, there was a *notable decrease worldwide in the number of impoverished people*. But in terms of absolute poverty in 2010, the latest estimates by the UNDP (the UN Development Program), -- limited to only developing regions-- show that one in five people (1,200 million) was still living beneath the threshold of extreme poverty (less than \$1.25 per day).

However, progress has been slower in the lines of greater poverty. A much smaller reduction has been achieved for people living on less than \$2 per day. In total, two in five people – 2,400 million – were living on less than \$2 per day in 2010. This reduction is marginal taken into account the 2,590 million of 1981.

The Economic Commission for Latin America and

the Caribbean (ECLAC) established a “poverty rate for Latin America and the Caribbean”: the percentage of the population whose per capita income does not reach the monthly amount needed to cover their essential needs. Data of 2012 confirm the downward trend observed over the last decades, even when the rate of reduction has slowed down gradually (ECLAC 2013). Since 2002, virtually without exceptions, there has been a drop in poverty throughout the region.

In 2012, the “poor population” of Latin America (164 million people) was 28.2% while “extreme poverty” affected 11.3% (66 million). These figures represent a 1.4 decline of poverty over that of 2011 (29.6%), or a decrease of six million in the number of impoverished, while “extreme poverty” remained virtually unchanged. Venezuela, Ecuador and Brazil are the countries that have shown the greatest reduction in poverty.

More and more approaches tend to complement these statistics with different dimensions relating to material deprivation or unfulfilled needs which represent indicators that are more feasibly applicable to the region. The results of this amplified measurement of poverty- show that deficiencies in housing (overcrowding and with inferior materials) and energy (electricity and fuel shortages for cooking) are much more felt in countries that register higher incidences of poverty (ECLAC 2013).

There is a correlation between poverty and this material deprivation: countries with higher rates also tend to have a greater intensity of poverty, that is, countries with more impoverished are also those where poverty is more intense, i.e. where there exist a still greater number of deprivations.

To this view of measuring poverty, we can add another qualifying concept -- that of income inequality. The same process points up the distribution of income within a given population, and the difference between those who possess more wealth than others. That distance is measured through the GINI coefficient, where #0 means that everyone would have the same income at her or his disposition, and #1, that



all the wealth is concentrated in only one person.

Worldwide economic inequality has increased in the past 30 years, and is becoming one of the serious topics in discussions about dynamic global politics. Even when viewed in the long run “the past devours the future,” as the French economist Thomas Piketty emphasizes in his book *Capital in the XXI Century*. Here he announces, that led and controlled by new family dynasties, there will be a return to the patrimonial capitalism of the XIX Century, following the period of greatly reduced inequality after the two World Wars.

The situation of Latin American constitutes a brief exception during recent years, when the GINI has experienced a decline since the mid-nineties, where it stood at 0.59 until today's 0.51. This decrease is mainly due to two causes: first the *commodity boom*; and second the implementation of policies to reduce inequality aided by political stability in a significant number of countries.

The first case is due largely to the reduction of the wage gap between skilled and unskilled workers, which is linked again to an increased supply because of improvements in education, and a reduction of demand.

As for political stability based on a period of economic growth: the re-distribution produced by the whole group of governments, but especially the new governments of the left and center-left has become emblematic, even though, compared with the countries of the OECD [Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development] the capacity of governmental institutions to address inequality is very much limited once social transfers have been made.

There are other associated factors of increasing consideration such as: the minimum wage in countries like Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay; significant re-distribution through direct taxes; the development of conditional transfer programs that currently reach 30 million families comprising some 127 million people in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Nevertheless, because of a system of equivalents and conditioning, these programs are losing their opportunity to have a universal character and in many cases even re-enforce gender inequality, as the Observatory of Gender Equality has warned. Besides they indicate that social segmentation and monetization of social policies have become worse, reducing the power

of these programs to assure concrete human rights.

But despite this reduction, the differences between households of lower and higher incomes is still enormous. The 20% of the poorest households possess only 5% of total revenues (even less in countries like Honduras, Paraguay and the Dominican Republic), while the 20% of the wealthiest possess 47% of total revenues (or even more, as in the case of Brazil).

The implications of these disparities not only result in difficulties to have greater access to good quality education, health care and even basic energy supplies, but they also give birth to strong social injustices. The countries that have best managed to reduce the internal differences between the wealthiest 20% and the impoverished 20% between the years 2002 to 2012 have been Bolivia, Nicaragua, Brazil and El Salvador. Guatemala is the only country in the region that in this aspect has deteriorated during this period.

The overall Latin American inequality has more to do with inequalities internal to each country rather than with inequalities between countries. The sheer weight of the Brazilian and Mexican economies is responsible for this. The movements of inequality, following the Palma Index, confirm a 10% most wealthy and a 40%, most impoverished and a relative stability of income-distribution through the upper middle classes.

Historically, this persistence of high inequality in the region of Latin America, has been explained in two different ways. The first way emphasizes the high structural inequality ever since the conquest by Europeans, and then ingrained during centuries and now very difficult to change. In contrast to this, a second way believes that inequality was historically low until the late nineteenth century, when the region underwent strong development, and according to this vision, it would be easier to reverse the trend.

Despite these considerations, the current decline in inequality does not seem to be producing any structural change. Moreover, at this time, when voices are being heard in favor of slowing down of the Latin American economy, still ultimately and almost exclusively, we keep on trusting the wellbeing of the people to the growth in the

GNP, as if we haven't known already for decades these two counter-evidences:



First: economic growth means neither an equitable distribution of wealth nor does it insure that gains in wellbeing move people upward from previous levels;

Second: in the current model of economic growth we turn our backs to the environmental crisis that is already upon us.


But beyond issues of measurement and economy, what really matters is the anthropological change that the neo-liberal revolution has introduced into our existence in this world. We are being forced to adapt ourselves to the ever-changing flow of the movement of merchandize. We must address this social model from the view point of ethics. We have social model in which growth has morphed basically into a parameter following these three fundamental axioms:

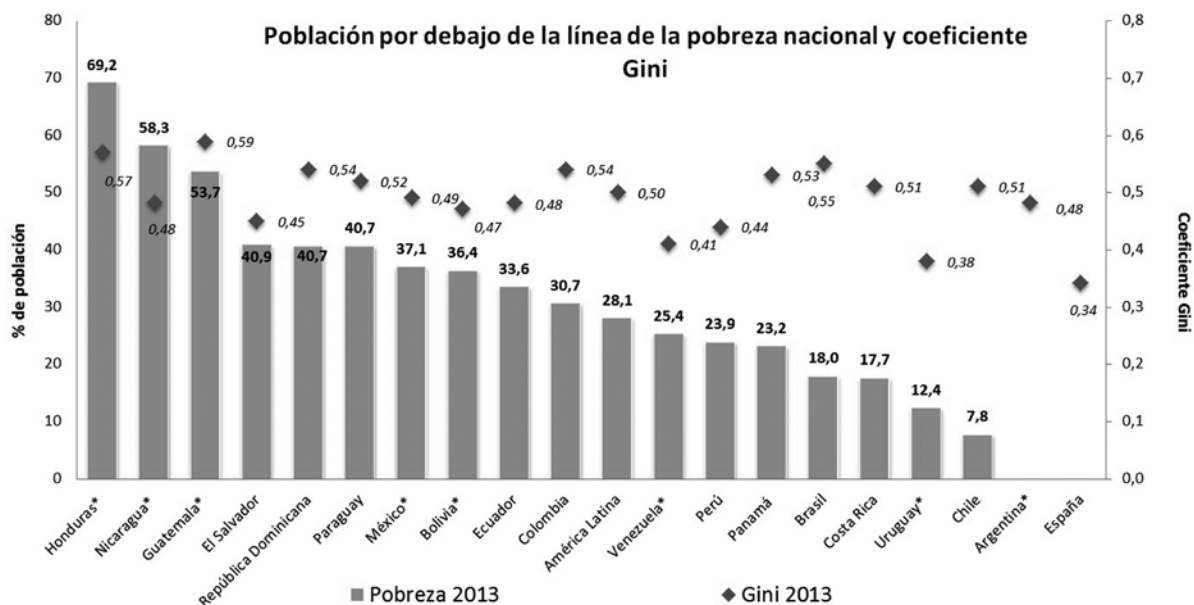
1) *More means better*. This is a logic based on individualistic ethics, neo-Darwinism and the Calvinist ethic of success: growth becomes synonymous with wellbeing -- a principle that makes impossible for the impoverished to reach wellbeing, and that hangs a guilt trip on those living on the periphery.

2) *Price is the measure of value*. Anything that

does not have a market value for productivity, profitability and competitiveness, must be rejected. In a merchandized society everybody is equal for consumerism, and any other consideration is wiped out. This is a logic that fits well into an ethic of celebrating accumulation and all that is immediate but results in the impoverished person becoming the excluded loser.

3) *There exists no social subject*. Once economic growth is identified as wellbeing, the question is: who is the social subject? And the answer is, systematically and methodically, "THE INDIVIDUAL": "the individual", without any relation to "the others". In consumerism, we find neither social dimension nor solidarity, because it accepts "the immediate" as an absolute, and in this case there is no place or room for "the other": for "the other" person who might appear with the possibility of competing for the potential profit or for the wellbeing that an individual has achieved. So in this way the same impoverished person is the creator of the insecurity which she or he must avoid.

And we cannot allow ourselves to be blind before this situation. 



Sources: Compiled from the database of ECLAC, Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (<http://goo.gl/blB7sa>), and UNDP, United Nations Development Program (<http://goo.gl/IqA0tJ>).

\*Years of data: Nicaragua 2009; Honduras 2010; Guatemala and Bolivia 2011; Venezuela, Uruguay, Mexico and Argentina 2012.



# AND THE OTHER 99%?

ALFREDO TORO HARDY

Caracas, Venezuela

The international organization OXFAM, with headquarters in Oxford, United Kingdom, published chilling statistics: in 2016, the wealth of 1% of humanity will surpass that of the other 99%. It would be worthwhile to try and establish how we have gone so far.

Some decades ago, industry in the USA settled on quarterly profitability as the basis by which to measure the success or failure of companies. This would cast over them enormous competitive pressure, propitiating a fierce effort to reduce production costs.

This phenomenon would be followed then by two more. The first, globalization, was a consequence of the quantum leap in telecommunications, information and transport technologies. The second, the addition to the labor force of 1.3 million Chinese, 1.2 million Indian, and enormous amounts of people from Indonesia and Vietnam, offering much cheaper labor.

The convergence of these three phenomena would be reflected in the supply chains: different stages of one manufacturing process are done in different countries looking for the cheapest labor for each component to be manufactured. This is so due to the possibility of moving and giving logistics to following to an endless amount of pieces and parts that move in different directions before arriving at the final assembly.

In short, the merchandise on sale is the product of the worker that costs less in each stage of the process. People from Bangladesh, Philippines or Vietnam compete among themselves to make the price of their labor increasingly cheaper.

On the other hand, the technological revolution of information, also consolidated in these last decades, became evident through the so called Moore's Law, which says mainly that the power of computing doubles every two years. Hence, a cellular phone today has the capacity of a personal computer of some years ago, which at the same time was more complete than a central computer some years before. The software, meanwhile, is progressing as well at an incredible pace.

A cellular phone with a chess program *Pocket Fritz 4* may beat a grand master of this game. Robotics does not lag behind and, as Tim Harford shows, Moore's Law also applies there (*The robots are coming and will ter-*

*minate your jobs*, Financial Times, 27 December 2013). From industrial robots we are now moving to "service" robots, as Tom Standage states, which is equivalent to the jump from the central computer to the personal computer (*At your service*, The Economist: The World in 2014). In competition with previous technologies, the 3-D printer has appeared, through which programmer and machine are enough to manufacture a product.

All this points in one direction: a huge amount of jobs eliminated, which up to now, could only be done by human beings. This gives rise to a human mass that, in spite of having disposition and knowledge for a job, is losing its capacity to be employed.

The above generates a horrific competitiveness in the search for greater profits between a cheap labor from Asia and a job-suppressing technology in the developed world. This greatly affects the social fabric in both.

For the first, because it depresses the labor cost in a deliberate and systematic way. For the developed countries, because it takes to what Alan Manning, from the London School of Economics, baptized as the "polarization of job" and David Autor from MIT has called the "disappearance of the middle": a phenomenon through which only the jobs situated at the extremes of the labor scale continue to exist. On one extreme, those of very high qualifications, mainly in the scientific/technological field. On the other, the jobs of the lowest remuneration and stability in the field of services. The jobs situated between the two groups become increasingly redundant.

In this way, the owners of capital and technology continue to accumulate wealth at exponential velocity, while labor and jobs decrease. Despite this state of affairs, no matter how terrible it seems, this is no more than a transition towards a worse situation. As Erik Brynjolfsson and Andrew McAfee from MIT state in a joint article with Michel Spence of New York University, there is an evolution towards intelligent machines ever cheaper that will take over the jobs of the Philippines or Indonesia (*The New World Order*, Foreign Affairs, July/August 2014). That is to say, they will supplant intensive labor of the developing world.

El Universal, Caracas, January 25, 2015.



# INEQUALITY, ENVIRONMENTAL CRISIS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

SILVIA RIBEIRO / GRUPO ETC

México, [www.etcgroup.org](http://www.etcgroup.org)

Translation by Curt Candoretti

## Production Models, Consumption and the Environment

- The destruction of the environment is an inherent consequence of the industrial model of production and consumption. In practice neither nature nor the environment is seen in terms of the maintenance of life. Rather, they are seen exclusively as substrata necessary for making a profit.

- The model today is not the only system that entails a predatory relationship with the environment, but it certainly has led to global destruction thus making it a planetary problem.

## Who Is Really in Charge?

- 737 corporations control 80% of all of businesses sales in the world.
- 147 control 40% (the spider in the web).
- 1310 corporations (with headquarters in 26 English-speaking countries and China) control 60% of global sales.
- 1318 of businesses have two or more interconnected headquarters for their own management and, on average 20 are part of a global network. The 50 top firms are financial institutions.

(Source: Vitali, Glaxelder and Bazston, 2001).

## Growing Inequality

- 1% of the richest people possess nearly 50% of global wealth (48.5%).
  - 50% of the poorest people possess less than 1% of global wealth (90% live south of the equator).
  - 20% of the population possesses 94.5% of all wealth.
  - 70% of the population has only 2.9% of all wealth.
- (Source: Global Wealth Report 2012, Credit Suisse).

## A Crisis that Enriched the Rich

- 85 of the richest billionaires in the world today have the same wealth as 3 billion less wealthy people.
- Inequality has increased more in the last thirty years, especially since the 2007-2009 financial crisis.
- Global wealth increased 68% in the last ten years. The richest 1% received 95% of the increased income while 90% were made poorer, more marginalized, with higher unemployment and vulnerability.

## Corporations + Technology = Erosion

- The fusion of enormous businesses and centers of financial capital effectively govern the planet, with the convergence of ever more powerful technology in their hands. They are creating a disastrous state of affairs in terms of the environment, society and health.

- The search for limitless wealth by a tiny minority is the motor force behind social devastation, environmental and climate chaos.

## Planetary Ecological Devastation

- The uncontrolled exploitation of natural resources: fracking for petroleum and natural gas, old and new mines, deforestation, and enormous monocropping on vast plantations are having a devastating effect on ecosystems.
- The industrialization of the production of crop-related food controlled by a few transnational corporations, control over seeds, hybrid plants, and the massive contamination of the land with toxic substances has an impact on water and health.

## Planetary Environmental Devastation

- Uncontrolled urbanization, marginalization, pollution, and the creation of massive, poisonous waste disposal areas.
- Enormous mega-projects for the infrastructure and transportation needs of corporations with no regard for the needs of the majority of the population.
- Mega-projects for energy generation, dams, nuclear plants, and projects that rely on biomass...
- Pollution and depletion of water, soil, air...
- Threats to health and the exponential rise of sickness.

## Crisis of Limits of Ecological and Planetary Resources

Climate change. The erosion of biodiversity. The nitrogen cycle (biochemical and geological influx) The phosphate cycle. Oceanic acidification. The depletion of fresh water. Soil erosion. Holes in the ozone layer. Chemical pollution. Atmospheric pollution (caused by propellants in aerosols). (Source: Stockholm Resilience Center, planetary limits according to SRC).



## Climate Change by Specific Source

- According to statistics released by the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change of the UN 2014) the emission of greenhouse gases can be broken down into primary sources:
  - 25% from the use of combustible fossil fuels used in the production of energy and electricity,
  - 24% from agribusiness, deforestation, and changes in the use of soil,
  - Industry (21%), transport (14%), and construction continue to be the largest sources of emissions.

## Concrete Translation

- If we factor in each sector's relationship to the current global food system and transnational food industry, from seed corporations to large supermarkets, this source is responsible for 44 to 57% of the gases causing climate change ([www.grain.org](http://www.grain.org)).
- Extrapolating with uncontrolled urbanization also increases percentages in light of the information above. Supermarkets cannot exist without highly populated urban areas.

## Principal Emitters of Green House Gases

In present day volumes:

- USA: 15.5%, China: 23%, Russia: 5% (10 countries are responsible for 2/3 of greenhouse gas emissions)

Present day emissions per person (per capita):

- USA: 17 tons, China: 5.4 tons, Russia: 11.6 tons

Total historical accumulation from 1850-2005:

- USA: 29%, China: 9%, Russia: 8 %

Total historical accumulation by ton per person:

- USA: 1133, China: 85, Russia: 677.

## The causes of climate change

- The principal historical sources are the USA, the European Union, Russia, Japan, and Canada...
- The USA uses 25% of global energy resources emitting more greenhouse gases than the other five nations that are listed right after it, after it behind it combined, 10 times more than the sixth, and more than 300 times the emissions of almost all of the nations in Africa.

## A remedy that is worst than the disease

The same governments that are responsible for climate change, and the scientists that work for them, have, at times, proposed high risk technologies,

among them:

- Geological engineering (manipulating the climate),
- nuclear energy,
- "bio-energy" (agriculturally-produced combustibles, large-scale mega-plantations, CCS: carbon-capture and storage in deep-sea reserves and geological formations, etc.)
- Natural gas produced by hydro-fracking...

## False and dangerous "solutions"

- Technological myths: genetically modified foods will cure hunger, "intelligent climate-based agriculture", engineering and nanotechnology will overcome the shortage of natural resources, "super-incinerating" to dispose of garbage... All of these "cures" are worst than the disease itself and will cause even more severe problems.
- The myth of the market: markets for carbon emissions, and payment for environmental services, REDD ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United\\_Nations\\_REDD\\_Programme](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_REDD_Programme)) for forests, payment for biodiversity...
- None of these are solutions for the real problem other than opening up new sources for financial speculation.

## None is related to present-day needs:

- We are in an age of plutocracy and its limitless ambition is destroying the planet.
- This is not just due to the "North/South" gap.
- We have to question, not only the power of corporations and the system that sustains them, but also the industrial model of production and consumption, and the "development" model of technological science.

## Green solutions

- The agro-industrial food system that produces 44-57% of GGE (greenhouse gas emissions), is responsible for 70% of water usage and produces 80% of greenhouse gases, but it only serves 30% of the worldwide human population.
- Peasant-based networks and small-scale agricultural producers, including urban gardens, feed 70% of the global human population.
- The networks of large cities would collapse completely without the interconnection of these networks and the solidarity of local economies of these small-scale producers.



# ANALYSIS OF CURRENT SITUATION: ORGANIZATIONAL CHALLENGES

JOÃO PEDRO STÉDILE

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Translation by Alice Méndez

In various areas of dialogue among our movements, when analyzing the present situation, we have found that we agree that we are facing the **decline of industrial capitalism** –and the social institutions that appeared with it,– before a **hegemony that was established by financial and speculative capital**, with a marked undertone of structural crisis which appears primarily financial, but with repercussions at other levels, because it is systemic.

With this transformation what we have is an **attack of capital**, both national and international, that seeks to get control of all natural goods (biodiversity, land, water, oxygen, etc.), mainly through mining, hydroelectric and nuclear plants, that are the origin of serious problems such as devastation of ecosystems, climate change, mass evictions, etc.; but that also directly affect the sovereignty of countries and peoples.

In this scenario, the **climatic crisis** is expressed in droughts, floods, hurricanes, fires, lack of water and a great many other problems that keep changing living conditions on our planet, whose main victims are the most poor; around 3 billion people world-wide. And alongside this we have the energy crisis, in which the present energy matrix based on fossil fuel has practically collapsed.

As well, we have a **food crisis**, due to the fact that food, source of our life and human reproduction, has been turned into a commodity, standardized, controlled by just 50 transnational companies. The consequence is that now there are nine hundred million hungry people on the planet and food security for all peoples of the world is threatened.

In this context, we see greater **job insecurity**, the rights of workers are curtailed. So much so that unemployment increases each year in the majority of countries, mainly among the young, to the point that youth unemployment reaches a 50% in some.

Generally, this is a dynamic marked by a

growing **concentration of the property** of land, wealth, cities, media and politics, in the hands of a capitalist minority that does not exceed a 1% of the world population: 737 corporations, 80% from the financial sector and 147 transnational companies. Meanwhile, 70% of the world population has just 2.9% of the wealth.

One should not lose sight of the fact that the US and its allies of the G8, through the World Trade Organization, control the world economy with the power of the dollar, and also free trade treaties, and that, with the war machinery and the control of the media, impose their interests to humanity.

And, inasmuch that the world corporate power controls the economy and governments –since the latter may have their meetings not intending to decide anything–, there is an evident **deterioration of democracy** and the formalities of representation, because they stopped responding to the interests of citizens. This appears both in international organizations and in most countries, where, though there are elections, the people have no right to an effective participation in the political power. And generally, public policies do not prioritize the needs of the most poor, or are limited to compensatory policies that do not solve problems from the roots.

On the other hand, current **wars** translate into the loss of millions of innocent lives, in order just to serve economic, energy and geopolitical interests of the imperial countries, who many times use false ethnic, religious or “anti-terrorism” justifications.

Within this scenario the monopoly control of the media is pivotal, not only to get income but also for the **ideological control of the minds** of the population. Even more so because a mercantile culture, will defend, promote, and extend the false values of consumerism, egotism and individualism.

And we must also state that the **universities**



**and the sciences have also been manipulated and used** purely to increase productivity and income of capital, and not at the service of the needs of the peoples.

To face this situation, we must first acknowledge that we are before a **crisis of an alternative project**, which hinders the development of unitary processes and programs oriented towards changing the correlation of forces. Popular organizations, unhappily, are still weak, with many difficulties, because we are in a **historical phase of reflection within the movement of masses**.

In general terms, **social struggles are still at a stage of “protests”** and not in a stage of construction of a project of society involving workers and social movements. Based on solidarity, equality and justice – key point, because without justice there is no future-.For that matter, we highlight the World Meeting of Popular Movements (WMPM) held in Rome and the Vatican (27-29 October 2014), and sponsored by Pope Francis, because it was a successful experience that showed once more the need to remain organized and articulated to move towards a unity of workers in all the world, but with a sense of autonomy with respect to state-governments, political parties, churches and related institutions, not implying, however, abstention from establishing relations and spaces of dialogue.

Consequently, we agreed to **continue gathering the largest and most distinct organized sectors** around the struggles for land and food sovereignty, for human rights in cities and of workers, for the end of genocidal wars, for the right to sovereignty of the peoples, and for the rights of nature and the environment.

Of course, this must lead us to refine a project from what was agreed in the Final Declaration of the WMPM that states: “the root of social and environmental evil must be found in the **unfair and predatory capitalist system**, which places profit above the human being. The great power of the transnational companies which seek to devour everything and privatize all –merchandise, services, thinking- are leaders in this destruction”.

Therefore, the solution is **the construction of an alternative to capitalism**, with adequate convergence of forces from the social sectors at the global level. This certainly implies a theoretical elaboration that allows for a deeper understanding of the present situation, but with awareness of existing social battles, because it is only through them that we will build and change the relationships of forces in society; and organizational capacity of the fighters for the people.

In our view, this brings us to the **importance of groundwork and education**, as permanent processes, since here is where the relationship of practice-theory-practice is established, and feeds itself. As well, there is no space for activism without reflection of what we do, nor is there theory far from struggles and daily activities. After all, the changes we wish do not depend on our personal will, but on our capacity as a working class to organize ourselves, to fight and to debate. Thus, we **commit to building schools to educate in politics** to raise the level of awareness of our peoples.

Another fundamental axis for our organizations and their communications, internationally, has to do with the challenges of facing **the media**, which has been turned into be the political voice of the established powers, through the erosion of political participation, and therefore, the primary gate of the ideas of the hegemonic powers for the ideological formation of our societies.

This is to say, we are facing a highly-concentrated media power which seeks to control ideas, wishes and public opinion, both at a global level and at a national level, thus employing a virtual ideological repression against any social struggle. For this reason, in our fight for true democracy, in which the people really participates actively in the definition of their destinies, we claim, first of all, a **democratization of the media**. In the same manner, we also assume the task of sponsoring and boosting our **own media and connect them in a network**, while establishing relations with alternative and popular media and the fight for democratization of communication by challenging the cultural communication hegemony.



# INEQUALITY AND POWER: MEGA MINING IN ISLA RIESCO

GABRIELA SIMONETTI GREZ

*Isla Riesco, Patagonia, Chile*

Isla Riesco, southern Patagonia, a place where only a few years ago, one lived without hurry, industry, or internet. The prevailing development model – that confuses development with the mere creation of wealth and growth with the exploitation of resources – had not yet been imposed. However, as happens across the world, this hegemonic vision arrived at Isla Riesco with no intention of leaving: Invierno Mine, the largest open air coal mine in Chile, was installed here. It is the first of five mines established there to extract coal and sell to thermoelectric companies abroad and in the north of the country. This imposed a double impact: one in the area of extraction, the other in the area of combustion.

The project is owned by two of the most powerful companies in the country: Angelini and Von Appen. Powerful not only because of their accumulation of wealth – both head up some of the strongest economic groups in the country – but also for their deep connections with the government in power. The opening of the mega mine in Isla Riesco is irrefutable evidence of this. When approving the Invierno Mine, the President himself held stock in the one of the corporations that owns the project and he personally promoted the mine as a development plan for Magallanes, even before it was approved. Let's remember that those who approve and reject projects are required to be disinterested parties. These conflicts of interest are obliterated by the power wielded by the actors involved, including those in the media. This leaves the citizenry, including those affected by the imposition of the mine, in a situation of blatant inequality.

Money and power cement inequality. This linkage sustains our institutional structure, where power is based in the tacit association between corporations and government, in the pursuit of a type of short-term extractive development, where the voice of others has no place.

What tools are available to those who believe in a different type of development? How can they confront a system where the economic, political, and media networks leave no room for dissent and for

presenting and advocating alternatives. How can a community oppose the burning of coal in areas that have been declared condemned and where communities are considered disposable? How can they protect the way of life of people living in places like Isla Riesco? Can there be space to propose other models of development in Patagonia, when any expression of dissent is treated like an obstacle to the growth and not as a legitimate proposal – a sustainable proposal, with a long-term view, that respects human beings, the environment, and above all, autonomy and difference.

In the current reality, it seems that there are no tools to confront decisions that have already been made and imposed, and that the most sensible option is to resign oneself, and to make the best of the situation. Indeed, the system is designed so that people will give up, and if other voices are raised, they will be denigrated, distorted, or minimized.

Then, why have communities for decades been defending their way of life that others want to take away and change? Why struggle against a mine owned by large corporations, when it is all but a lost cause? It's simple: we believe that a different future is possible, that other forms of development should be listened to and respected as legitimate possibilities. In a true democracy, all voices are respected and differences can co-exist. Different visions are debated and democratically accepted, without being dictated by inequality, economic power, contacts, the media, and weak institutionally. Until this happens, doing the battle is winning the battle. Silence and withdrawal in the face of injustice perpetuates inequality and increases the power of some over others. The struggle is not just about stopping the mine; it is about defending the right to a different present and future.

Those who lose are those who remain quiet. May the voices of those who hope to contribute to a different and more equal world be greater than the deaf noise of power and inequality. Let's bring our voices together.

*Do not fall into the worst mistakes: the silence.*

*Most live in a dreadful silence.*

*Do not resign escape (W. Whitman).*

*Translation by Molly Graver*



# SHOWING CARCINOGENIC TRANSGENIC CROPS IN LATIN AMERICA

LUCÍA SEPÚLVEDA RUIZ

*Pesticide Action Network, and Campaign: "I Don't Want GMO's in Chile", Santiago, Chile*

This news never got on TV: the International Agency for Research on Cancer, IARC, a specialized agency of the World Health Organization, reclassified the herbicide gly-phosphate as a possible carcinogen. It is the poison most widely sold and used in Latin America and the world, and goes by the trade name "Roundup". This was possible after one year's work by 17 experts free of any conflicts of interest or ties to companies producing pesticides and GMO's. The power of the transnational corporations producing pesticides and GMO's became clearly evident from the lack of any official reaction by subservient Latin American authorities when this alert was released in March 2015.

In Argentina, the network "Doctors of Fumigated Towns", claim that more than 300 million liters of gly-phosphate a year are used in communities surrounding giant GMO soybean and corn monocultures, and they, together with independent scientists and environmental organizations, have dedicated more than ten years to monitoring effects and claims that Monsanto's "Roundup" causes cancer and birth defects, besides other serious damages. But they are not granted access to the great communication medias nor to the government.

The researcher Andres Carrasco, head of the Laboratory of Molecular Embryology of the Faculty of Medicine, at the University of Buenos Aires, Argentina, who died in May 2014, stated that the greatest proof of the effects of pesticides was to be found in fumigated communities. Already in 2009 he had been able to prove that gly-phosphate produced malformations in amphibian embryos. He was attacked and denigrated when he informed the affected communities about the risks, even before his work was published (2010) in the scientific journal *Chemical Research in Toxicology*.

Likewise in Chile, Brazil, Colombia, and Paraguay campesino and environmental organizations have denounced the effects of the "Roundup" herbicide ("Randal Weed Killer"), whose active ingredient is gly-phosphate, and is also used on conventional vegetable and citrus crops. SAG (the Agricultural and Livestock Service), -- the responsible Chilean public entity -- responded negatively when in 2014 the "Chilean

Action Network on Pesticides" (RAP-Chile) solicited a ban on these highly hazardous pesticides.

With transgenic soybeans, corn, cotton and raps {"receiver associated proteins"} prepared for "Roundup Ready" -- which is genetically engineered to tolerate such fumigations -- the use of gly-phosphate rocketed. No known living beings are able to survive "Roundup". The damage is severe in children living near plantations or starting beds, as well as upon water sources, beneficial insects and soil itself. The National Cancer Institute of Brazil issued a statement associating the increase in cancer cases with transgenic crops using gly-phosphate. In Ecuador and Colombia the nefarious "Plan Colombia" -- with its broad spraying of gly-phosphate -- affected the environmental health and food productivity of the communities.

Gly-phosphate has been detected in water and food for humans, likewise in their blood and urine. Gly-phosphate is rated in "Group 2A" meaning "probably carcinogenic for humans" since "although there exist limited evidence of carcinogenicity in humans there is plenty evidence for it in experimental animals".

Action Network on Pesticides and Alternatives RAP-AL welcomed the announcement of IARC/OMS, demanding that Latin America governments protect human health by measures "to ban the use of gly-phosphates in the region and everywhere", based on precautionary principles. "Waiting for factual certainty will be too late for people directly or indirectly exposed to gly-phosphates, like other pesticides, since they have already developed diseases that endanger the possibility of their living a decent life," said the network, which maintains close contact with communities affected by pesticides.

In the meantime Monsanto began operating behind the scenes to discredit the report of the IARC hoping to achieve a retraction by the OMS. This dirty task is handled by its department for refuting and belittling the findings of all independent scientists. This filthy operation is boosted by Syngenta, BASF, Bayer, Dupont, Dow Agro-Sciences among others, that, since the expiration date of their license permits it, currently continue to produce their "Roundup".



# TTIP: THE DICTATORSHIP OF MULTINATIONALS

JAVIER LEZAOLA

eldiario.es

*The main objective of the neo-liberal TTIP, treaty of free trade of the USA with Europe, is to transfer the political power of the European states to the great business corporations.*

Some months ago I attended an artistic exhibition that included a video in which a kind of virus, formed by the logos of the multinationals listed on the major stock exchanges of the world, was devouring sequentially and mercilessly, with a worrisome buzz as musical backdrop, the flags of a series of states, until it reduced them all to black.

Together with that screen, another one showed a disturbing future where all the armies of the capitalist world depended directly, not only indirectly, as today- from the great business corporations. The armed forces of the states had been replaced by the army of this or that bank or this or that oil company. There had been a shift from present democracy of markets to a future dictatorship of the multinationals.

I immediately thought all that illustrated very well what the Transatlantic Trade and Investment Partnership (TTIP) is after, a free trade treaty being negotiated by the European Committee –on behalf of the member states of the EU- and the Government of the USA in a hidden agenda, secretly, not giving the parliaments of the states any details of the texts being negotiated and obstructing as much as they can the work of control from the members of the European Parliament.

And the fact is that the main objective of the neo-liberal TTIP is precisely to make an old dream of the dominant elites come true: transfer the political power of the European institutions –autonomic, state controlled and continental- to the multinationals. In other words, to give unlimited power to the great business corporations, eliminating the few legal and bureaucratic obstacles that still exist limiting their freedom to exploit paid labor and to erode the rights and life conditions of the workers. It is true that before approving the TTIP the European states are just surrendering to the ambitious pretenses of the multinationals, but the truth is that after appro-

ving the TTIP they will not even be asked.

The TTIP has two possibilities: end up being approved, as the NAFTA, or not approved, as the ALCA.

The neo-liberal North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) between the US, Canada and Mexico gave rise to the insurgency of the Zapatista Army of National Liberation (EZLN) in the Mexican state of Chiapas on 1 January 1994, day the agreement came into force. The thing is that this agreement was for the Mexican oligarchy a business opportunity, but for the workers –and very especially for the indigenous peasants- their economic ruin. We are dealing here with the democracy of the peoples or the dictatorship of the multinationals. Europe, the old Europe, has the floor.

On the other hand, the ALCA (Area de Libre Comercio de las Americas), Area of Free Trade of the Americas, wanted to extend the NAFTA from the US, Canada and Mexico to the rest of the American states –with the exclusion of the blocked and resistant Cuba-, but the triumph of Hugo Chávez in Venezuela stopped this free trade treaty and Venezuela and Cuba started the ALBA (Alianza Bolivariana para los Pueblos de Nuestra América – Tratado de Comercio de los Pueblos) an anti-imperialist alliance and of fair trade and solidarity among the peoples of Latin America and the Caribbean of which today other states such as Bolivia, Nicaragua and Ecuador form part and that stopped the USA to impose the ALCA.

What the USA presents as innocent and worthy treaties of free trade are really powerful instruments of de-regulation and flexibilization of the market so as to guarantee freedom of movement and the highest income rates for the great business corporations –most of them originating in the USA- at the expense of eroding to the point of paroxysm the rights and life conditions of the popular classes.

The democracy of the peoples or the dictatorship of multinationals.

Translation by Alice Méndez



# IN THE AFRODESCENDANT DECADE

EDUCAFRO

Rio de Janeiro, RJ, Brazil

Translation by Alice Méndez

The UN has proclaimed 2015-2024 the “Afro descendant Decade” for the 197 affiliate countries to the organization. The UN recognizes that the black decade is an action of extreme urgency, before the increasing misunderstanding of capitalism that makes the rich richer and the poor poorer. In this context, how can we advance the Rights to the historic reparation to the black peoples? The UN, with this decade, has already compromised with the demands of the black people on a world scale. Now, after this great conquest of the black community, the institutional structures of each country should be pushed by conscious black and white militants, so that the UN action takes place and questions the reality of exclusion, there is a change of mind and an investment in the cause of these people. So that the black appears in all programs of the Organization, EDUCAFRO has worked for strategic meetings with the UN Commission.

Let us not fool ourselves: the world economic crisis of the XXI century is eroding the conquests of the black people in America and the world! In the last two years, the major victim of unemployment has been the black population, especially the black woman, in all countries going through rough waters. Public policies of a third generation (specific affirmative actions) must be re-thought, to correct the course of the new exclusion which, if nothing is done, will see its effects extended up to 2018. The black were always the main excluded from public policies in all countries. The “public machine” of each country is in the hands of Euro-descendant elites. In the next three years, if the black cry for their rights, with occupation, protests and negotiation strategies, there will be advances. Affirmative actions, as a new way of understanding investment in public policies, are here to stay! Maybe Brazil is the country where the black people, with the support of the left, have mostly advanced. We have to share with the rest. However, the organization of the black people has not yet taken the plunge.



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o del saberse rodeado de los cuerpos inertes de quienes, hasta unos minutos atrás, compartían con el sueños y alegrías. Para esas lágrimas ya habrá tiempo. Lloro por el sonido de las sirenas que se acercan, porque adivina la ayuda, porque sabe que el negro Turiño, el médico a quien sostiene la cabeza y él, estarán a salvo, y que meses después, esto será una anécdota más, de esas que gusta de contar en el patio de la casa, en su sillón preferido, bajo la sombra del flamboyán, con Silvita sentada sobre sus piernas, escuchándole contar de las peripecias del negro Turiño al timón, de su miedo a las serpientes y a la sangre; de todas las caminatas que él y sus colegas hacen día a día para llegar hasta comunidades lejanísimas, donde nunca antes habían visto un médico. Escuchará el *ohhh* prolongado de Silvita cuando le cuente de selvas y panteras, y saboreará el ron que Sergio le brinde de la botella nueva «especial por el regreso», y del beso prolongado que Silvia pondrá en sus labios, tras recriminarle sonriente «mira que inventas»; mientras la niña va a buscar el último dibujo que hizo de su papá, «curando a los niños del mundo».



# INEQUALITY AND PROPERTY

## WHO ESTABLISHES THEIR MEANING?

**IVONE GEBARA**

*Camaragibe, PE, Brasil*

Many times we are so naïve to think words mean the same for everybody, as if they were “objects”, unchangeable. However, words have history and are linked with the history of those who use them. We are learning to distinguish the form of the word from its meaning or the form of the word from the interpretation of it. For example, “to die of thirst” or “to die of hunger” or “to die of love” are expressions that must be interpreted according to the situation of the person who is using them. And it is not always the case that the person who says he is dying of hunger or thirst is a pauper who lacks the daily bread. In the same way words not always do what they say they do. For example, to state that “we are all born equal” or that “justice is for all”, maybe are expressions used to impress certain groups because it is correct to say them, but they do not reflect what actually happens in human relationships, that is, they do not improve or transform our behaviour.

Along these lines we may say that all explanations and interpretations of inequality and of property are not the same. Apart from that, we must distinguish the focus given to the word, that is, whether we are within an ethical code, or geographical, economic, cultural, gender ... code. I will limit myself to a christian ethical code or aspect of these two words. And will focus them mainly from the experience of women.

Inequality and property, equality and property must be understood in a diverse and plural way. Those ways include different cultures, visions, genders, ethnicities, moments of life. Hence we are all a body with a particular history, situated in a place and time permanently changing and from there it expresses itself in words with a limited meaning. We spontaneously imagine that the meaning we give to things is the most correct and true one, and it includes experiences of men and women. This has been the most frequent procedure we have had through-

out the history of humanity, mainly in christianity. However, we always end up excluding different experiences from those we consider normal or characteristic of our religious tradition.

### **God's equality**

There are those who thought of a concept of equality coming from God and based on the Bible. For that reason, trustworthy and acceptable by all those faithful to christianity. Nevertheless, here we find an interpretative conflict. There is no coincidence between the different interpretations and the practices which according to the various groups are required from God. In the end, which God are we talking about? Who is he? How do we know if it is he or she, or a plural neutral that encompasses all that exists?

We imagine that throughout the history of christianity there has been only one model of equality and justice. However, since we have started to perceive the complexity of historical interpretations we realize that there has never been a unique interpretation in real life. Each equality model generates others of inequality. Many people created ways of living in equality and attributed them to divine inspiration. But, personal corruption, competition, showed the limits to all behaviours and to all attempts to attribute ways of living and behaviours in an absolute way to God. We may even say that equality was used merely as a word, in sight of the daily inequality among people. In an ethical sense, inequality means to make differences between due rights of people; to create fictitious differences so as not to attribute real and legal rights to people. For example, during black people slavery in Brazil, it was believed that white people were redeemers of the black because due to their colour they had more knowledge and privileges before God and had more social rights. The same can be said of the indigenous people before the colonizer: the latter were convinced of their superiority and that they were acting for God, making the natives convert to

*Traducción Alice Méndez*



Christianity. Inequality was justified through political and religious ideologies of the most diverse type.

The same perspective gives light to the notion of private or collective property. Between not having material goods and accumulating all the goods possible, there is an enormous scale of interpretations. Between individual property and state property there is an ideology that feeds and opposes one group against the other.

It is good to remember that the word “property” refers to much more than the possession of material goods. It has to do with the inwardness of each person, with the relationship among persons and things, so it can be stated that I am or not the owner of myself. From a religious point of view, some people say we are “the property” of God and we are in the world to do his will. We have not always been so clear in the use of this and other ideologies about the “property” of God. Really, this statement was expressed in historical relationships that many times were unjust. Women in particular have a painful experience of that “property”, many times as a masculine property of their own being. We can see mobility, limits and the interaction of subjectivities and powers present in the understanding and interpretation of a same concept or an expression.

Each one believes his understanding of inequality or equality and property is the most correct. If someone states a different or even contrary thesis we are surprised. We violently defend our small world of interpretations and judgments. We feel menaced by others and cannot coexist with different interpretations. This has happened a lot recently, when many peoples and groups claim their autonomy, and women their right to citizenship in society and the church. They are accused of destroying social and religious order. They break with an interpretation of life and history taken as natural, and introduce multiple new interpretations.

### **Women and property**

In this context we may ask: can women suffer inequality more than men? Can they have less property? When universal concepts start to become particular and have many interpretations based on the diverse human experiences we start to see many things. We may say that in patriarchal societies in

fact, women suffered and suffer more social economic and cultural inequalities than men. And this is so due to the place they occupy in society and the interpretations made throughout the patriarchal history about their subordinate and dependent role. In this situation, we still have less property than men have. In other words, most of the capitalistic wealth is in the hands of men and, consequently, they are the owners of most properties. And not only that, men many times regard themselves as owners of women, owners of their bodies with the authority to control and legislate over them. We know that different societies grant culturally more political and cultural power to men. This situation is the same in religious traditions, specifically in the Christian tradition. The present organization and social struggle of women is considered by them a way of collective justice, despite other groups see them as a menace.

Today many people are critical of the absolute concepts coming from a masculine hierarchic centre and work in the construction of more equal and interdependent relations. We perceive that we are for each other, brothers and sisters in the search for freedom, and also in the creation and maintenance of new forms of oppression. We are invited by Life to revise behaviours and to propose other reading codes of history, of the values and antivalues that form part of it. The invitation extends also to religions in an attempt to eliminate fundamentalisms and intransigence that have caused alienation, blindness and conflict in many places. It is an educative process, slow and challenging, that pretends to free us from the spell that certain cultural and religious interpretations imposed on us. A new dialogue is necessary, a mutual invitation to knowledge and discernment. Only thus a plural humanity, plural beliefs, plural genders and identities can be welcomed. To welcome does not mean to accept everything without reflection, but to accept the other so he can give reasons for his expectations, so he can leave aside trivial religious slogans, the stupidity of the establishment, which many times do not allow solidarity and a plural thought. I must say this viewpoint is for today something like the “life in abundance” of which Jesus of Nazareth talked.



# TO THROW LIGHT ON THE ANALYSIS

*Trends in income and wealth show something very clearly: the gap between the rich and the poor is broader than ever, and continues to grow, while power is increasingly in the hands of a small elite. OXFAM, October 2014 Report, Iguales.*

*There has been a class struggle during the last 20 years, and my class has won. Warren BUFFET, the 4th richest person in the world.*

*Just as any revolution swallows its children, market fundamentalism without control may swallow the necessary social capital for long term drive of capitalism itself. Mark CARNEY, governor of the Bank of England.*

*In this country we may have democracy, or we may have a lot of wealth concentrated in a minority, but we cannot have both. Louis D. BRANDEIS, ex-magistrate of the Supreme Court of the USA.*

*To be rich and that it be valued in an unjust society, is a shame. Mahatma GANDHI.*

*If there are no intentional political interventions, the high levels of inequality tend to perpetuate. They lead to the development of political and economic institutions that work to maintain political, economic and social privileges of the elites. United Nations Institute of Investigation.*

*No society can maintain such a growth of inequality. In fact, there are no examples in the history of humanity where wealth was so accumulated that gallows would not appear at some time. Nick HANAUER, an American multimillionaire businessman.*

*No society can maintain such a growth of inequality. In fact, there are no examples in the history of humanity where wealth was so accumulated that people would not take up arms. Give me a tremendously une-*

*qual society, and I will show you a police state. Or an uprising. There are no exceptions. Nick HANAUER.*

*One of the effects of market fundamentalism is that it never paid attention to income distribution, or to the idea of a good or just society. Joseph STIGLITZ.*

*Inequality is the root of all social evils. Pope FRANCIS.*

*At the present rhythm, 75 years will be necessary for women to earn the same salary for the same job. Only 3 out of the 30 richest persons in the world are women. In India, the medium daily salary of a man is approximately 2.5 times bigger that a woman's for the same job.*

*Women have it even more difficult than men; if the reduction rate of the gap in salary between men and women continues at the same rhythm, 75 years will be needed to fulfill the principle of the same pay for the same job. OXFAM.*

## Gap between women and men in the world:

Populationn:	50%	50%
Hours worked:	52%	48%
Owned money :	10%	90%
Owned land:	1%	90%
Agricultural credit:	2%	98%
Paupers:	67%	33%
Illiterate:	70%	30%
Malnourished people:	80%	20%
Children with no educat:	67%	22%
Parliamentary positions:	17%	83%
Ministry positions:	16%	84%
Business management:	14%	86%

*Source: Clara Murguialday: Methodologies to assess the impact of gender in development interventions, 2009, manosunidas.org/noticia/abril-india-acceso-las-propiedades*

Fuente: OXFAM, Even It Up, 2014 october.



# INEQUALITY AND PROPERTY: FROM NOBILITY TO BURGEOISIE

**FREI BETTO**

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Traducción Alice Méndez

One only has to look: the world in which we live is frankly unequal. The data comes from OXFAM, English ONG, published in Davos, Switzerland, in January 2014. 84 persons have an equivalent income to 3,5 thousand million people, half of humanity.

The French economist Thomas Piketty, in *The Capital in the XXI Century*, a book that has turned bestseller worldwide, warns that the great challenge raised is how to untie the knot that allows today private accumulation of wealth in the hands of a few. Encouraged by the right of inheritance, this concentration helps inequality to intensify in the world casino, where the incomes from speculation surpass those of production.

In the past, power and wealth (which always go hand in hand) were concentrated in the hands of the nobility. And blood ties guaranteed the privilege of inheritance. The noble should not work, something reserved to the people. The noble engaged exclusively in enjoying life...

The ascent of the bourgeoisie displaced that privilege of the "blue blood" to the property. The lineage of nobility was overthrown by the wealth of the bourgeoisie. Being the son of a banker or owner of something came to be more important than being the son of a prince. The latter has ancestry...; the first has a bulky bank account...

In the XIX century Karl Marx analyzed how goods (or property) assigned value to people. He properly called it, "commodity fetishism".

In capitalism a rose is not a rose, or better, a person is not a person. As such it has no value. Unless it comes dressed in fetish, covered in something that produces, in the eyes of the rest, an enchantment.

This enchantment is given by the merchandise. John is a person; but if he does not hold any valuable merchandise, John is "a nobody". On the contrary, if John has a bank, business, land, rides a luxury car and dresses in expensive clothing... then his value shines in society, causing admiration and envy.

To sum up, value does not come from the fact that John is a person, but on being the owner of something, boasting patrimony and exhaling the seductive flavor of money.

This anomaly or inversion of values strongly contaminates the capitalist society. If the poor steals, he is a thief; if the wealthy steals he is corrupt. The poor is thrown into a filthy prison; the wealthy is treated with respect and comfort. If a poor murders, he is condemned to years in prison; the wealthy has lawyers and benefits by a legislation tailored to the system: for those above, impunity; for those below, severe and cruel punishment.

The basis of inequality hence is property. In democracy, in theory, everyone has the right to property. But few have access to it. Accumulation of property in the hands of a few is the result of the proliferation of the many who are not owners.

In my childhood, in Belo Horizonte, Brazil, there were a great number of shops in my neighborhood, from groceries to grain stores and shops of cleaning products. With the advent of supermarkets, the shops were ruined. And today, with shopping centers, the supermarkets are in crisis.

The inequality pyramid, based on the concentration of wealth, becomes increasingly narrower, condemning a great part of humanity to exclusion and poverty, lacking even basic necessities, such as food and housing.

The solution lies in the intervention of progressive governments, through an advanced legislation preventing the formation of oligopolies, and defending the rights of the majority of the population. A ray of hope lies in the economy of solidarity, self-management, which facilitates workers becoming the owners of means of production. The reduction of social inequality demands the reduction of property and wealth concentration, in such few hands. Without these measures, the gap between the world of the rich and the world of the poor will only become greater.



# PRIVATE PROPERTY AND INEQUALITY

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*Translation by Alice Méndez*

The history of humanity is a long road in permanent search for equality and social justice for all. On the other hand, the history of capital is the history of the private appropriation of the goods and wealth of humanity and its concentration, and, therefore, social inequality. For this reason, the history of capital is anti-social. But some day it will be overcome by the social force of humanity.

There are many ways of reading the history of capital; I am going to read it from one point of view. Capital is the sum of the goods produced by human labour, and is measured by money. Marx said money is a fetish, an illusion, because in itself it has no value; it simply measures, expresses a value, determined by human work. The ideal would be that, instead of money -dollars, euros, reais, pesos- goods were measured by the time of labour they carry within. A loaf of bread, would be worth two hours of work. A table, one day of work. A shirt, two days of work. A computer would be worth some weeks of work. A house would be worth two years of work. Thus, it would be simpler to understand that, when one person gets and owns many goods as private property, beyond his working capacity, those goods express many days of work that someone has done, which other people grab. Here is where inequality is born. We work all life, and in our work we produce all types of goods, but the property of those goods is not divided by the work time each one did. If it were like this, we would live in an egalitarian society, at least among those who work.

Our society is extremely unequal. And social inequality was born from the way private property of goods was constituted.

To study the historical roots of private property we must go back to the XIII Century, when peasants and craftsmen that lived in feuds started producing more, beyond their needs and took those goods to seasonal markets, along the roads between the feuds, which were soon made into permanent markets, with a new name: the market.

Those goods taken to the market received the

name of “merchandise”. At the beginning it was just a barter of goods, according to what each one needed. But soon another intermediary appeared, that measured the value (of the time of work within each good), and finally money appeared to facilitate the circulation of goods.

With market and money, the intermediary person appeared, someone that started to buy goods, for a certain price, to peasants and craftsmen, and to re-sell them later for a greater price, to whoever needed them. So there the capitalist was born: that person who accumulates goods, wealth, without working, without producing them. The difference in value between the price paid and the price of re-selling the merchandise, was taken privately by the merchant who accumulated riches in this way, and grew economically without producing anything. The capital was born in the commerce of goods. The first capitalists were merchants, who lived in “burgs” (name of markets and German cities), and hence, the peasants called them “bourgeois”. Private property of goods was also born like this, which did no longer stay with those who produced them but went to the market. Inequality was born: those who bought and re-sold goods kept that added value which made them rich and distinguished them from the rest, those who just worked producing goods.

Three hundred years passed. Accumulation of riches through commerce was such that the European bourgeois financed expeditions to China, India, Asia... and to America in search of new goods.

In the XVIII Century there was a technological revolution in knowledge that led the human being to dominate the physical energy with a steam machine. With it, it was possible to develop machines that could produce goods in less time than human labour. Factories appeared. And with it a social revolution: million of human beings were taken to operate machines inside industrial warehouses, organized in different tasks, that multiplied the velocity at which necessary goods could be produced, be those industrialized food in slaughter houses, or



shoes, clothes, furniture and tools in factories. Iron, steel, cement, bricks ... appeared, which added to the velocity and size of constructions.

All that seemed an enormous social progress, due to the increase in productivity of labour. And, because with it, the price of goods fell dramatically. However, as we lived in the world of capital and private property, that technological revolution was owned by only some human beings, who became private owners of the machines, the inventions, and privately hired workers, also buying the labour force of the majority, those who worked, turning human labour into just a merchandise. Later, those goods produced by this kind of work were sold at a higher price, taking ownership in a private way of what came to be called capital-gain: the added value produced by human labour.

Another contradiction was added: the production of goods was greatly increased, and its price decreased, measured by the time taken to produce them, but the main appropriation of the surplus was accumulated privately by only some of the industrial bourgeois, the owners of the machines, of the factories who hired workers, the real producers of goods! And the social differences in society increased rapidly, separating those who worked from those who took the ownership of the work.

Capital dominates now the production of goods as well, not only the commerce. The phase of industrial capitalism appears then. The gains of the bourgeois from taking ownership of the production of goods is extended to agriculture. And the main change is that the bourgeois, dominating the State, as a legal instrument to regulate the capitalist society, introduces for the first time private property of land as well, which is a good of nature, not the fruit of labour. Private property of land was a condition imposed through the State to satisfy the bourgeois who wished to invest in agriculture with their machines and hiring workers.

Industrial capitalism dominated all Europe for two hundred years, until the possibility of expanding the business further and accumulating more in each country ended, and immediately the need for those companies to cross borders and take the factories to other countries in search of new markets,

raw materials and more workers to exploit emerged. Thus, at the beginning of the XX Century, imperialism was born, a movement of capital necessary which needs to expand to continue accumulating and concentrating wealth in other countries. An international bourgeois appears, which privately and without respect for borders or sovereignty of nations, goes taking hold of wealth. And social inequality expands to the whole world.

The dispute between the industrial bourgeoisies to control markets, raw materials and work-force to be exploited was so big that took humanity in just 50 years to two world wars, with 50 million casualties.

We reach 1990, the era of Thatcher and Reagan, and the start of a new phase of capitalism. Now, the centre of accumulation of wealth is not commerce, industry or the production of goods, but money, transforming money into capital, which increases with interests, controlling shares of productive companies and speculating with goods. Financial capitalism dominates all forms of capital appropriation. And when the barrier of socialism was destroyed in the countries of the East, the ideology of neo-liberalism was imposed. For the first time in history one unique form of production, capitalism, spread through the whole planet "globalized".

These last decades have seen even more concentrating and centralizing of wealth in the hands of less capitalists, now concentrated in bankers and share holders of big transnational companies. Less than 500 companies control more than 60% of the world production, but give work to just 8% of workers... There are 50 times more money/capital circulating around the world in dollars and euros than their equivalent in goods! Only the 1% richest people of the world control more wealth than all the rest 99%... Now the private property of living beings was introduced, genetically modified seeds, private property of water, of biodiversity, and even of oxygen...

Never did humanity reach such a concentration of wealth and such inequality. But we should not despair. Humanity will overcome capitalist profit and private property, which only generate inequality and social problems, due to its intelligence, wisdom and the organizational ability of the people.



# INEQUALITY IN HUMAN HISTORY

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The study of history has lately been bombarded by a series of questionings. Many authors agree that human history over the face of the earth is not linear. By contrast, in the coordinates of time and space, humanity walks in a come-and-go that is tortuous and labyrinthine.

Following the timeline, the itinerary of civilizations in general and of each group of people in particular tends usually to be winding and turbulent. Progress and setbacks, highs and lows jeopardize the concept of progress. The idea is fading away that one generation is superior to the previous and inferior to the following. The twentieth century belies a certain evolutionary optimism, since despite all the technological innovations, it was a period of extreme barbarism: two World Wars with millions of dead and maimed, colonialism and totalitarianism, injustice and socio-economic imbalance, the atomic bomb and the Holocaust, terrorism, genocide and other armed confrontations.

In the space line, the linearity appears even more irregular. The "World History" taught in schools was usually restricted to happenings in the Western Judeo-Christian world, of Greco-Roman origin. Ancient civilizations such as Chinese, Japanese or Indian for example, or even more recent as the Aztec, Mayan and Inca, with rare exceptions, are virtually unknown. Economic and cultural Euro-centrism has dominated much of historiography.

On the other hand, both in time and space terms, the pyramid of social, economic and political inequality (not to speak of racism and ethnic prejudice) looms as a constant throughout history. To realize the discrepancy between the base and the top of the pyramid it's sufficient to take a simple birds-eye overlook on the civilizations of ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt and the Asian and African continents; on the Persian, Babylonian, Greek and Mongolian conquests; on the vast territories of Roman rule and the medieval feudalism; or on today's modern, contemporary society.

In the ancient world, the city-state with all its splendor, was raised up on the shoulders of peasants, farmers and herdsmen, through heavy taxes and cor-

vee (occasional free work for the king and court). In the Chinese and Japanese empires on one hand, and the Indian caste system on the other, the broad population base maintained the privileged elites. Even in the Greek cities of the philosophers Plato and Aristotle, the very "birthplace of democracy", slaves and women had neither vote nor voice, since they were considered second-class citizens.

The luxury and depravity of the Roman Empire was due to the wealth captured from the "barbarians" (synonymous for peripherals and conquered) and then distributed as "bread and circus" in the amphitheatres of the Eternal City. In Feudal Society (the title of a book by Marc Bloch), due to the unequal pact of "being subject in exchange for being protected", the serfs maintained the knights, clergy and nobility, which meant servitude and hard work sunrise to sunset.

But when we come to modern times -- including contemporary society -- things hardly changed and that bit only superficially. On the one hand, the change over from feudalism to the capitalist mode of production, accompanied by efforts for democratization of power, met with unresolved difficulties; on the other hand, the experiences of real socialism showed up as a kind of state capitalism, where a class of technocrats managed to centralize power, wealth and decision-making.

The pyramid of social inequality continued. The truth is that the efforts towards democracy, following the USA Independence (1776) and the French Revolution (1789), fell apart en route. While on the one hand it did away with the political dynasty of kings and princes, on the other hand, it kept intact the economic dynasty. So, while nepotism gets questioned, estates from father to the son become normal, no matter how they had been acquired or accumulated. While the "legacy of power" is denaturalized, the legacy of wealth is naturalized. And this in turn, through not always transparent mechanisms, re-introduces a political dynasty, now no longer based upon blood or birth origin, but rather on ownership of wealth.

*Traducción Justiniano Liebl*



The trajectory of democracy cruises on the surface of turbulent political waters, but avoids the undercurrents of capitalist accumulation, particularly obvious today in the predominance of financial capital. In the context of our globalized economy, democratically elected governments retain very little leeway against the iron laws of the market. Virtual capital -- often detached from actual production -- cruises freely through stock exchanges, based on the favorably unequal winds of fluctuating currencies, interests and exchanges. Such de-regulation on an international level of economic and financial transactions, creates, re-creates and reinforces social inequality not only between central and peripheral countries, but even between regions of the same country. Governments become hostages of such movements, or even their foremen and accomplices.

This results in the shifting of the frontier between the First and Third Worlds. Instead of dividing poor and rich countries, that line now passes through the interior of each country or bloc of nations. An emblematic case is that of Europe. The crisis of the past decades has created two sub-continents: Northern Europe, relatively stable (Germany, UK, Scandinavia) and southern or Mediterranean, unstable and extremely difficult to regain previous levels (Greece, Italy, Spain, Portugal and even France). Consequently social inequality exists between North and South, between center and periphery, and even within each country.

Meanwhile, active production of other forms of social and economic inequality remain alive. I cite only a few: turbulence due to global warming and migrations for environmental reasons; ethnic, cultural and religious wars and conflicts, with multitudes of refugees and displaced persons; historical patriarchy and forms of violence, such as wage difference for equal service by men or by women; resurgent forms of work very similar to slavery; forced migration, trafficking and abuse of persons for labor or sexual exploitation. It goes without saying that all this is, at the same time both cause and effect of social inequality.

The more or less obvious symptoms of these new forms of production and maintenance of inequality are visible around the globe. They are symptoms of a sick organism, which manifests itself in a fever that is brutal and violent. In fact, once again, "History does not walk linearly." As the global economy deepens, for

example, the struggles for local, regional, ethnic and religious identities grow.

As a counter current to the global market, people rebel and try to retrieve their original values or counter-values. This gives rise to a growing intolerance with a political, ideological or religious camouflage. The result manifests itself in extremely fanatical and fundamentalist activity.

The recent waves of terrorism can not be taken into consideration apart from that broader context of action and reaction to world-wide socio-economic imperialism. It should be noted that just as on the one hand we can not justify organized crime and bloody attacks, on the other hand neither can we obviate the existence of state terrorism.

The so called "invisible hand" of the market does not neglect the "iron fist" of the armed forces, when markets are not "behaving" as expected. Nothing seems more contrary to freedom than economic liberalism.

Another symptom of modern production of inequality is the huge crowd of "country-less-people" who roam the roads of the world. Millions and millions of migrants, refugees, fugitives ... people simultaneously fleeing and searching. Fleeing from countries and regions plagued by violence and war, where ruins, ashes and corpses accumulate. Searching for a place to give them a roof and bread -- a place they can call fatherland.

Next as a mark of inequality we can include pollution of air and water, plus the devastation of the environment. In any disaster (natural or caused by humans), the poor are usually the first to be sacrificed. Not having sufficient wealth they have to take shelter in the most inhospitable places. In floods, tsunamis or droughts, they are on the top of the list as victims.

Finally, even nature itself and our "dear mother earth", when they turn against the exploitative and indiscriminate action of economic policies, are accused to harm the most vulnerable of their children. That's why the ecological discourse also enters the socio-economic dimension of inequality which we consider as inherent in all social analysis as well as all searching for solutions to their challenges.



# «READING GUIDE» TO PIKETTY'S BOOK

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God talks through the signs of the times, according to Vatican II (GS36). Therefore, it is important to know how to read our society, ever more complex, especially its “economy”, the axis on which all the cogs turn. *The Capital in the XXI Century*, of Thomas Piketty (Fondo de Cultura Económica 2014) challenges both the right and the left. We have chosen, as an example, some of the main questions dealt with in the book.

**1st. question:** *Of the national income, which part belongs to the worker?*

Piketty says: “By definition, the national income measures all the incomes available to the inhabitants of a country over one year”. “National income = capital income + labor income”. “In practical terms, the current national income of around 30.000 Euros per capita in the rich countries was divided approximately like this: 21.000 Euros work income (70%) and 9.000 Euros capital income (30%)”. “The most important case ... is no doubt that of the high participation of capital during the first stages of the Industrial Revolution (1800-1860). In the United Kingdom, whose data is more complete, the historical available data ... suggest that participation of capital expanded ten percentage points of national income, turning from around 35-40% by the end of the XVIII century and beginning of the XIX, to 45-50% by middle XIX century, when the Communist Manifesto was published”.

In an economic analysis, the concept of “national income” is basic, because it enables to distinguish which part corresponds to the worker and which part to capital. Various and excellent charts in Piketty's book show the famous “curve in U”: the capital was strong in the XIX century, it decreased in the first half of the XX, and started to grow with force in the second half of the XX (mainly with the conservative neo-liberal wave).

**2nd. Question:** *The “free market”, angel or demon?*

Piketty says: “That fundamental inequality, which I will express as  $r > g$ , where  $r$  is the rate of return of

capital (that is, what the capital yields, on average, during one year, as profit, dividends, interests, rents and other capital income, as percentage of its value) and  $g$  represents the rate of growth (annual growth of income and production), will play a fundamental role in this book. In a way, it sums up the logic of my conclusions”. “It is important to highlight that the fundamental inequality,  $r > g$ , the main force of divergence in my book, does not make a reference necessarily to an imperfection in the market... It is possible to think that some public institutions and policies could counterbalance the effects of this implacable logic: for example, the introduction of a progressive tax on capital could act on the inequality of  $r > g$ , leveling the remuneration of capital and economic growth”.

For Piketty, free market is more of an angel. It is the lack of adequate public policies what may turn it into a demon.

**3rd:** Which is the main mark of present capitalism?

Piketty says: “Since the years 1970-1980, we are witnessing an unprecedented explosion of the inequality of income in the USA. The 10% at the top went from 30-35% of the national income in the years 1970, to near a 40-45% in 2000-2010, a growth of almost fifteen percentage points of the American national income”. “Of the 15 percentage points of additional national income absorbed by the 10% at the top, some 11 points –almost  $\frac{3}{4}$ – were taken by the 1% (the group whose income in 2010 was more than 352.000 American dollars), and half of it went to the 0'1% (the group whose annual income was above 1'5 million dollars)”. “The new American inequality has a tight relationship with the appearance of a society of “super-executives””. “The thousandth top part of the population (the 0'1%) went from 2% to almost 10% of the national income”. “The proportions of wealth registered in poor or emerging nations as regards the upper hundredth in national income were very similar to those observed in rich countries”. “Tax collection today has turned out to be, or is just about to be,



regressive for the top part of the hierarchy in terms of income in most countries”.

Piketty attributes this upturn of the “super-executives” to the appearance of the modern macro-businesses and to the “meritocratic extremism” with no link to the growth in production, apart from the “great fall of the tax rate of the highest marginal income tax in Anglo-Saxon countries since the years 1970-80”.

**4th: Was Marx right in his analysis of capital?**

Piketty says: “Marx rejected the hypothesis that technological progress could be long-lasting and that productivity would be able to grow continuously –two forces that could, in some measure, be placed in opposition to the process of accumulation and concentration of private capital-. No doubt there were statistical data lacking for him to refine his views... The principle of infinite accumulation he proposed has a fundamental notion, as valid for the analysis of the XXI century as it was for the XIX century”.

The labels “approved” or “dismissed” do not apply to capitalism, or to Marxism. It all depends on the point of view. Generalizations are too frequent, in the Church as well. Marx was an icon of the past; Piketty is the icon of the present.

**5th: In his analysis of *The Capital*, does Piketty contribute something new?**

Piketty says: “The general lesson of my investigation is that the dynamic evolution of the market economy and of private property, left to themselves, has important convergence forces, linked mostly to the expansion of knowledge and qualifications, but also vigorous divergence forces and potentially threatening for our democratic societies and for the values of social justice on which they are founded. The best solution is an annual progressive tax over capital. With it, it is possible to avoid the unending unequal cycle and at the same time safeguard the concurrence forces and incentives so that new primitive accumulations are created”. “The progressive tax expresses, in a certain way, an ideal compromise between social justice and individual freedom”.

The proposal of a progressive tax over capital, as a complement to taxes over income and inheritance, does not eliminate the capitalist system, but it inno-

vates, as a way of preventing “limitless accumulation” which forms part of its DNA.


**6th: In the capitalist system, do salaries go always downwards?**

Piketty says: “In Western Europe, in North America and Japan, the average income went from just over 100 Euros monthly per inhabitant in 1700, to more than 2500 Euros per month in 2012, representing a 25-fold increase. Really, the expansion of productivity, that is, of production per hour worked, was even higher. The average purchasing power in Europe between 1700 and 1820 almost did not change, but after that it more than doubled between 1820 and 1913 and finally it multiplied by 6 between 1913 and 2012”.

Careful with this “average” purchasing power ... Averages hide great disparities. All won, but some much more than the rest.

**7th: Does the gap between rich and poor countries continue to grow?**

Piketty says: “The participation of the rich countries ... in the world income reaches 46% in 2012 if we use the purchasing power parity, opposed to a 57% if we use nominal exchange rates ... Participation of rich countries in world income has diminished systematically from the years 1970-1980. Whatever the measure used, the world seems to have entered a convergence phase between rich and poor countries”. “The historical experience suggests that the main mechanism that allows the convergence between countries is the expansion of knowledge, both internationally and nationally”. “The top thousandth (of the world population) seems presently to be near the ownership of a 20% of the total heritage; the top hundredth, around a 50% of the total heritage; the tenth top, between 80 and 90%; the lower half of the world population has, no doubt, less than 5% of the total heritage”.

The distance between rich and poor countries continues to grow, but more slowly. Piketty's 1.3 chart shows world inequality from 1700 to 2012. Assuming the world average as 100%, the approximate gap is: 140%/90% (of PIB per person) in 1700; 220%/37% in 1950; 245%/45% in 1990, and 225%/61% in 2012. 



# EQUALITY - IN THEORY A PROBLEM, IN PRACTICE A CHALLENGE

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The claim that all people are equal and therefore enjoy the same rights and obligations, is one of the ideas disseminated widely in modern democratic culture. However, there is nothing more apparent than real and concrete facts of enormous inequalities of all kinds existing between human beings. It seems then, that there is something to be corrected in the idea of equality, and even more to be corrected in the reality of inequality. Both -- to correct the idea and to change the reality - are part of the same process.

On the one hand we must assume that the most simple and direct observation of facts gives us ample evidence of the inequality of conditions, capacities, levels of development - physical, psychic, intellectual, moral, aesthetic and artistic -- all of which differentiate us from each other as persons. Besides the obvious differences in gender, age and health, we find among human individuals -- fools and geniuses, saints and devils, ugly and beautiful, weak and strong, aggressive and timid, violent and peaceful, etc; all are differences that generally arise from conditions of biological and natural circumstances, which get accentuated by social and cultural causes, plus the attitudes, behaviors and life styles that we as persons choose to make.

On the other hand, the affirmation of an equal and common dignity for all people sharing a set of "human rights", is undeniably a cultural, moral, legal and political conquest for humanity in order to provide a healthy and civilized social structure. We are members of the same species -- we form one single human society and we share the capacity to love, to know, to become thrilled, to instigate and carry out free choices.

It is in this sense that we all define ourselves as equally human persons; this is the conviction that religions have historically claimed -- that we are not just biological but also spiritual sons and daughters of the same Father -- beings, created in the image and likeness of God, and they have offered metaphysical philosophies that affirm that every human individual shares with all the others "one same essential human nature".

Today this profound equality of human beings is put into question not only by economic and social realities, but it is also theoretically threatened by modern scientism. Actually, positivism and scientism -- rejecting religion and rational metaphysics as true sources of knowledge -- have weakened the belief in the existence of a common essence with equal dignity for all individuals of the human species. At the same time advances in biology and neuroscience have done nothing but incessantly emphasize that knowledge and scientific convictions consider as biological and cerebral the causes for inequality among human individuals.

Therefore, it is necessary to develop and provide new intellectual bases for the claim of substantial equality of human beings, since the ancient religious and philosophical foundations, just as modern ideological foundations, have been seriously weakened. At the same time, we must recognize and accept the biological and mentally accepted fact of human inequality, as a prerequisite for any policy and/or activity oriented to focus on prospects of generating economic, social, political and cultural conditions of greater equality.

In synthesis, we need a new policy formulation that would be theoretical, scientific and legal, proposing and establishing a new and better articulation between the recognition of natural inequalities and the affirmation of the essential equality of human beings. This would serve as the foundation for a new and superior civilization.

In this new formulation, equality could not be understood as the point of departure, or as the condition in which people find themselves today; but rather equality would have to be accepted as the result and goal to be achieved through a process embracing education, economics, politics and culture.

The formulation of the concept of equality done by Antonio Gramsci is illuminating: "The concept of equality that must be developed to found a new order, must not only put people in a common relation to the right of property, but must arrive at theorizing the



potential of self-consciousness and self-guidance of individuals, as structural elements of the community.

The community should consider itself as the product of a collective elaboration by free-wills and ideas, achieved through concrete efforts of individuals, and not by any predetermined process by disconnected individuals: therefore, the obligation exists for interior discipline and external liberty of process.”(Notebooks, 751)

Now we must focus on and develop several fundamental ideas affirmed by Gramsci:

1) Equality is a concept needing continual developing and this involves comprehensive and complex intellectual work. In the case of human beings, respecting equality achieves and even enhances people’s diversity and their inherent freedom to decide for themselves. Diversity and freedom inevitably generate inequalities in the economic, political and cultural fields, and these inequalities generated by diversity and freedom must be respected but always within a framework of established structures and institutions to bring about real social justice. All this makes us understand the complexity required by the theoretical elaboration, and aids us to avoid the simplifications that have characterized liberal and socialist ideologies.

2) The concept of equality (to be developed and reworked) should become one of the foundation stones for a new social order, i.e. the creation of a new civilization. This means by overcoming: a) in the market the difference between autonomous agents and subordinates; b) in government the separation between rulers and ruled. It’s a transformation that is very deep and radical.

3) There is no denying the equality of persons before the law, nor the right of everyone to have access to property -- both necessary equalities; but we must go further. The equality aspired to by humans is not just what is expressed formally as “equality before the law” and as “equal opportunities”, but an equality so “substantive” that it can be experienced subjectively by every person.

4) The equality that has to be established at a level of human development superior to that of today, is one that implies enhancement of self-awareness and the capacity for self-direction by individuals. Indeed, as long as there is distinction and separation

between rulers and those ruled, between organizers and subordinates, there will be no true equality. But overcoming these distinctions can only be brought about when all people acquire freedom, autonomy and the capacity for self government.

If such equality is possible and desirable, then education is very important . But it would have to be an education generating self-awareness and the ability for auto- education, an education available to everyone and especially to the social groups currently subordinated and managed.

It would have to be an education capable of assuming as the point of departure the unequal and diversified reality of those who receive it, and from there on be guided to generate in everyone all those processes of personal, intellectual and moral development that enhance the capabilities and vocations of each one so as to achieve the condition for autonomy/

An essential aspect of the social construction of equality which does not deny the differences and essential diversity of human beings, is the feeling of brotherhood and sisterhood that we must share not only at the level of intellectual understanding, but also in terms of sensitivity, affections and tenderness.

Without a solidarity that leads us to feel the needs of others as our own, and compassion (suffering together with others) for the pain of our sisters and brothers , there is no true equality, since we are social beings who necessarily live in community, and just as we work for one another we also have need for one another.

And beyond all the inequalities that arise from biology and nature, economy and politics, education and training, and/or by our own choices, we must never forget that because of our common essence, we all have equal dignity and value , and the same capacity for spiritual development.

Unlike many other human qualities and skills such as the cognitive fields, sports, communication, etc. in which potentials are noted to differ so much from one person to another, in spirituality we come across perhaps the only truly democratic human potential: that is the one potential in which we all share -- basically consisting in **the capacity to love** : love of oneself, love for others, love for nature and our Mother Earth, and love for the “TOTAL BEING”.



# INEQUALITY FROM A COSMOPOLITAN PERSPECTIVE

JUAN ANTONIO FERNÁNDEZ MANZANO

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To address global inequality as a problem and not as a phenomenon, already somehow implies considering it from a cosmopolitan perspective. I will try to explain what I mean by this idea. From my point of view, "cosmopolitanism" forms part of the Aristotelian premise maintaining that humans are essentially social and political beings, as expressed by the displeasure produced by isolation; not surprisingly, "being ostracized" already in ancient times was one of the most severe forms of punishment because it meant separating a person from her or his social and family niche. Consequently, any project for living-well can not be understood separated from a determined social-political environment.

The idea of the natural sociability of human beings, implies another view point that tends to be forgotten: there exists a bond that links individuals who are part of a political community and in some way inter-twines their destinations. That "lone, self-sufficient, powerful individual" presented by liberalism is a gross fiction. Humans are much more inter-dependent and vulnerable than commonly thought. Cosmopolitanism emphasizes the idea that faced with some eventualities we can not remain indifferent because we are responsible for one another.

Being "cosmopolitan" in no way rejects membership in a polis. Cosmo-pólita, or citizen of the world, is not synonymous with an "a-politic citizen of a polis". Cosmopolitanism does not deny that the life of people takes place in a locally determined policy-framework. Undoubtedly, affections, loyalties and sentimental ties tend to get narrow between those who are closer, but the step that cosmopolitanism advances, as stated above, is to consider that the link of responsibility that binds individuals with other citizens of their community does not prohibit the establishment of new links with their peers, even though they might be members of other communities.

This affirmation of universal brotherhood may sound too generalized or simply good-intentional. To make this idea clear, we maintain that the human

rights of a citizen of a particular state should never be preferred to the those of any other person. To be called "cosmopolitan" assumes the initial refusal to consider the collection of basic human rights and duties to be defined solely by membership in any particular political system.

This presupposes advocating for the convergence between the rights of citizens and human rights. Being cosmopolitan implies defending the claim of individuals, regardless of their nationality, to a higher political community, whether or not such should exist, which recognizes them as members by the mere fact of their being human beings. Peaceful co-existence is possible only if the basic human rights of those affected by our decisions are respected.

As it is easy to deduce, this cosmopolitan premise does not question the rights of individuals to belong to their particular political communities. Rather, what cosmopolitanism denounces is that belonging to a State should be the distinctive element that makes the list of human rights available or that the needs of a political community should give priority to a hierarchy of superior rights.

But it is not a question with an exclusively moral dimension. Cosmopolitanism in this era of capitalist globalization has shown that there is a growing range of issues that actually affect everyone and therefore demanded a cosmopolitan approach. The ecological crisis and the shortage of raw materials, food and water, the technological revolution, genetic manipulation, advances in biotechnology, the preponderance of economics at the global level, the growing inequalities and extreme poverty that affects a large part of humanity, the growth of exclusion and new social gaps caused by unequal access to new technologies, wars and violations of human rights are just some of the highlights.

It is completely unacceptable -- from a minimally democratic point of view-- that institutional arrangements, rules, practices and procedures governing international relations, companies and other actors at the global level, should be based on the unequal

*Translation by Justiniano Liebl*



powers of each actor. The creation of a stable and peaceful environment in which the basic rights of individuals are met is one of the primary goals of any political community. In its absence, those entities with the capacity to prevail -- whether they are countries with the strongest economies or companies with greater turnover -- become the only agents capable of acting on a global stage while using this capacity to pursue their own interests without any popular (democratic) power being able to control their activity.

In a global environment lacking democratic rules, legitimate political decisions taken in national parliaments are left impotent to produce any relevant effects. This directly violates Article 28 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (HR), which is one of the keystones of the entire Declaration. This article states that everyone is entitled to a social and international order able to guarantee the other rights and freedoms set forth in the Declaration lest the Declaration should become pure rhetoric without any practical effects.

That means creating a system of international rules that can be imposed on all States, through which it is considered that there are certain lifestyles that are minimally below any reasonable definition of human decency. Malnutrition, illiteracy, diseases that can be abolished, existence in a miserable environment, high infant mortality and low life expectancy can not be tolerated. There is no justification that for the mere fate of having come to birth in certain areas of the planet, the vital expectations of a child should be clouded over by such aspects.

Nor can there be any valid argument that the victims themselves share the blame for these situations. It is the currently prevailing international economic order which is responsible that many of these tragedies are periodically repeated. If we study the data of the worldwide distribution of income, it is easily verifiable that no theory of justice could accept, beneath any moderately sensible standard, the final distribution of wealth being such that a privileged 5% of our global population should come to monopolize 90% of our global wealth.

This way of dividing the world is morally unacceptable and certainly does not respond to any

political criteria adopted democratically. The global architecture, based on the shady need for lobbyists and the absence of democratic counterweights is highly responsible for the poverty and the continuing violations of human rights in the most disadvantaged countries. Rich countries supporting dictatorial regimes in the impoverished world is an example of abusing power for their own advantage.

The same happens with the pharmaceutical industry, whose health benefits imply neglect for those who can not afford the drugs; or the uncontrolled financial flow into tax shelters, making possible large-scale evasion of taxes by the richest people. It's all part of the power machine contributing to increase global polarization. Cosmopolitan thinking considers it an obligation, not only to compensate the damages caused but to change the political and economic structures that have given rise to them. And this obligation is in direct proportion to the amount of power at hand.

We have offered a three fold consideration: a) prudential or strategic -- with focus on the disaster looming over mankind; b) moral -- by reinstating the moral imperative of not neglecting the basic needs of others, and c) social affinity -- in so far as individuals unite to live under common institutions not just out of fear, neither just to establish agreements for mutual advantage, nor even just from a sense of moral duty, but from the affinity that links individuals with one another and the cohesion necessary to enjoy it.

It's true that affinities can be questioned, citing that there are different types of securities, but the fact remains that being able to recognize and share many of them strengthens our conviction that we are all human beings sharing in the structural essence which constitutes us.

And finally we maintain the need for a free and egalitarian community, where nobody remains controlled by anyone else, so that individuals are able to develop their personality freely and fully. So by linking these prudential, moral and social affinity factors we establish the basic arguments and feelings that convince cosmopolitan thinkers to defend the creation of a world that would be at least somewhat better than what we have today.



- 01/06: João de Aquino, presidente del Sindicato de Trabajadores de Nova Iguaçu, RJ, Brasil, asesinado.
- 07/07: Carlos Bonilla, obrero, mártir del derecho al trabajo en Citlaltépetl, México.
- 08/07: Martín Ayala, militante, mártir de la solidaridad de los marginados de su pueblo salvadoreño.
- 13/07: Riccy Mabel Martínez, símbolo de la lucha del pueblo de Honduras contra la impunidad militar.
- 15/07: Julio Quevedo Quezada, catequista de la diócesis de El Quiché, asesinado, Guatemala.
- 27/07: Eliseo Castellano, sacerdote, Puerto Rico.
- 09/08: Miguel Tomaszek y Zbigniew Strzalkowski, franciscanos, misioneros en Perú, asesinados, testigos de la paz.
- 25/08: Alejandro Dordí Negroni, misionero, mártir de la fe y de la promoción humana, Perú.
- 14/09: Alfredo Aguirre y Fortunato Collazos, mártires de la entrega a sus hermanos de San Juan de Lurigancho, Perú.
- 30/09: Vicente Matute y Francisco Guevara, indígenas mártires de la lucha por la tierra, Honduras.
- 30/09: José Luis Cerrón, universitario, mártir de la solidaridad entre los pobres de Huancayo, Perú.
- 16/12: Indígenas mártires de Cauca, Colombia.

**1996: 20 años**

- 06/03: Pascuala Rosado Cornejo, fundadora de la comunidad autónoma de Huaycán, asesinada en Lima.
- 17/04: Masacre de Eldorado dos Carajás, PA, Brasil. La Policía Militar mata 21 personas que defendían el derecho a la tierra.
- 05/10: El ejército guatemalteco asesina 11 campesinos, ex-refugiados en México, en la comunidad Aurora 8 de Octubre.
- 10/11: Jafeth Morales López, militante popular animador de CEBs, asesinado por paramilitares en Ocaña, Colombia.

**2001: 15 años**

- 05/05: Bárbara Ann Ford, 64 años, hermana de la Caridad, estadounidense, en El Quiché, Guatemala.
- 19/09: Yolanda Cerón Delgado, de la Compañía de María, directora de la Pastoral Social de Tumaco, Colombia, asesinada.
- 19/12: Claudio "Pocho" Lepratti, 36 años, líder comunitario, asesinado en Rosario, Argentina.
- 28/12: Edwin Ortega, campesino chochoano, líder juvenil, asesinado por las FARC en el río Jiquamiandó, Colombia.

**2006: 10 años**

- 18/09: Jorge Julio López, luchador por los Derechos Humanos, primer desaparecido en la democracia, Argentina.

**2011: 5 años**

- 27/02: Sebastião Bezerra da Silva, del Movimiento de los Derechos Humanos, mártir de la tortura, Tocantins, Brasil.
- 24/05: José Cláudio Ribeiro da Silva y María do Espírito Santo, matrimonio ambientalista, asesinados por luchar contra la devastación de la floresta, en Ipixuna, PA, Brasil.
- 27/05: Adelino Ramos, dirigente campesino, víctima por su lucha contra el latifundio, en Porto Velho, RO, Brasil.
- 01/09: Pe. José Reinel Restrepo Idárraga, líder contra la minería, asesinado, en Marmoto, Colombia.

# ANTONIO MONTESINOS PRIZE FOR PROPHETIC IDEAS IN THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

20th Edition

## AWARDED IN HONOR OF EDUARDO GALEANO

Eduardo GALEANO, born in Montevideo, Uruguay, in an upper-class Catholic family of Italian, Spanish, Welsh and German ancestry. In his youth, he worked in a factory, as a cartoonist, painter, courier, typist and bank teller, among other jobs.

In the coup d'état on July 27, 1973, Galeano was imprisoned and forced to flee Uruguay. His book *Las venas abiertas de América Latina* was censored by the military dictatorships in Uruguay, Argentina, and Chile. He went to live in Argentina, where he founded the magazine; Cultural Crisis.

In 1976, he travelled to Spain, where he wrote his famous trilogy: *Memoria del fuego* (a review of Latin American history), in 1984.

In September 2010, he received the Stig Dagerman prize, one of the most prestigious to be awarded to authors in Switzerland, dedicated annually by the Stig Dagerman Society to whichever writer acknowledges the importance of free speech through the promotion of cross-cultural understanding. Galeano was given the prize with distinction for being "always, and unswervingly on the side of those imprisoned/condemned, by listening and transmitting their testimony through poetry, journalism, prose, and activism", according to the judges. The Latin American Agenda was one of the grateful records of the Great Homeland, and is proud to have included his writing in our pages. His Latin American legacy will live on.



# 2016: U.N. INTERNATIONAL YEAR OF...

## ...OF CAMELIDS

«The General Assembly,

Noting that camelids are strictly herbivorous, even-toed ungulate mammals that first appeared in America 45 million years ago,

Noting also that there are six living species of camelids, namely, dromedary camels, bactrian camels, llamas, alpacas, vicuñas and guanacos, in North Africa, South-West and Central Asia and South America,

Recognizing the economic and cultural importance of camelids in the lives of the people living in the areas where they are domesticated and used as a source of food and wool and as pack animals,

Convinced of the need to raise awareness at all levels to promote the protection of camelids and the consumption of the goods produced from these mammals in a sustainable manner,

Reaffirming Economic and Social Council resolution 1980/67 of 25 July 1980 on international years and anniversaries and General Assembly resolutions 53/199 of 15 December 1998 and 61/185 of 20 December 2006 on the proclamation of international years,

1. Decides to declare 2016 the International Year of Camelids;

2. Encourages all Member States, the United Nations system and all other actors to take advantage of the International Year to promote awareness among the public of the economic and cultural importance of camelids and to foster the consumption of the goods produced from these mammals, including edible goods, in order to contribute to the eradication of hunger, food insecurity and malnutrition».

Plenary Session, November 7, 2014  
Resolution A/C.2/69/L.41

## ...OF PULSES

«The General Assembly,

Noting that pulses are annual leguminous crops yielding between 1 and 12 grains or seeds of variable size, shape and colour within a pod, used for both food and feed, and that the term “pulses” is limited to crops harvested solely for dry grain, thereby excluding crops harvested green for food, which are classified as vegetable crops, as well as those crops used mainly for oil extraction and leguminous crops that are used exclusively for sowing purposes,

Noting also that pulse crops such as lentils, beans, peas and chickpeas are a critical source of plant-based proteins and amino acids for all the people,

Recalling that the World Food Programme and other food aid initiatives use pulses as a critical part of the general food basket,

Desiring to focus attention on the role that pulses play as part of sustainable food production aimed towards food security and nutrition,

Recognizing that pulses are leguminous plants that have nitrogen-fixing properties which can contribute to increasing soil fertility and have a positive impact on the environment,

Recognizing also that health organizations around the world recommend eating pulses as part of a healthy diet to address obesity, as well as to prevent and help manage chronic diseases such as diabetes, coronary conditions and cancer,

Believing that such a celebration would create a unique opportunity to encourage connections throughout the food chain that would better utilize pulse-based proteins, further global production of pulses, better utilize crop rotations and address the challenges in the trade of pulses,

Affirming the need to heighten public awareness of the nutritional benefits of pulses and to further sustainable agriculture,

**Decides to declare 2016 the International Year of Pulses.**

71th Plenary Session, December, 20, 2013  
Resolution A/RES/68/231



January							July						
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February							August						
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March							September						
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May							November						
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2015

Latinoamericana



2017

January'2017						
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June						
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August						
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September						
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October						
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November						
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December'2017						
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30	31					



1 F	1 M	1 T
2 S	2 T	2 W
<b>3 S</b>	3 W	3 T
4 M	4 T	4 F
5 T	5 F	5 S
6 W	6 S	<b>6 S</b>
7 T	<b>7 S</b>	7 M
8 F	8 M	8 T
9 S	9 T	9 W
<b>10 S</b>	10 W <sup>Ashes</sup>	10 T
11 M	11 T	11 F
12 T	12 F	12 S
13 W	13 S	<b>13 S</b>
14 T	<b>14 S</b>	14 M
15 F	15 M	15 T
16 S	16 T	16 W
<b>17 S</b>	17 W	17 T
18 M	18 T	18 F
19 T	19 F	19 S
20 W	20 S	<b>20 S</b>
21 T	<b>21 S</b>	21 M
22 F	22 M	22 T
23 S	23 T	23 M
<b>24 S</b>	24 W	24 T
25 M	25 T	25 F
26 T	26 F	26 S
27 W	27 S	<b>27 S</b> <sup>Easter</sup>
28 T	<b>28 S</b>	28 M
29 F	29 M	29 T
30 S		30 W
<b>31 S</b>		31 T



2016

April

May

June

1 F	<b>1 S</b>	1 W
2 S	2 M	2 T
<b>3 S</b>	3 T	3 F
4 M	4 W	4 S
5 T	5 T	<b>5 S</b>
6 W	6 F	6 M
7 T	7 S	7 T
8 F	<b>8 S</b>	8 W
9 S	9 M	9 T
<b>10 S</b>	10 T	10 F
11 M	11 W	11 S
12 T	12 T	<b>12 S</b>
13 W	13 F	13 M
14 W	14 S	14 T
15 F	<b>15 S</b>	15 W
16 S	16 M	16 T
<b>17 S</b>	17 T	17 F
18 M	18 W	18 S
19 T	19 T	<b>19 S</b>
20 W	20 F	20 M
21 T	21 S	21 T
22 F	<b>22 S</b>	22 W
23 S	23 M	23 T
<b>24 S</b>	24 T	24 F
25 M	25 W	25 S
26 T	26 T	<b>26 S</b>
27 W	27 F	27 M
28 T	28 S	28 T
29 F	<b>29 S</b>	29 W
30 S	30 M	30 T
	31 T	



1 F	1 M	1 T
2 S	2 T	2 F
<b>3 S</b>	3 W	3 S
4 M	4 T	<b>4 S</b>
5 T	5 F	5 M
6 W	6 S	6 T
7 T	<b>7 S</b>	7 W
8 F	8 M	8 T
9 S	9 T	9 F
<b>10 S</b>	10 W	10 S
11 M	11 T	<b>11 S</b>
12 T	12 F	12 M
13 W	13 S	13 T
14 T	<b>14 S</b>	14 W
15 F	15 M	15 T
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<b>17 D</b>	17 W	17 S
18 M	18 T	<b>18 S</b>
19 T	19 F	19 M
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21 T	<b>21 S</b>	21 W
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<b>24 S</b>	24 W	24 S
25 M	25 T	<b>25 S</b>
26 T	26 F	26 M
27 W	27 S	27 T
28 T	<b>28 S</b>	28 W
29 F	29 M	29 T
30 S	30 T	30 F
<b>31 S</b>	31 W	



2016

October

November

December

1 S

**2 S**

3 M

4 T

5 W

6 T

7 F

8 S

**9 S**

10 M

11 T

12 W

13 T

14 F

15 S

**16 S**

17 M

18 T

19 W

20 T

21 F

22 S

**23 S**

24 M

25 T

26 W

27 T

28 F

29 S

**30 S**

31 M

1 T

2 W

3 T

4 F

5 S

**6 S**

7 M

8 T

9 W

10 T

11 F

12 S

**13 S**

14 M

15 T

16 W

17 T

18 F

19 S

**20 S**

21 M

22 T

23 W

24 T

25 F

26 S

**27 S** Advent, A

28 M

29 T

30 W

1 T

2 F

3 S

**4 S**

5 M

6 T

7 W

8 T

9 F

10 S

**11 S**

12 M

13 T

14 W

15 T

16 F

17 S

**18 S**

19 M

20 T

21 W

22 T

23 F

24 S

**25 S**

26 M

27 T

28 W

29 T

30 F

31 S



2016

December 2015				M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2	3	4	5	6	21	22	23	24	25	26	27
				7	8	9	10	11	12	13	28	29	30	31			
				14	15	16	17	18	19	20							

Monday		Tuesday		Wednesday		Thursday	
28 Lunes		29 Martes		30 Miercoles		31 Jueves	







[illegible]

**Chinese year 4712-4713. Year 2769 *ab Urbe condita*. Buddhist year 2582. Armenian year 1465.**





# 31 Thursday

# 1 Friday

# 2 Saturday

Num 6,22-27 / Ps 66 / Gal 4, 4-7 / Lk 2,16-21  
 1508: The colonization of Puerto Rico begins.  
 1804: Haiti becomes world's first Black republic. National holiday.  
 1959: Victory of the Cuban revolution.  
 1977: Mauricio López, Rector of the University of Mendoza, Argentina, member of the World Council of Churches, disappeared.  
 1990: Maureen Courtney and Teresa Rosales, Religious women, assassinated by U.S.-backed Contras in Nicaragua.  
 1994: NAFTA comes into effect. Indigenous campesinos stage Zapatista uprising in Chiapas, Mexico.  
 2003: Lula takes office as President in Brazil.

## International Day of Peace



1Jn 2,29-3,6 / Ps 97  
 Jn 1,19-28  
 Basil the Great  
 Gregory of Nazienzen  
 J.K. Wilhelm Loehe  
 1904: US Marines land in the Dominican Republic to "protect U.S. interests."  
 1979: Francisco Jentel, defender of Indigenous peoples and campesinos, victim of Brazilian security forces.  
 1981: José Manuel de Souza «Zé Piau», worker, victim of the «grileiros» in Pará, Brazil.  
 1994: Daniel Arrollano dies, devoted guardian of the memory of Argentinean martyrs.  
 Last quarter: 05h30m (UTC) in Libra



# 3

Genevieve

Epiphany  
 Isa 60, 1-6 / Ps 71  
 Eph 3,2-6 / Mt 2,1-12

1511: Agüeybaná, 'El Bravo', leads a rebellion of the Taino people against Spanish occupiers in Puerto Rico, the 'Cry of Coayuco'.  
 1981: Diego Quic, Popular Indigenous leader, catechist, disappeared, Guatemala.  
 1994: Antulio Parrilla Bonilla dies, bishop who fought for Puerto Rican independence and the cause of the persecuted, the "Las Casas" of Puerto Rico.



4

Monday

Rigoberto  
1493: Columbus expedition begins return voyage with up to 25 kidnapped Indigenous people.  
1975: José Patricio Leon, "Pato", a Young Christian Student leader in Chile, is disappeared.  
2005: The Supreme Court authorizes the trial of Pinochet for Operation Condor.  
2010: The United Arab Emirates complete the *Burj Dubai*, the highest building in the world, 818 meters, 370 more than the *Taipei 101*.

1Jn 3,22-4,6 / Ps 2  
Mt 4,12-17.23-25

5

Tuesday

Telesfor and Emiliana  
*Kaj Munk*  
1534: Guarocuya, "Enriquillo," Christian leader in La Española (Dominican Republic) rebels in defense of his people.  
1785: Spanish Queen Mary I orders the suppression of all Brazilian industry except that of clothing for slaves.  
2007: Axel Mencos, hero of the Guatemalan resistance and the steadfast church, dies.

1Jn 4,7-10 / Ps 71  
Mk 6,34-44

6

Wednesday

Gaspar, Melchior and Balthasar  
1848: The Guarani are declared Paraguayan citizens by decree of Carlos A. López.  
1915: Agrarian reform in Mexico, fruit of the revolution, first distribution of landholdings in Latin America.  
1927: To combat Sandino, American troops occupy Nicaragua. They will leave only in 1933.  
1982: Victoria de la Roca, a Guatemalan Religious who worked for the poor, is disappeared.  
1986: Julio González, bishop of Puno, Peru, dies in a suspicious accident.  
1992: Augusto Maria and Augusto Conte, human rights activists, are martyred in Argentina.

1Jn 4,11-18 / Ps 71  
Mk 6,45-52





7

## Thursday

1Jn 4,19-5,4 / Ps 71

Raymond of Penafort

Lk 4,14-22a

1835: Victory of Cabanagem, Brazil. Rebels take Belem and govern the province.

1981: Sebastião Mearim, rural leader in Para, Brazil, assassinated by «grileiros».

1983: Felipe and Mary Barreda, Christian revolutionary activists, are assassinated by U.S. backed Contras in Nicaragua.

1999: Barotomé Carrasca Briseño dies, bishop of Oaxaca, Mexico, defender of the poor and of Indigenous people.

8

## Friday

1Jn 5,5-13 / Ps 147

Severino

Lk 5,12-16

1454: Pope Nicholas authorizes the enslavement of any African nation by the king of Portugal as long as the people are baptized.

1642: Galileo Galilei dies, condemned by the Inquisition. The Vatican will "rehabilitate" him 350 years later.

1850: Juan, leader of the Queimado revolution is hanged in Espírito Santo, Brazil.

1912: Founding of the African National Congress.

1982: Domingo Cahuec Sic, an indigenous Achi delegate of the Word, is killed by the military in Rabinal, Guatemala.

9

## Saturday

1Jn 5,14-21 / Ps 149

Jn 3,22-30

Eulogio, Julián, Basilia

1662: Authorities in Lisbon order the extermination of the Janduim Indians in Brazil.

1858: First known strike in Brazil, by typographers, pioneers of workers' struggles there.

1959: Rigoberta Menchú is born Chimel, Guatemala.

10

Baptism of the Lord

Isa 42,1-4-6.7 / Ps 28

Acts 10,34-38 / Mk 3,15-16.21-22

Aldo

1911: Five month strike by the shoemakers of São Paulo, for an 8 hour day.

1920: The League of Nations is created following the massacres of the First World War.

1978: Pedro Joaquin Chamorro is assassinated, journalist who fought for civil liberties against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

1982: Dora Azmitia «Menchy», 23 years old, teacher, martyr to young Catholic students, Guatemala.

1985: Ernesto Fernández Espino, a Lutheran pastor, martyred. New Moon: 01h31m (UTC) in Capricorn



11 Monday

1Sam 1,1-8 / Ps 115

Higinio, Martín de León

Mk 1,14-20

1839: Eugenio María de Hostos is born, advocate for Puerto Rican independence and Caribbean confederation.

2005: Raul Castro Bocel, campesino anti-mining activist, killed by Guatemalan authorities.

12 Tuesday

1Sam 1,9-20 /Int.: 1Sam 2

Mk 1,21-28

Benedict, Tatiana

1694: 6500 men begin the siege of Palmares that will last until February 6.

1948: The United States Supreme Court proclaims the equality of blacks and whites in schools.

1970: Nigerian Civil War ends with the surrender of Biafra.

13 Wednesday

1Sam 3,1-20 / Ps 39

Mk 1,29-39

Hilary, George Fox

1825: Frei Caneca, republican revolutionary and hero of Ecuadorian Confederation, shot.

1879: Roca begins the desert campaign in Patagonia Argentina.

1893: U.S. Marines land in Hawaii to impose a constitution, stripping monarchical authority and disenfranchising the Indigenous poor.

2001: Earthquake in El Salvador, 7.9 on the Richter scale, 1200 dead, 4200 disappeared.





# 14 Thursday

1Sm 4,1,11 / Ps 43

Mk 1,40-45

Fulgence

1988: Miguel Angel Pavón, director of the Honduran Human Rights Commission, and Moisés Landaverde are assassinated.

1997: 700,000 South Korean strikers march on behalf of social rights.

# 15 Friday

1Sam 8,4-22a / Ps 88

Mk 2,1-12

Ef시오

1919: Rosa Luxemburg, revolutionary social philosopher, killed following an unsuccessful revolt in Berlin.

1929: Martin Luther King Jr. born in Atlanta, Georgia, USA.

1970: Leonel Rugama dies in the revolutionary struggle against the Somoza dictatorship.

1976: The government of Bahia (Brazil) suppresses the police records of the Candomblés.

1981: Estela Pajuelo Grimani, campesina, 55 years old, 11 children, martyr to solidarity, Peru.

1982: The Constitution of Canada acknowledges the rights of First Nations.

1990: Collapse of the Brazilian currency.

# 16 Saturday

1Sam 9,1-19 / Ps 20

Mk 2,13-17

Marcel

1899: Treaty of Berlin divided Samoan Archipelago between Germany and the USA, usurping traditional rulers.

1992: Chapultepec Peace Accords end 12 year civil war in El Salvador.

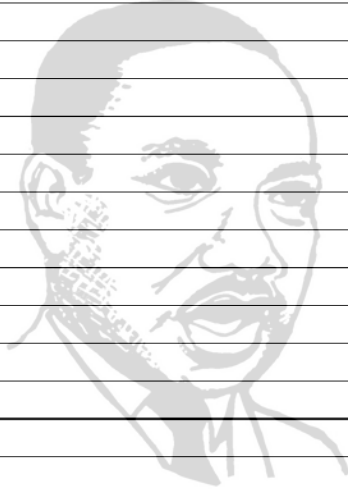
## World Day against Child Slavery

In memory of Igbal Mashib, a child slave who, with the support of the Liberation Front of Pakistan Workers, closed several factories employing child slaves (solidaridad.net).

First quarter: 23h26m (UTC) in Aries



Luther King



# 17

Second Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isa 62,1-5 / Ps 95

2Cor 12,4-11 / Jn 62,1-5

Anthony Abbot

1961: Patrice Lumumba, African independence hero, murdered.

1981: Ana M. Castillo, militant Salvadoran Christian murdered.

1981: Silvia Maribel Arriola, nurse, first Religious martyr in the Salvadoran revolution.

1988: Jaime Restrepo López, priest, martyr for the cause of the poor, Colombia.

1991: The Persian Gulf War begins.

1994: Earthquake in Los Angeles.

1996: Juan Luis Segundo, liberation theologian dies Uruguay.

2010: Earthquake in Haiti, 7.3 on the Richter scale. More than 250,000 dead, plus total destruction.

2010: A commission in the Netherlands concludes that the invasion of Irak in 2003 was illegal.



18 Monday

1Sam 15,16-23 / Ps 49  
Mk 2,18-22

Beatrice, Prisca

*The confession of Peter*

1535: Founding of the City of Kings, (Lima).

1867: Rubén Darío is born in Metapa, Nicaragua.

1978: Germán Cortés, Christian activist, a martyr for the cause of justice in Chile.

1981: José Eduardo, union leader in Acre, Brazil, contracted murder.

1982: Sergio Bertén, Belgian Religious, and companions are martyred because of their solidarity with Guatemalan peasants.

19 Tuesday

1Sam 16,1-13 / Ps 88  
Mk 2,23-28

Mario, Martha

*Henry of Upsala*

1897: Battle of Tabuleirinho: the *sertanejos* stop the Army 3 kms. Outside Canudos, Brasil.

1817: An army under General José de San Martín crosses the Andes from Argentina to liberate Chile from Spanish rule.

1969: Jan Palach, a Czech student, dies after immolating himself as a political protest against Soviet occupation.

20 Wednesday

1Sam 17,32-51 / Ps 143  
Mk 3,1-6

Fabian and Sebastian

1973: Amílcar Cabral, anti-colonial leader in Guinea Bissau, killed by Portuguese police.

1979: Octavio Ortiz, a priest, and four catechists, are killed by government troops in El Salvador.

1982: Carlos Morales, Dominican, martyr among the Indigenous campesinos of Guatemala.

2009: Barack Hussein Obama, first Afro-American President of the United States, takes office.





## Mk 3,7-12

Agnes

1972: Gerardo Valencia Cano, bishop of Buenaventura (Colombia), prophet and martyr for liberation.

1974: Campesinos of Valle Alto, Bolivia are martyred.

1980: María Ercilia and Ana Coralia Martínez, students, Red Cross workers catechists, martyrs in El Salvador.

1984: The Movement of Workers without Land (MST) formed in Cascavel, Brazil.

2000: Indigenous and popular uprising in Ecuador.

## Mk 3,13-19

Vincent

1565: «Tata» Vasco de Quiroga, bishop of Michoacán, precursor of the Indigenous reductions.

1932: Peasant plan to revolt against oppression in El Salvador sparks massive reactionary violence.

1982: Massacre of campesinos from Pueblo Nuevo, Colombia.

2006: Evo Morales, Indigenous Aymara, becomes President of Bolivia.

## Mk 3,20-21

## Ildefonse

1870: 173 Piegan people massacred by U.S. cavalry on the banks of the Marias River in Montana.

1914: Revolt of the Juazeiro, Brazil. Victory of the sertanejos commanded by P. Cícero.

1958: Fall of the last Venezuelan dictator: General Marcos Pérez Jiménez.

1983: Segundo Francisco Guamán, a Quechua campesino, murdered.

## Third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Neh 8,2-4a.5-6.8-10 / Ps 18

1Cor 12,12-30 / Mk 1,1-4;4,14-21

Francis de Sales

1835: Blacks organize an urban revolt in Salvador, Brazil.

1977: Five union lawyers were murdered in their Atocha Street office by neo-fascists in Madrid, Spain.

Full Moon: 04h53m (UTC) in Cancer





25 Monday

Acts 22,3-16 / Ps 116

Conversion of St. Paul  
Mk 16,15-18  
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity  
1917: USA buys Danish West Indies for \$25 million.  
1919: League of Nations founded at Treaty of Versailles talks following World War I.  
1524: The "Twelve Apostles of Mexico" leave Spain, Franciscans.  
1554: Founding of São Paulo, Brazil.  
1996: Leiland Muir wins forced sterilization case (Canada).

26 Tuesday

2Tim 1,1-8 / Ps 95

Timothy, Titus and Silas  
1500: Vicente Pinzón disembarks in North East Brazil - before Pedro Alvares Cabral.  
1813: Juan Pablo Duarte, Dominican Republic's national hero, is born.  
1914: José Gabriel, 'Cura Brochero', priest and prophet of Argentina's campesinos, dies.  
2001: Earthquake in India: 50,000 victims.

27 Wednesday

2Sam 7,4-17 / Ps 88

Angela de Merici, Lidia  
Lk 10,1-9  
1554: Pablo de Torres, bishop of Panama, first exile from Latin America, for defending the Indigenous peoples.  
1945: The Auschwitz concentration camp in Poland is liberated. Holocaust Memorial Day.  
1973: Paris Peace Accords bring the Vietnam War to an end.  
1977: Miguel Angel Nicolau, a Salesian priest committed to the youth of Argentina, is disappeared.





# 28 Thursday

2Sam 7,18-19,24-29 / Ps 131

Thomas Aquinas

Mk 4,21-25

1853: José Martí, 'Apostle of Cuban Independence', is born.  
1909: US troops leave Cuba after 11 years for the first time since the end of the Spanish American War.  
1916: Manitoba women get the vote (Canada).  
1979: Puebla Conference begins, Mexico.

# 29 Friday

2Sam 11,1-4a.5-10a-13-17 / Ps 50

Valero

Mk 4,26-34

1863: Shoshone resistance broken by massacre of over 200 people on the Bear River in Idaho by US cavalry.  
1895: José Martí, poet and national hero, launches the Cuban war of independence.  
1985: First national congress of MST.  
1999: The dollar reaches 2.15 reales, critical moment in the fall of the Brazilian currency.  
2001: Pinochet is tried as the author of the crimes of the "caravan of death."  
2010: Tony Blair testifies before the commission investigating him for his participation in the invasion of Irak in 2003.

# 30 Saturday

2Sam 12,1-7a.10-17 / Ps 50

Martina

Mk 4,35-41

1629: Antônio Raposo, bandit, destroys the Guarani missions of Guaira, P.R., Brazil, and enslaves 4,000 Indigenous persons.  
1948: Mahatma Gandhi is assassinated.  
1972: Fourteen civil rights marchers are killed on Bloody Sunday in Northern Ireland by British paratroopers.

Non-Violence and Peace Day

Mahatma Gandhi



# 31

Fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 1,4.5.17-19 / Ps 70

1Cor 12,31-13,13 / Lk 4,21-30

John Bosco

1865: The 13th amendment to the US Constitution abolishes slavery.  
1980: The Spanish Embassy Massacre in Guatemala City - 40 Quichés including Maria Ramirez and Vincente Menchú are killed.



# THE BIBLICAL INEQUALITY

**GONZALO M. DE LA TORRE GUERRERO**

*Centro Bíblico Camino, Quibdó, Chocó, Colombia*

**1. Understanding human history let's us understand the biblical story.** The Bible sets forth no theory of equality. It simply posits a human being who proves its ability to become human precisely by exercising equality or on the contrary the ability to become worse than an animal, by implementing inequality. Equality, therefore, is not the point of departure for humans: on the contrary, inequality is the point of departure for humans, so that every human being trying to become truly human must struggle against its natural tendency to use power.

Science tells us the same by making our reptilian and limbic cerebral spheres (animal heritage) responsible for the abusive acts of power that cause inequality. Only by getting these two cerebral spheres to act under the guidance of a third cerebral sphere -- the neo-cortex -- can an egalitarian society become reality. We all know that only by having this third sphere develop and take control of our behavior, that gradually we become human. This is the reason that equality is the goal and not the point of departure.

Equality is the sign that we are reaching a significant degree of human maturity.

This indicates that the construction of equality, equity and solidarity is the duty of all cultures and not a particular task of any "divinely privileged culture", as often claimed by the "great world-religions". Nor is there any reasons to say that some "divinities" are more prone to equality than others, since the way of perceiving "The Divinity" always depends on the qualities that a given culture endorses to "IT". "God" is the expression of the "social human being".

Equality depends on an attitude that people or institutions assume in a particular historical point. A culture, nation, religion, institution or person, can "go about becoming more equal" to the extent they discover the value of equality in the process of humanization, and are willing to sacrifice any other interest in favor of this value.

The historical trend proves that the human being comes to value equality when it becomes the victim of inequality. And we are told how the human community, threatened by superior animals, enjoyed a cer-

tain degree of equality in the of Paleolithic age, when under *matristic* society led by their "mother goddesses of Life" who with their naked bodies and uncovered bellies and breasts, protected the lives to be born and called on society to be supportive and egalitarian.

At the same time, we also have the example of the Neolithic Age, when inequality increases, so that only a few are happy. The Neolithic is the age in which people got organized according to their ability to accumulate goods: there was too much economic surplus, thanks to the sedentary life-style that transformed agriculture, authorized the powerful to take ownership of this surplus and their political states to impose taxes on the conquered and/or reduce them to slavery. Humanity, in the Neolithic Age, regressed to the law of the more powerful, endorsing the law that prevails in the animal kingdom

## **2. The biblical world drinks of the global world...**

Israel, as a nation, born after the Neolithic age, inherits its features as a top-down and servile society necessarily based on a tax economy, an army that defends the monarch and its interests, and a religion that places its blessing on the people of this model of unequal society. The Bible details in the story of Cain's children, other situations that exacerbate inequality already implemented in the Neolithic age: the city (Enoch), ambition (Metushael), violence and machismo beyond control (Lamek), money (Yabal), the squandered culture (Yubal) and weapons (Tubal Cain).

Israel born of the Neolithic age, lives and is the victim of the unequal societal model that prevails in the Near and Middle East. Therefore we see Israel applying to Egypt and neighboring nations the law of the strongest: who wins the war, has rights over the lives, of the losers who are eliminated or made slaves. That is, human beings from the time of the Neolithic age on, in disputes over the goods of the earth, invented a model of unequal society plus the Gods of War to support it, justified in conscience by the existence of an unequal society.

Israel's history is woven through with proposals that are sinfully unequal and others that have equality. The Bible is full of such stories grouped around

*Translation by Justiniano Liebl*



different people and institutions: patriarchs, kings, prophets, leaders, tribes, temple and synagogue -- all go marching by with raw realism. But it's precisely these stories (some bloody and painful while others are full of dignity and romance); all are recounted in order to serve as either deterrent or incentive to take steps toward "humanization" of which equality is clearest of its manifestations.

When Israel touches bottom by oppression under Egypt, it experiences the difference between living the social models of inequality or equality. It curses the first and battles to death for the second. It succeeds as it becomes aware of worshipping a God of Liberation, Lover of Equality. It gets a taste of being on the road to equality under "re-tribalization", which recuperates cultural values of the tribes -- expressions of cultural equality-- such as "circumcision"; "revengeing blood" [cf. Num 35,19]; celebration of the "Pass-over Meal" closely bound up with the liberation from slavery to Egypt and agricultural festivals, etc. -- the clearest manifestations of all these are equality.

However, Israel falls into the trap of power and re-founds monarchy under Saul, David and Solomon, all fortifying inequality ... In response, prophet-hood appears defending social equality for the poor, the oppressed and the excluded. This becomes the key judgment that the Prophets throw up against bad governors and managers of inequality ...

The main stages of inequality shut down with the destruction of the Northern Kingdom (Israel, 722 BC.) and of the Southern Kingdom (Judah 587 BC.). Judah, had believed itself invincible because of the protection by its God Yahveh, now gets burned, destroyed, looted, subjected to tribute and exiled. The conscience of Israel again hits bottom as it becomes convinced that the destiny of human beings is equality not inequality, which brings suffering and death. And it concludes that inequality (enslavement, the law of the strongest, law of the jungle) can not be God's plan for humanity and much less for his people.

Therefore, when revising its history, at the time of the exile, it condemns the agents of inequality: forgetfulness of God as a moral referent (Gn 3); Cain and his sons as owners of de-humanizing powers (Gn 4); Israel, when choosing the pleasant way of "daughters of men" (Gn 5-9); empires organized to suck the blood of small nations (Gn 10) and religion that pairs up with

oppressive politics and culture (Gn 11).

At the same time, reflecting on its exile Israel inserts stories in which it is apparent that the clear will of God is that human beings live in equality. To affirm that this is "The Plan of God", is the greatest act of human maturity to which Israel could reach. Let's take a quick glance at the Old and New Testaments.

First of all, there is the equality of the very God-head: "Let us make the human being man and woman according to our image and likeness" (Gn 1,26-27) ... Men and women are equal in rights and dignity: "This is really bones of my bones and flesh of my flesh " (Gn 2,22-23); ... Israel should be equal to other free nations: "always maintain in your memory the day you left slavery" (Ex 13,3) ...

Social equality is the divine plan: "Let each recover his property and return to his family." (Lv 25,10) ... Everybody should have an area for their livelihood; "You shall divide the land as inheritance, according to the number of men " (Nm 26,53) ... The supreme project or dream of God is that "there will be no poor among you " (Dt 15,4). What more could be said and expected from God ?

In the New Testament Jesus of Nazareth continually tries to fulfill this divine desire for equality. And He does so, based on what it means to His Incarnation: God in Him becomes equal to human beings and follows the path of growing in humanization, just as every child does (Lk 2,52) ... In Him, seeking equality, God chooses the poor (Mt 5,3) ... In Him God equalizes Himself to those of the worst conditions (Mt 25,35ff) ... In Him God restores the Jubilee Year or "Year of social and economic leveling" (Lk 4,16ff) ... In him God reconstructs the rights and dignity of women (Jn 4,10ff), when He offers the woman participation in His Own Being, through the image of water giving eternal life) ...

In his letter to the Romans, Paul directs himself to communities that are inclusive and egalitarian between men and women, 10 of which he commends and greets by name (Rm 16,1ff) ... And finally, Paul presents us a Jesus who renounces the power of His divinity and becomes equal to us human beings. (Fil 2,5ff), indicating that equality presupposes a "relinquishing", an act of "kenosis", in which we become changed into a likeness of the Incarnation ... Living equality likens us to God.



2016

January

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1

Monday

2Sam 15,13-14.30;16,5-13a / Ps 3

Cecilio, Viridiana

Mk 5,1-20

1870: Jonathan Jasper Wright is elected to the Supreme Court, the first Black man to reach a position this high in the United States judiciary.

1932: Agustin Farabundo Martí and companions are executed in massive wave of repressive violence in El Salvador.

1977: Daniel Esquivel, pastoral worker with Paraguayan immigrants to Argentina, martyred.

Last quarter: 03h28m (UTC) in Scorpio

2

Tuesday

Mal 3,1-4 / Ps 23

Presentation of the Lord

Heb 2,14-18 / Lk 2, 22-40

1976: José Tedeschi, Worker priest, martyr to those in shantytowns in Argentina worker priest, martyr of «villeros» in Argentina. He was kidnapped and killed.

1982: Syrian troops attack Hamas killing thousands of civilians.

1989: Alfredo Stroessner, dictator in Paraguay is removed in a fierce military coup.

1991: Expedito Ribiero de Souza, president of the Brazilian Union of Rural Workers, is assassinated.

World-wide Week for Inter-religious Harmony (UN)  
(first week of February)

3

Wednesday

2Sam 24,2.9-17 / Ps 31

Blas and Oscar

Mk 6,1-6

*Ansgar of Hamburg*

1795: Antonio José de Sucre, South American independence leader, born in Cumaná, Venezuela.

1929: Camilo Torres, Colombian priest and revolutionary, born.





4

## Thursday

1Kings 2,1-4.10-12 / Int.: 1Cor 29,10-12

Andrés Corsino

Mk 6,7-13

1794: Liberation of the slaves in Haiti. The first abolitionist law in Latin America.

1927: The Prestes Column takes refuge in Bolivia.

1979: Benjamín Didincué, Colombian indigenous leader, martyred for his defense of the land.

1979: Six workers killed and dozens injured in police attack on the Cromotex factory in Lima, Peru.

1981: The Massacre of Chimaltenango (Guatemala). 68 campesinos are killed.

1992: An attempted State coup in Venezuela.

5

## Friday

Sir 47,2-13 / Ps 17

Mk 6,14-29

Águeda

1883: Beginning of movement for 40 hour week (Canada).

1977: The Somocist police destroy the contemplative community of Solentiname, a community committed to the Nicaraguan revolution.

1988: Francisco Domingo Ramos, labor leader, is assassinated on orders of large landowners in Pancas, Brazil.

2004: Rebels take over of the city of Gonaïves, Haiti triggering events leading to fall of Aristide government.

6

## Saturday

1Kings 3,4-13 / Ps 118

Mk 6,30-34

1694: Zumbí and companions are besieged in Palmares.

Without gunpowder, they fled into the jungle.

1916: Rubén Darío, renowned Nicaraguan man of letters, dies.

1992: Dom Sergio Méndez Arceo, bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico and Patriarch of Solidarity dies.

7

Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isa 6,1-2a.3-8 / Ps 137

1Cor 15,1-11 / Lk 5,1-11

Richard

1756: Armies of Spain and Portugal massacre 1500 Guarani at Caiboaté, RS, Brazil.

1974: Independence of Granada. National holiday.

1986: Jean Claude Duvalier leaves Haiti after 29 years of family dictatorship.

1990: Raynal Sáenz, priest, is assassinated in Izuchara, Peru.



8

## Monday

Jerome Emiliani

1Kings 8.1-7.9-13 / SI 131

Mk 6.53-56

1712: Slave revolt in New York.

1812: Major repression against the inhabitants of the Quilombos of Rosario, Brasil.

1817: Juan de las Heras leads an army across the Andes to join San Martín and liberate Chile from Spain.

1968: Samuel Hammond, Delano Middleton, and Henry Smith die, and 27 others are wounded when police fire on civil rights protestors in Orangeburg, South Carolina.

9

## Tuesday

1Kings 8.22-23.27-30 / SI 83

Mk 7.1-13

Miquel Febres Cordero

Chinese New Year (Yüan Tan).

1977: Agustin Goiburú, Paraguayan doctor, disappeared in Argentina. *See wikipedia.*

1985: Felipe Balam Tomás, missionary, servant to the poor, martyred in Guatemala.

10

## Wednesday

Ash // JI 2.12-18 / SI 50

2Cor 5.20-6.2 / Mt 6.1-6.16-18

Scholastica

1763: Treaty of Paris ends the Seven Year War with France ceding Dominica, Grenada, the Grenadines, Tobago and Canada to England.

1986: Alberto Koenigsnecht, Peruvian bishop and advocate for the poor, dies in a suspicious car accident.





# 11 Thursday

Dt 30,15-20 / SI 1  
Lk 9,22-25

Our Lady of Lourdes

1990: Nelson Mandela freed after 27 years in prison.  
1998: The communities of Negras del Medio Atrato (Colombia) gain collective title to 695,000 Hectares of land.  
2006: First woman president of Chile, Michelle Bachelet inaugurated.

World Day of the Sick

# 12 Friday

Isa 58,1-9a / SI 50  
Mt 9,14-15

Eulalia

1541: Pedro de Valdivia founds Santiago in Chile.  
1542: Orellana reaches the Amazon.  
1545: The conquistadores reach the mines of Potosí, where 8 million indigenous people will die.  
1809: Abraham Lincoln born in Kentucky, USA.  
1894: The Nicaraguan army occupies Bluefields and annexed the Mosquitia territory (Nicaragua).  
2005: Dorothy Stang, advocate for the poor and the environment, murdered by land barons at Anapú, Brazil. [See her martyrial testimony at: vimeo.com/54570270](http://vimeo.com/54570270)

# 13 Saturday

Isa 58,9b-14 / SI 85  
Lk 5,27-32

Benigno

1976: Francisco Soares, priest, martyred in the cause of justice for the poor in Argentina.  
1982: James Miller, a LaSalle brother, is martyred for his commitment the indigenous church in Guatemala.

# 14

First Sunday of Lent  
Dt 26,4-10 / SI 90  
Rm 10,8-13 / Lk 4,1-13

Valentine, Cyril and Methodius

1992: Rick Julio Medrano, a religious brother, is martyred in service to the persecuted Guatemalan church.  
1949: Asbestos workers strike (Québec, Canada).

Friendship Day





# 15 Monday

Lev 19,1-2,11-18 / Ps 18

Claude  
1600: José de Acosta, missionary, historian and defender of indigenous culture, Peru, dies.  
1966: Camilo Torres, priest, martyr to the struggles for liberation of the Colombian people.  
1981: Juan Alonso Hernández, priest and martyr among the Guatemalan campesinos.  
1991: Ariel Granada, Colombian missionary, assassinated by guerrillas in Massangulu, Mozambique.  
1992: María Elena Moyano, a social activist, martyred for the cause of justice and peace in Villa El Salvador, Peru.  
2003: «First World Demonstration»: 15 million people in 600 cities against the war of the United States against Iraq.



First quarter: 07h46m (UTC) in Taurus

# 16 Tuesday

Isa 55,10-11 / Ps 33

Juliana y Onésimo  
1981: Albino Amarilla, campesino leader and Paraguayan catechist, killed by the army.  
1985: Ali Primera, Venezuelan poet and singer for justice to the Latin American people, dies.  
1986: Mauricio Demierre, a Swiss international worker and several Nicaraguan campesino women are assassinated by US backed Contras.

# 17 Wednesday

Jon 3,1-10 / Ps 50

Jon 3,1-10 / Ps 50  
Lk 11,29-32  
1600: Giordano Bruno is burned alive by the Inquisition for his freedom of thinking and expression.  
1909: Geronimo or Goyaałé a leader of the Apache resistance to U.S. and Mexican Government incursions on tribal lands dies.  
1995: Darcy Ribeiro, an activist writer, anthropologist and Brazilian senator, dies.  
1997: 1300 activists of MST (*without land workers movement*) march out of São Paulo for Brasília, for land reform.





# 18 Thursday

Esth 14,1,3-5,12-14 / Ps 137

Simeon

1519: Hernán Cortés leaves Cuba for the conquest of Mexico.

1546: Martin Luther dies in Germany.

1853: Félix Varela, Cuban independence fighter, dies.

1984: Edgar Fernando García, Guatemalan social activist, disappeared.

# 19 Friday

Ezek 18,21-28 / Ps 129

Mt 5,20-26

Alvaro and Conrad

1590: Bernadino de Sahagún, missionary and protector of indigenous cultures of Mexico, dies.

1861: Serfdom abolished in Russia.

1990: Students take over traditionally Afro-Mexican Tennessee State University demanding equal economic treatment.

# 20 Saturday

Deut 26,16-19 / Ps 118

Mt 5,43-48

Eleuthere, *Rasmus Jensen*

1524: The Mayan Memorial of Solola records the "destruction of the Quiches by the men of Castile."

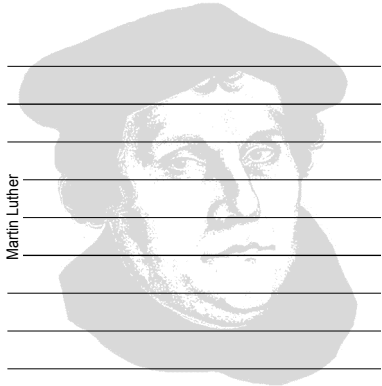
1974: Domingo Lain, priest, martyred in the struggle for freedom in Colombia.

1978: Decree 1142 orders Colombia to take into account the language and culture of the indigenous peoples.

World Day for Social Justice (U.N.)

February

Martin Luther



# 21

Second Sunday of Lent

Gen 15,5-12,17-18 / Ps 26

Phil 3,20-4,1 / Lk 9,28b-36

Peter Damian

1934: Augusto C. Sandino, Nicaraguan patriot, executed by A. Somoza.

1965: Malcolm X, Afro-American leader, is assassinated.

1985: Campesinos are crucified in Xeatzan, during the on-going passion of the Guatemalan people.



# 22 Monday

1Pet 5,1-4 / Ps 22

Mt 16,13-19

Chair of Peter

1910: U.S. Marines intervene in Nicaragua.

1943: White Rose members, a German resistance movement, are executed by Nazis.

1979: St. Lucia gains independence. National holiday.

1990: Campesino martyrs in Iquicha, Peru.

Full Moon: 18h20m (UTC) in Virgo



# 23 Tuesday

Isa 1,10.16-20 / Ps 49

Mt 23,1-12

Bartholomew and Policarp,

*Ziegenbalg*

1903: Guantanamo Bay, in Cuba, leased by the United States "in perpetuity."

1936: Elias Beauchamp and Hiram Rosado of the Nationalist Party of Puerto Rico execute Coronel Riggs, for the death of four nationalists.

1970: Guyana attains independence, national holiday.

# 24 Wednesday

Jer 18,18-20 / Ps 30

Mt 20,17-28

Mathew Apostle, Sergio.

1821: The Plan of Iguala proclaims Mexican Independence, national Holiday.

1920: Nancy Astor, first woman elected to parliament, gives her first speech in London.

2008: Fidel Castro retires after forty-nine years as the President of Cuba.

1942: Japanese Internment begins (Canada).





# 25 Thursday

Jer 17,5-10 / Ps 31

Justo y Valero, *Isabel Fedde*  
National Day for the Dignity of the Victims of the Armed Conflict, Guatemala.

1778: Birthday of José de San Martín.

1980: Military coup in Suriname.

1982: Tucapel Jiménez, Chilean trade union leader, murdered by Pinochet dictatorship.

1985: Guillermo Céspedes, activist and revolutionary, martyr in the struggle of the Colombian people.

1989: Caincoñen, a Toba, assassinated for the defense of indigenous land rights in Formosa, Argentina.

1990: Electoral defeat of the FSLN in Nicaragua.

# 26 Friday

Paula Montal, Alejandro

1550: Antonio de Valdivieso, bishop of Nicaragua, martyr in the defense of the indigenous people.

1885: Berlin Conference divides Africa among European powers.

1965: Jimmie Lee Jackson, Black civil rights activist, murdered by police in Marion, Alabama.

1992: José Alberto Llaguno, bishop, inculturated apostle of the Tarahumara indigenous people of México, dies.

2012: Giulio Girardi, Italian and Latin American philosopher and theologian of international solidarity and of the indigenous and revolutionary Cause.

# 27 Saturday

Gen 37,3-28 / Ps 104

Gabriel de la Dolorosa

1844: The Dominican Republic declares independence from Haiti. National holiday.

1989: Free-market reforms spark protests in Caracas, Venezuela, the «Caracazo». Government repression leaves 400 dead.

1998: Jesús Ma Valle Jaramillo, fourth president of the Commission of Human Rights of Anioquia, Colombia, assassinated.

2005: 40 out of 57 countries, members of the World Covenant against Tobacco are legally bound.

2010: Earthquake in Chile, 8.8 on the Richter scale, leaves 500 dead.

March

# 28

Third Sunday of Lent

Ex 3,1-8a.13-15 / Ps 102

1Cor 10,1-6.10-12 / Lk 13,1-9

Román

1924: The US Marines occupy Tegucigalpa.

1985: Guillermo Céspedes Siabato, a lay person committed to Christian to Socialism and to the Base Ecclesial Communities, worker, teacher, poet, assassinated by the army, Colombia.

1989: Teresita Ramírez, a sister of the Companions of Mary, is assassinated in Cristales, Colombia.

1989: Miguel Angel Benítez, priest, killed in Colombia.



# JESUS, THE DEFENDING PROPHET OF THE LOWEST

JOSÉ ANTONIO PAGOLA

San Sebastián, Donosti, Basque Country, Spain

## 1. In the midst of cruel inequality

Jesus begins his prophetic activity in the midst of a society torn apart by a cruel inequality between the centres of power and the villages of Galilee. Military, tax collectors and landowners are concentrated in Sepphoris and Tiberias. They are those who have wealth, power, and honor: the *first* in the time of Jesus. The situation in the villages is very different. Unable to afford to pay taxes, more than a few families are forced to let go of their lands making the properties of the powerful grow. It increased the number of day laborers, prostitutes, beggars, and people fleeing from creditors. These are the *lowest*.

There are common traits that characterize this oppressed sector: all of them are victims of the abuses of those who have power and money; they live in a state of misery that may be impossible to leave; they are humiliated and without any dignity; they live excluded from real coexistence. They are the 'waste material' of Galilee (G.E.Lensky), lives without a future.

## 2. Jesus, identified with the *lowest*

The Gospels do not talk about the presence of Jesus in Sepphoris and Tiberias. It is presented through the villages of Galilee where they live that have been stripped of their right to enjoy the land given by God to Israel. Jesus Announces and opens ways to the Kingdom of God, without any complicity with the centres of power, and in direct contact with the people most in need of dignity and liberation.

Jesus was likely part of a family without land, either because they had been forced to divest them to pay their debts, or because they had emigrated from Judea or had not been able to obtain land of their own.

They were not at the bottom of the social ladder, but they were limited. Due to their dependency on a fairly unreliable job, especially in times of drought and famine.

Although, at the beginning of his prophetic activity, Jesus leaves his job and abandons his house to live as one more destitute that *has no place to lay his head* (Lk 9,57). He carried no denarius with Caesar's image. He has renounced the imperial system security

to collaborate on the father's project of humanization. He calls it the "Kingdom of God".

Then invites his people to do the same. They will live as the *lowest* of Galilee. They walk barefoot, they dispensed even their spare tunic. They will learn how to live among the excluded. That's the place in society to open roads to the Kingdom of God. Jesus does not think what his followers have to take with them, but precisely in what they shouldn't carry, lest they distance themselves too much from the *lowest*. (Mc 6,8-11; Lk 9,3-5; Mt 10,9-14; Lk 10,4-11).

## 3. Making a special place for them in his life

The Gospels describe Jesus as making a place for the poor, sick and malnourished so they know that they have a privileged place in the Kingdom of God (Mt 4,23). He stops for beggars in his path so that they do not feel abandoned by God (Mc 10, 46-52). He embraces and blesses the children of the street so that they don't live without the love of being the favorite child that belongs to them. He wants to be in the middle of that society torn apart by inequality between rich and poor, attestant that God wants to build a new world where the *lowest* will be the *first* to be welcomed with open arms and defended.

## 4. Defending the victims

The Kingdom of God does not belong to everyone equally, the rich landowners banqueting in Tiberias and undernourished people of the villages. Jesus wants to make it clear that in the unjust society the Kingdom of God is good news for the downtrodden and a threat to the rich oppressors. "*Blessed are you who are poor (ptaioi) for yours is the kingdom of God... But woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort. Blessed are you who hunger now, for you will be satisfied... Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh... Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep*" (Lk 6,20-21).

Isn't all this a mockery, cynicism? It would be, perhaps, if Jesus was speaking to them from any villa of Sepphoris or Tiberias. But he is with them. He

Translation by Ditter Chavez, Yolanda Chavez



is one more destitute. The Prophet defender of the poor, who speaks with total conviction. The son of God incarnated within the *lowest*, who even today is shouting at us all: Those who do not interest anybody are the ones God is most interested in; those left out of the Empires built by man have a special place in his heart; those who do not have anyone that defends them, have God as their father.

These words do not mean the end of hunger and misery right now, but they confer an absolute dignity to the innocent victims. The lowest are the beloved of God. Their lives are sacred. Life will never be built anywhere the way God wants it to be, if it is not for freeing the *lowest* from their misery and humiliation. No religion will ever be blessed by God if they turn their backs to them.

But the poor of Galilee understand his message. They are not *blessed* by their poverty, much less by; their hunger and their misery is not an enviable State for anyone. Jesus calls them *blessed* because God can't reign among his sons and daughters without doing justice to those that no one else does. The God of Jesús is their hope and comfort.

## 5. The radical denunciation of Jesus

With a penetrating gaze, Jesus reveals the cruel reality of Galilee in a parable collected by LK 16: 19-38. The story speaks of a powerful *rich* man. His life is a continual feast. He has no name because he has no human identity. He is nobody. His life, empty of unconditional love, is a failure.

A *beggar* is lying next to the door of his mansion full of nasty sores. They don't even give him the scraps that fall from the table of the rich man. He is alone. He has no one. He only has a name, full of promise, *Lazarus* or *Eliezer*, meaning *God is help*.

The scene is unbearable. The rich man has it all. He feels safe. He doesn't see the poor man dying of hunger near his mansion. Does this not represent many powerful rich people who today live in thriving countries? Lazarus the beggar lives in extreme necessity, hungry, sick, excluded by those who can help him. Does this not represent millions of people abandoned to their fate in the *lowest* countries on earth?

Jesus does not directly speak any words of condemnation. It is not necessary. His compassionate and penetrating gaze is exposing the injustice of that so-

ciety. The most powerful classes and most oppressed strata seem to belong to the same society, but they are separated by an invisible barrier: that door that the rich never cross to approach the beggar Lazarus.

This is now also the radical condemnation of Jesus to the world today: a barrier of indifference, cruelty and blindness separates the world of the rich of the world's malnourished. The obstacle to building one world more human and worthy, is us the rich, and we continue deepening the abyss that separates us from the *lowest*. Jesus puts us face to face with the bloodiest reality in the world in the eyes of God: the unfair and cruel suffering of millions of innocent victims. That suffering is the first enforceable truth to all human. Nobody can deny it. All ethics must take it into account if they do not want to become an ethic of tolerance of inhumanity. Any policy has to address it if does not want to be an accomplice to crimes against humanity. All religion must listen if they do not wish to be a negation of the most sacred.

## 6 The Christian's response

We must honestly listen to Jesus. Many of us do not belong to the most impoverished, deprived or excluded sectors. We are not the *lowest* of the Earth. But we can learn to make more room in our life, listening to their questions and most dramatic protests, sharing their suffering, making us responsible for their humiliation, defending their cause tirelessly. We have to resist continuing to enjoy our small wellness, void of compassion and solidarity. It is cruel to keep feeding us that "secret illusion of innocence" that allows us to live with a clear conscience, thinking that the fault belongs to everyone and no one. It's not Christian to lock ourselves in our communities mentally pushing hunger and unjust suffering in the world towards an abstract distance, to live our religion without hearing any cry, wail or yell. John Baptist Metz who has spent years denouncing the Christian communities of the countries of wealth is right, there is too many songs and few cries of outrage, too much complacency and little nostalgia for a more humane world, too much solace and little hunger for justice. Will we continue feeding our self-deception or will we open our eyes to the reality of the *lowest*? Our victims are who best help us to know the reality of the world and all that we need to be human.



# 2016

February

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29						

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Lunes						Martes						Miércoles						Jueves					
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<div> <div>Friday</div> <div>Saturday</div> <div>Sunday</div> </div>			<div>MARCH</div>		
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29 Monday

2Kings 5,1-15a / Ps 41  
Lk 4,24-30

2004: Aristide leaves Haiti.

1

Tuesday

Dan 3,25.34-43 / Ps 24  
Mt 18,21-35

Rosendo, Albino, *George Herbert*  
1739: British sign a treaty with Jamaican runaway slaves known as Maroons.  
1954: Lolita Lebron, Rafael Cancel Miranda, Irving Flores and Andrés Figueroa attacked the U. S. House of Representatives demanding Puerto Rican independence.  
2002: U.S.-led invasion of Afghanistan begins.  
1959: Founding of the CLAR, Latin-American Confederation of Religious.  
2012: Milton Schwantes, Brazilian, Lutheran bible expert, promoter of the Latin American popular biblical reading.  
Last quarter: 23h11m (UTC) in Sagittarius



2

Wednesday

Deut 4,1.5-9 / Ps 147  
Mt 5,17-19

Simplicio  
*John and Charles Wesley*  
1836: Republic of Texas declares independence from Mexico.  
1791: John Wesley dies in England.  
1897: Third attack against Canudos, Brazil.  
1901: US Platt Amendment limited autonomy of Cuba as a condition for eventual removal of occupying troops.  
1963: Goulart proclaims the Workers' Statute, a step forward at the time, Brazil.





# 3 Thursday

Jer 7,23-28 / Ps 94

Lk 11,14-23

Emeterio, Celedonio, Marino

1908: Birth of Juan Antonio Corretjer, Puerto Rican poet, founder of the Socialist League.

1982: Hipolite Cervantes Arceo, Mexican priest martyred for his solidarity with Guatemalan exiles.

1982: Emiliano Pérez Obando, judge and delegate of the word, martyr of the Nicaraguan revolution.

2000: The dictator Pinochet returns to Chile after 503 days of detention in London.

2005: The WTO condemns the U.S. cotton subsidies that harm free trade.

# 4 Friday

Hos 14,2-10 / Ps 80

Mk 12,28b-34

Casimir

1962: The United States begins to operate a nuclear reactor in Antarctica.

1970: Antonio Martínez Lagares is assassinated by police in Puerto Rico.

1990: Nahmán Carmona, a street child, is beaten to death by the police in Guatemala.

2004: The Argentinean navy acknowledges for the first time that it carried out torture during the dictatorship.

1941: All Japanese Canadians registered by the government.

# 5 Saturday

Hos 6,1-6 / Ps 50

Lk 18,9-14

Adrian

1766: Spanish governor assumes control over former the French territory of Louisiana.

1940: Soviet authorities ordered execution of more than 25,000 Polish POW's and elites in Katyn forest.

1996: 3,000 families effect the Landless Movement's largest occupation, Curionópolis, Brazil.

2013: Dies Hugo Chávez, Venezuela's President.

March



Fourth Sunday of Lent

Josh 5,9a.10-12 / Ps 33

2Cor 5,17-21 / Lk 15,1-3.11-32

Olegario, Rosa de Viterbo

1817: The revolution at Pernambuco, Brazil.

1836 Mexican forces defeat pro-slavery secessionist force at the Battle of the Alamo.

1854: Slavery is abolished in Ecuador.

1996: Pascuala Rosado Cornejo, founder of the self-directed community of Huayacán, Peru, assassinated for standing up to terrorists.

2005: The Argentinean Supreme Court confirms the life sentence of Arancibia Clavel for his assassination of Chilean General Prats in 1974 as a crime against humanity.



7

Monday

Isa 65,17-21 / Ps 29

Perpetua and Felicity; *Thomas Aquinas*

Jn 4,43-54

1524: Cakchiquel kings, Ahpop and Ahpop Qamahay were burned to death by Pedro de Alvarado during the Spanish conquest of Guatemala.

1994: Diocesan priest Joaquin Carregal, prophet of justice dies in Quilmes, Argentina

2009: Fujimori is sentenced to 25 years in prison.

8

Tuesday

Ezek 47,1-9.12 / Ps 45

John of God

1782: Nearly 100 Munsee wrongly suspected of collaborating with British in Revolutionary War executed by Pennsylvanian militiamen at Gnadenhutten, Ohio.

**International Women's Day**

Established in 1910 in memory of New York workers who died on March 8, 1857 while demanding better working conditions and the right to vote.

9

Wednesday

Isa 49,8-15 / Ps 144

Jn 5,17-30

Dominic Savio

Francisca Romana

1841: U. S. Supreme Court rules on the Amistad case that Africans who had seized control of their slave ship had been taken into slavery illegally.

1965: Rev. James J. Reeb, Unitarian minister and civil rights activist, martyred in Selma, Alabama.

1989: 500 families occupy a hacienda and are forced out by military police leaving 400 wounded and 22 detained, Salto do Jacuí, RS, Brazil.

1989: **Massacre de Santa Elmira. 500 familias ocupan una hacienda y son expulsadas por la policía militar: 400 heridos, 22 presos. Salto do Jacuí, RD, Brasil.**

New Moon: 01h55m (UTC) in Pisces





# 10 Thursday

Ex 32,7-14 / Ps 105

Macario Jn 5,31-47  
1928: Elías del Socorro Nieves, Agustinian, Jesus and Dolores Sierra assassinated for proclaiming their faith in Mexico.  
1945: Firebombing of Tokyo results in deaths of more than 100,000 people, mostly civilians.

**Bottled Water Free Day** (Canada)

# 11 Friday

Wis 2,1a.12-22 / Ps 33

Constantino, Vicente, Ramiro Jn 7,1-2.10.25-30  
1797: Defeated by the English, the Garifunas of Saint Vincent are deported to Honduras.  
1914: Opening of the Panama Canal.  
1966: Henry Marrow violently dies in a racially-motivated crime in Oxford, North Carolina.  
1990: The dictatorship of Pinochet takes a step toward "State-approved" democracy. Patricio Aylwin becomes president.  
2004: Terrorist attack in Madrid leaves 200 dead and 1400 injured.

# 12 Saturday

Jer 11,18-20 / Ps 7

Inocencio, Gregorio Jn 7,40-53  
1930: Gandhi leads Salt March in nonviolent defiance of British colonial rule.  
1977: Rutilio Grande, parish priest, and Manuel and Nelson, peasants, martyred by the military in El Salvador.  
1994: The Anglican Church ordains a first group of 32 women priests in Bristol.  
2005: Argentina extradites Paul Schaefer to Chile, ex-Nazi collaborator with Pinochet in the "Colonia Dignidad," accused of disappearances, torture and sexual abuse of minors.

March

# 13

Fifth Sunday of Lent  
Isa 43,16-21 / Ps 125  
Phil 3,8-14 / Jn 8,1-11

Rodrigo, Salomón, Eulogio

1957: José Antonio Echeverría, student and Catholic Action activist, dies in the struggle to free Cuba from Batista dictatorship.  
1979: Coup d'etat brings the New Jewel Movement to power in Grenada.  
1983: Marianela García, lawyer to the poor, founder of the Human Rights Coalition, martyr to justice in El Salvador.  
1998: María Leide Amorim, campesina leader of the landless, assassinated in Manaus in revenge for having led an occupation by the Landless Peoples' Movement.



# 14 Monday

Dan 13,1-9.15-17.19-30.33-62 / Ps 22  
 Matilde Jn 8,12-20  
 1549: Black Franciscan, Antony of Cathegeró, dies.  
 1795: Garifunas leader Joseph Satuyé killed by British colonizers.  
 1849: Moravian missionaries arrived in Bluefreds (Nicaragua) to evangelize the Mosquitia.  
 1997: Declaration of Curitiba: International Day of Action Against Dams and in favor of water and life.  
 2009: Evo Morales begins to distribute landholdings to Indigenous peoples under provisions of the new Constitution.  
 1967: Chinese Immigration Act of 1923 repealed (Canada).

# 15 Tuesday

Louise de Marillac Num 21,4-9 / Ps 101  
 Jn 8,21-30  
 1961: The Alliance for Progress is created.  
 1986: Pastor Antonio Chaj Solis, Manuel de Jesús Recinos and evangelical companions are martyred for their dedication to the poor.  
 1995: General Luis García Meza is sentenced to 30 years in prison for crimes committed following the 1980 military coup in Bolivia. This is the first case of the imprisonment of Latin American military involved in coups.  
 First quarter: 17h03m (UTC) in Gemini



# 16 Wednesday

Dan 3,14-20.91-92.95 / Int.: Dan 3  
 Jn 8,31-42  
 Raimundo de Fitero  
 1630 Benkos Biohó, heroic anti-slavery leader, dies in Colombia.  
 1977: Antonio Olivo and Pantaleón Romero are martyred for their commitment to the land struggle in Argentina.





# 17 Thursday

Gen 17,3-9 / Ps 104

Patrick

1973: Alexandre Vanucchi, student and Christian activist, assassinated by Brazilian police.

1982: Jacobus Andreas Koster "Kooos" and fellow journalists committed to the truth, are assassinated in El Salvador.

1990: María Mejía, Quiche campesino mother involved in Catholic Action is assassinated in Sacapulas, Guatemala.

# 18 Friday

Jn 8,51-59

Cyril of Jerusalem

1907: U.S. Marines land in Honduras.

1938: Mexican president Lázaro Cárdenas decrees the nationalization of oil.

1981: Presentación Ponce, Delegate of the Word, martyred along with companions in Nicaragua.

1989: Neftali Liceta, priest, martyred along with Amparo Escobedo and companions among the poor in Peru.

Jer 20,10-13 / Ps 17

Jn 10,31-42

# 19 Saturday

2Sam 7,4-5.12-14a.16 / Ps 88

Joseph

Rom 4,13.16-18.22 / Mt 1,16.18-21.24a

1849: The Quemado Revolution, Brazil. More than 200 Blacks proclaim the Liberation of slaves.

1915: Uprising of the Quechuas and the Aymaras in Peru; led by Rumi Maka.

1980: First Afro-American Ministry Meeting, in Buenaventura, Colombia.

1982: Argentina's military landing on South Georgia Island triggers Falklands War with Great Britain.

1991: Felisa Urrutia, a Carmelite nun working with the poor, assassinated in Cagua, Venezuela.

20

Palm Sunday

Isa 50,4-7 / Ps 21

Phil 2,6-11 / Lk 22,14-23.56

Serapión

1838: The government of Sergipe (Brazil) prohibits the "Africans" and those suffering contagious diseases from attending school.

1982: Ríos Montt leads a State coup, Guatemala.

1995: Menche Ruiz, catechist, popular poet, missionary to base Christian communities in El Salvador, dies.

2003: U.S. lead invasion of Iraq begins without U.N. mandate.

Equinox, the spring / autumn at 04h30m UTC



# 21 Monday

Isa 42,1-7 / Ps 26  
 Filemon and Nicholas  
 Baha'i New Year  
 World Forest Day  
 1806: Benito Juárez, born in Oaxaca, México.  
 1937: Ponce massacre, Puerto Rico.  
 1975: Carlos Dormiak, Salesian priest, assassinated for his commitment to Liberation, Argentina.  
 1977: Rodolfo Aquilar, a 29 year old parish priest, martyred in Mexico.  
 1987: Luz Marina Valencia, nun, martyr for justice among the campesinos of Mexico.

Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination

# 22 Tuesday

Isa 49,1-6 / Ps 70  
 Jn 13,21-33.36-38  
 Bienvenido, Lea  
 1873: Spanish National Assembly passes law abolishing slavery in Puerto Rico.  
 1980: Luis Espinal, priest and journalist, martyred in the struggles of the Bolivian people.  
 1988: Rafael Hernández, campesino, martyr in the struggle for land, Mexico.

World Water Day (UN)

# 23 Wednesday

Isa 50,4-9 / Ps 68  
 Mt 26,14-25  
 Toribio de Mogrovejo  
 1606: Toribio de Mogrovejo, Archbishop of Lima, pastor to the Inca people, prophet in the colonial Church, dies.  
 1976: Maria del Carmen Maggi, Argentine professor and martyr for liberating education, martyred.  
 2003: Rachel Corrie, human rights volunteer, killed by Israeli bulldozer while protesting the demolition of Palestinian homes.  
 2005: Chile admits to the assassination by the dictatorship of Carmelo Soria in 1976.

Penumbral eclipse of Moon in the west of America

Full Moon: 12h01m (UTC) in Libra





# 24 Thursday

Ex 12,1-8,11-14 / Ps 115  
1Cor 11,23-26 / Jn 13,1-15

Holy Thursday

José Oriol

1918: Canadian women gain the vote.

1976: Argentine 'Dirty War' which killed 4,000 and disappeared 30,000, begins with a military coup.

1980: Oscar Arnulfo Romero, Archbishop of San Salvador, "Saint Romero of the Americas" is assassinated.

2004: Kirchner converts the torture centre from the dictatorship into the Museum to the Memory of Terrorism of the Argentinean State: 4,000 assassinated and 30,000 disappeared.

Visit today the Romero page and his homilies:  
<http://servicioskoinonia.org/romero>

**International Day for the Right to Know the Truth About Violations of Human Rights and the Dignity of Victims** (designated in 2010 by the UN for the 17th of June)

Monsignor Romero



# 25 Friday

Isa 52,13-53,12 / Ps 30

Passion of the Lord

Heb 4,14-16;5,7-9 / Jn 18,1-19,42

1807: Enactment of Slave Trade Act abolishes slavery in Great Britain and Ireland.

1986: Donato Mendoza, Delegate of the Word, and companions murdered for their faithful work among Nicaragua's poor.

# 26 Saturday

Gen 1,1-2,2 / Gen 22,1-18 / Ex 14,15-15,1

Holy Saturday

Isa 54,5-14 / Isa 55,1-11 / Bar 3,9-15,32-4,4

Braulio

Ezek 36,16-28 / Rom 6,3-11 / Mt 28,1-10

1989: Maria Gómez, teacher and catechist, killed for her service to the Simiti people in Colombia.

1991: Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay and Uruguay sign the Treaty of Commence of Asunción, thus creating the Mercosur.

1998: Onalicio Araujo Barrios and Valentin Serra, leaders of the landless movement, executed by large landowners in Parauapebas, Pará, Brazil.

# 27

**EASTER Sunday**

Acts 10,34a,37-43 / Ps 117

Col 3,1-4 / Jn 20,1-9

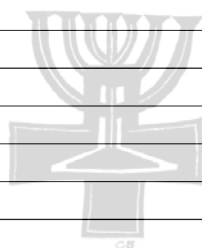
Good Friday / Ruperto

1502: Columbus lands at Carani, Costa Rica.

1814: Forces under General Andrew Jackson defeat Creek under Red Stick at Battle of Horseshoe Bend in final push to "clear" Alabama of its original peoples.

1984: The Txukahamãe block a main highway demanding their lands in Xingú, Brasil.

2011: Jose Comblin, theologian of liberation, missionary, prophet, and prolific writer, committed to the poorest communities, dies. Brazil.





# PRIVATE PROPERTY, SOURCE OF INEQUALITIES IN THE UTOPIAS

JUAN JOSÉ TAMAYO

Madrid, Spain

The relationship between private property and social inequalities, the removal of the property and the sharing of the goods of the Earth for the use and enjoyment of all the human beings constitute three invariant utopias woven throughout the history of humanity and made literally for centuries in different cultures to form a literary genre and a model of thought: the utopian. Utopias have their temporality and its historical context and respond to different situations social, cultural, political, religious, etc. But in all of them, there are three listed at the beginning. In this article I will make a journey through some of the utopian lands to prove it, starting with the ancient Greece, considered the birthplace of utopias and utopian thinking, to the present day, focusing on the utopias forged in the West.

One of the first utopians of which we have news by the works of Aristotle is Phaleas of Chalcedon, for whom the most important thing in the life of the city was to regulate questions relating to property, considered the main cause of civil strife, caused by economic inequalities. As a solution to these inequalities he proposes the absolute equality of property, nationalization of production goods and a public education system. Do this, says Phaleas, from the foundation of the city because then it is more difficult to channel it. Some authors consider Phaleas a precursor of socialism.

Antisthenes of Athens (445-365), founder of the cynical school, argues that wealth is found in intelligence. The rich man is not the one with a lot of money, but the one who is wise. "Be the total of my money, he said, so the man can take with moderate or transporting." The cynic philosopher was fond of suppressing the gold, marriage, and home and lived as he thought: he showed disdain for foreign goods and uninhibitedly lived scorning religion, social conventions, institutions, science, fame and power.

For him, happiness is to live with simplicity in nature. Free and happy people have fewer needs. The same path was followed by his disciple Diogenes of Sinope (Asia Minor), who was banished from his city, and got rid of everything that was not essential, he lived an itinerant existence and was free and cosmopolitan. Anywhere was his home.

"Let all things be common, as between friends," says Plato. In his book *The Republic* advocates the abolition of private property among the guards, which is the most important class and whose lifestyle is very demanding and it all depends on the class, and from it emerge the rulers. They must devote themselves exclusively to the service of the city. Therefore they should renounce all staff, not a family, not possessing any property, single parenthood or not having recognized maternity, forming a community of life and women perform the same activities men and women, to entrust the education of the sons and daughters to the state. Wealth creates greed, and greed is the source of all the evils of the state.

Iambulus' Islands of the Sun, last utopia of the antiquity, defined by Ernst Bloch as «a Communist and collective Festival», designed a style of life without private ownership or division of labor, slaves without masters, without specific economic forms for agricultural work or for the family. There is an economic collectivism, joy and work are common, educated in harmony and understanding, and work is compulsory for everyone.

The ideal of the Christian community of Jerusalem, according to the utopia of Jesus, is the community of goods, as it reflected in "Acts of the Apostles", which seems to inspire the community style of life of the Essenes or the rule of the Qumran community: "all the believers were together and had everything in common: sold their properties and possessions» «and shared their goods among

Translation by Ditter Chavez, Yolanda Chavez



themselves according to the need of each» (Acts 2, 44-45; cf 4, 32-35). That ideal, which perhaps never became reality, excluded by their very nature the existence of indigent people.

In medieval utopia of the Three Ages of Calabrian monk Joachim of Fiore, the Age of the Spirit, whose arrival looked imminent, is characterized by abundant grace, the perfection of knowledge, removing servitude of slaves and the servility of the children, the liberation of the oppressed, communion with the Spirit without hierarchy, strict observance of the Beatitudes, extreme poverty, fraternity lived without classes, as interpreted by Bloch, in a monastic communism rooted in the earth. This ideal became a reality in the middle ages for a time in the mendicant orders and other church reform movements that wanted to be faithful to the spirit of Christianity.

The consideration of private ownership as cause of all evils, suppression - not simple reform or its legal control - and the defense of the collective property constitute the main characteristics of the fable seafaring Utopia, Tomas Moro, author of the neologism: "here, where everything is everybody's, none doubt that no one has anything private to miss... nor is parsimonious distribution of assets and no one there is homeless nor a beggar; by none having nothing, they are all, however, rich». Private property creates serfs and Lords, causes clashes between warlords themselves, creates appetite for power and even wars for power and authority, is the cause of the wars of religion and justifies the anti-Christian exploitation of the poor by the rich. And all of this is legitimized by the public laws.

In the same direction is, Tomassio Campanella's *The city of the Sun*. Utopia in which Communism is the current system. Each neighborhood is self-sufficient and has their own barns, kitchens and dining halls. Meals are common. There is nothing in that regime that promotes the selfishness and attachment to private property. The principle governing relations between the people of the city is the love to the community.

Utopian socialism is a reaction against economic liberalism and its dogma of free competition, the

philosophical individualism of utilitarianism, that fails to align self-interest with the public interest, slave behaviors of the industrial revolution, which degrades the dignity of the workers subjected to hours of endless work, and middle-class orientation of the French Revolution does not recognize women as political subjects, non-proprietary people and the indigenous people of the colonies. Proposed social and economic alternatives to the current model. Some of the utopian Socialists advocate the Elimination of private property and the establishment of a "Communist" society. For example, Robert Owen with their agricultural cooperatives in Indiana and Etienne Cabet with the egalitarian Republic of Icaria first in Texas and Illinois. The three realities that embodies the "Trinity of evil", for Owen, are private property, marriage and positive religion.

Even recognizing the contributions of the utopian Socialists to the construction of a more just and egalitarian society, Marx and Engels criticize their idealism and their lack of scientific analysis and propose a global and radical, which leads to the creation of a society without exploitation, alienation, Classless, and that translates into concrete utopia improved abstraction of the classical social utopianism and antidote against the totalitarian utopia. Marxism in opposition is not between science and utopia, but between abstract utopia and concrete utopia.

Pope Francisco is in tune with the approach of utopias about the relationships of cause and effect between the accumulation of wealth and social inequalities. He says that the current social and economic system is unjust to its roots because: a) it develops an "economy of exclusion and inequality", governed by the law of competitiveness and stronger; b) considers the human being as a consumer good throwaway and fosters a culture of discarding; c) generates a globalization of indifference incapable of compassion to the cries of those who suffer; d) it has, in short, a potential disintegration and Death. Francisco says "no" to the new idolatry of money, which rules the world rather than serve, deifies the market and makes it an "absolute rule".



2016

March

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4	5	6	7
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18	19	20	21
25	26	27	28



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# 28 Monday

Atcs 2,14,22-23 / Ps 15

Sixtus  
1750: Francisco de Miranda, Spanish-American revolutionary is born in Caracas, Venezuela.  
1985: Héctor Gómez Calito, defender of human rights, captured, tortured and brutally assassinated in Guatemala.  
1988: 14 indigenous Tikunas are assassinated and 23 wounded by the forestry industrialist Oscar Castelo Branco and 20 gunmen. Meeting in Benjamin Constant, Brasil, they were waiting for the help of FUNAI.  
1972: Quebec General Strike.

# 29 Tuesday

Acts 2,36-41 / Ps 32

Beatriz de Silva, *Juan Nielsen Hauge*  
1857: Sepoy Mutiny or War of Independence breaks out against British colonial rule in India.  
1904: Birth of Consuelo Lee Corretjer, revolutionary, poet and teacher, leader of the Puerto Rican Independence movement.  
1967: Oil is brought to the surface for the first time in the Ecuadorian Amazon.  
1985: Brothers Rafael and Eduardo Vergara Toledo, militant Christians, martyred in resistance to the dictatorship in Chile.

# 30 Wednesday

Acts 3,1-10 / Ps 104

Gladys, Juan Clímaco  
1492: The Edict of Expulsion of the Jews issued by Ferdinand and Isabella of Spain.  
1870: Afro-American men win the vote in the United States: ratification of the 15th amendment.  
1985: José Manuel Parada, sociologist, Santiago Natino, art student and Mauel Guerrero, labour leader are assassinated in Santiago, Chile.





# 31 Thursday

Acts 3,11-26 / Ps 8  
Lk 24,35-48

Benjamin,

*Amos, John Dunne*

1767: Expulsion of the Jesuits from Latin America.

1866: Chile, Bolivia and Peru take arms against Spanish aggression.

1987: Roseli Correa da Silva, campesina, run down by a landowner's truck in Natalino, Brazil.

Last quarter: 15h17m (UTC) in Capricorn



# 1 Friday

Acts 4,1-12 / Ps 117  
Jn 21,1-14

Hugh

1680: Lisbon abolishes the slavery of Indigenous peoples in Brazil, influenced by Antonio Vieira.

1923: The first feminist congress is celebrated in Latin America, in Cuba.

1964: Military coup against João Goulart. Thus begins 21 years of military dictatorship in Brazil.

1980: The great strike of metalworkers in São Paulo and the interior begins.

1982: Ernesto Pili Parra is martyred in the cause of peace and justice in Colombia.

1999: Nunavut, a new Canadian territory is formed to protect Inuit culture.

# 2 Saturday

Acts 4,13-21 / Ps 117  
Mk 16,9-15

Francis of Paola

1550: The Spanish Crown orders Spanish to be taught to the Indigenous peoples.

1982: The Argentinean army occupies the Malvinas (Falkland) Islands in an attempt to regain control of the archipelago from the British who occupied it in 1833.

1993: 8 European countries undertake a joint strike against unemployment and the threat to social victories.

2005: Pope John Paul II dies.

# 3

Second Sunday of Easter

Acts 5,12-16 / Ps 117  
Apoc 1,9-11a.12-13.17-19 / Jn 20,19-31

Ricardo, Sixto

1948: U.S. President Truman signs the Marshall Plan for the post-war reconstruction of Europe.

1976: Victor Boichenko, Protestant pastor, disappeared in Argentina.

1986: Brazil approved its Plan for Information Technology. It will protect the national industry for several years.

1992: Institutional State coup by Fujimori, Peru.



4

## Monday

Isa 7,10-14;8,10 / Ps 39

Heb 10,4-10 / Lk 1,26-38

## Annunciation of the Lorde

Gema Galgani; Isidore of Seville

1775: The Portuguese crown encourages marriages between Indigenous people, Blacks and Whites.

1884: The Valparaiso Agreement. Bolivia cedes Antofagasta to Chile thus turning itself into a land-locked country.

1968: Martin Luther King Jr. is assassinated in Memphis, Tennessee.

1985: Maria Rosario Godoy, leader of the Mutual Support Group (GAM) in Guatemala, is tortured and murdered along with her 2 year old son.

Day of Protest against Child Prostitution

5

## Tuesday

Acts 4,32-37 / Ps 92

Jn 3,5a.7b-15

Vincent Ferrer

1989: Maria Cristina Gómez, a Baptist and women's rights activist, is martyred in El Salvador.

1992: Fujimori dissolves congress, suspends the constitution and imposes martial law.

6

## Wednesday

Acts 5,19-26 / Ps 33

Jn 3,16-21

Marcelino

Alberto Durero

1979: Hugo Echegaray, 39 year-old priest and liberation theologian dedicated to the poor in Peru, dies.

1994: Rwandan genocide begins.

April





7

Thursday

Acts 5,27-33 / Ps 33

Jn 3,31-36

Juan Bta. de La Salle

1868: Thomas D'Arcy McGee, one of the Canadian Fathers of Confederation is assassinated.

**World Health Day**

New Moon: 11h24m (UTC) in Aries



8

Friday

Acts 5,34-42 / Ps 26

Jn 6,1-15

Dionisio

Feast of «Vesakha», Birth of Buddha (566 B.C.E.).

1513: Juan Ponce de León claims Florida for Spain.

1827: Birth of Ramón Emeterio Betances, a revolutionary who developed the idea of the Cry of Lares, a Puerto Rican insurrection against Spanish rule.

1977: Carlos Bustos, an Argentinean priest, is assassinated for his support of the poor in Buenos Aires.

**World Romani (Gypsy) Day**

Established by the First World Romani Congress celebrated in London on this day in 1971

9

Saturday

Acts 6,1-7 / Ps 32

Jn 6,16-21

Casilda, M<sup>a</sup> Cleofás

Dietrich Bonhoeffer

1920: The US Marines land in Guatemala to protect U.S. citizens.

1948: Jorge Eliécer Gaitán is assassinated in Bogotá, Colombia, sparking the bloody repression of the 'Bogotazo'.

1952: The Bolivian National Revolution begins a period of fundamental political and economic reform.

1945: Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Pastor in the Lutheran Confessing Church opposed to Hitler, is executed today.

April

10

Third Sunday of Easter

Acts 5,27b-32,40b-41 / Ps 29

Apoc 5,11-14 / Jn 21,1-19

Ezechiel

Miguel Agrícola

1919: Emiliano Zapata, peasant warrior hero of the Mexican Revolution, dies in a military ambush.

1955: Pierre Teilhard de Chardin dies in New York. 60 years.

1985: Daniel Hubert Guillard, parish priest, murdered by the army in Cali, Colombia

1987: Martiniano Martínez, Terencio Vázquez and Abdón Julián, of the Baptist Church, martyrs to freedom of conscience in Oaxaca, Mexico.



# 11 Monday

Acts 6,8-15 / Ps 118

Jn 6,22-29 Zenón

Estanislao

1945: U.S. forces liberate the Buchenwald concentration camp from the Nazis.

1986: Antonio Hernández, journalist and popular activist, martyred in Bogotá, Colombia.

2002: State coup against President Hugo Chávez in Venezuela lasts four days until he is returned to office. Three presidents in 42 hours.

# 12 Tuesday

Acts 7,51-8,1a / Ps 30

Jn 6,30-35

1797: 25,000 Carib people expelled by the British from the island of St. Vincent arrive in Trujillo, Honduras. They became known as the Garifuna people.

1861: The American Civil War begins with Confederate forces bombarding Fort Sumter, in Charleston, South Carolina.

1925: Gathering in Foz de Iguaçu initiates the Prestes Column that will travel 25,000 kilometers in Brazil.

1997: Teresa Rodriguez is assassinated, in a teacher demonstration in Neuquen, Argentina. The major Argentinian picketing movement takes her name, MTR.

# 13 Wednesday

Acts 8,1b-8 / Ps 65

Jn 6,35-40

Martín, Hermenegildo

1873: White supremacists murder 105 black and 3 white men in Colfax, Louisiana.

1919: British and Gurkha troops massacre 379 unarmed demonstrators in Amritsar, India.

1999: The trial of 155 police is transferred to Belem. They are accused of the murder of 19 landless people in Eldorado do Carajás, Brazil.

April





# 14 Thursday

Acts 8,26-40 / Ps 65

Telmo

Jn 6,44-51

1981: In Morazán, El Salvador, 150 children, 600 elderly people and 700 women die at the hands of the military in the largest massacre recorded in recent Salvadoran history.

1985: Sister Adelaide Molinari is martyred in the struggle of the marginalized, Marabá, Brazil.

2010: Reynaldo Bignone is condemned to 25 years in prison for crimes against humanity during the dictatorship in Argentina.



First quarter: 04h00m (UTC) in Cancer

# 15 Friday

Acts 9,1-20 / Ps 116

Jn 6,52-59

Engracia

Benedict Joseph Labré

1961: The Bay of Pigs invasión, Cuba.

1983: Indigenous campesino martyrs of Joyabaj, El Quiché, Guatemala.

1989: Madeleine Lagadec, a French nurse, is tortured and killed along with Salvadorans María Cristina Hernández, nurse, Celia Díaz, teacher. Carlos Gómez and Gustavo Isla Casares an Argentinean doctor were injured.

1992: Aldemar Rodríguez, catechist and his companions are martyred in the cause of youth solidarity in Cali, Colombia.

1993: José Barbero, priest, prophet and servant to the poorest brothers of Bolivia.

# 16 Saturday

Acts 9,31-42 / Ps 115

Jn 6,60-69

1919: Mohatmas Gandhi calls for a non-violent protest of "prayer and fasting" in response to the Amritsar Massacre.

1952: The revolution triumphs: campesinos and miners achieve land reform in Bolivia.

1977: The Committee for the Defense of Political Prisoners, the Persecuted, the Disappeared and Exiles of Mexico (EUREKA) is established.

2002: Carlos Escobar, Paraguayan Judge, orders the capture and extradition of dictator Alfredo Stroessner, who had taken refuge in Brasilia. He is accused of the death in 1979 of a leader of the teachers union.

2007: 32 die in the Virginia Tech massacre, the worst rampage in modern American history.

**World Day Against Child Slavery**

215 million children in this situation, according to OIT in 2010.

April

# 17

Fourth Sunday of Easter

Acts 13,14.43-52 / Ps 99

Apoc 7,9.14b-17 / Jn 10,27-30

Aniceto

1695: † Juana Inés de la Cruz, Mexican poet.

1803: Toussaint L'Ouverture, Haitian liberation hero, dies in a French prison.

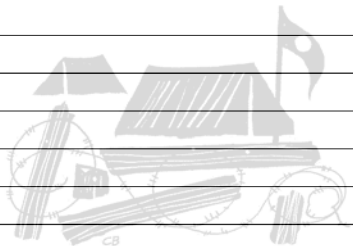
1990: Tiberio Fernández and his companions are martyred in Trujillo, Colombia for their defense of human rights.

1996: The Massacre of Eldorado do Carajás, Pará, Brazil. The State military police kill 23 people.

1998: César Humberto López, of Frater-Paz, is assassinated in San Salvador.

**International Campesino Day**

This is the «Labor Day» of campesinos.





# 18 Monday

Acts 11,1-18 / Ps 41

Perfecto, Galdino

Jn 10,1-10

1537: Francisco Marroquín, first bishop ordained in the New World, founder of the first schools and hospitals, pastor in Guatemala.

1955: The Conference of Bandung, Indonesia, where the Non-Aligned Movement is founded.

1955: Albert Einstein, Nobel laureate, dies.

1998: Eduardo Umaña Mendoza, Colombian lawyer who fought for human rights and denounced paramilitaries, is assassinated.

# 19 Tuesday

Acts 11,19-26 / Ps 66

Jn 10,22-30

León, Ema

*Olavus Petri*

1925: U.S. Marines land at La Ceiba, Honduras.

1980: Juana Tum, mother of Rigoberta Menchú, and her son Patrocino are martyred in the struggle for land and justice in Quiché, Guatemala.

2005: Adolfo Scilingo, condemned in Spain to 640 years of prison for his participation in the "death flights" during the Argentinean dictatorship.

# 20 Wednesday

Acts 12,24-13,5 / Ps 66

Jn 12,44-50

1586: Rose of Lima is born in Lima, Peru.

1871: The Brazilian Franciscans free the slaves in all their convents.

1898: Spanish American War begins. U.S. forces invade Cuba, Guam, the Philippines and Puerto Rico.

1980: Indigenous leaders martyred in Veracruz, Mexico.

**Pan-American Indian Day**



April



# 21 Thursday

Acts 13,13-25 / Ps 88

Anselmo Jn 13,16-20  
 Mohammed is born. Day of Forgiveness for the World.  
 The birth of Rama, Sikh Religion.  
 1792: Joaquín da Silva Xavier, «Tiradentes» (Teeth Puller), precursor of Brazilian Independence, decapitated.  
 1960: Brasilia is established as the capital of Brazil.  
 1965: Pedro Albizu Campos, Puerto Rican independence leader, dies.  
 1971: F. Duvalier dies, Haiti.  
 1989: Juan Sisay, popular artist, martyred for his faith at Santiago Atitlán, Guatemala.  
 1997: Gaudino dos Santos, Pataxó Indian, burned to death in Brasilia by several youth.

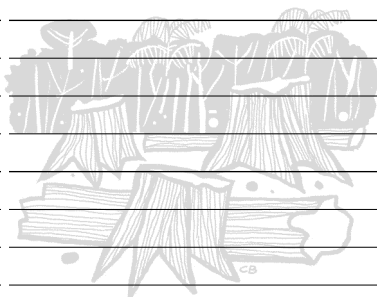
# 22 Friday

Acts 13,26-33 / Ps 2

Sotero, Cayo, Agapito Jn 14,1-6  
 1500: Pedro Alvares Cabral lands in Brazil, beginning of the invasion of the South.  
 1519: Cortés lands in Veracruz with 600 soldiers, 16 horses and some pieces of artillery.  
 1914: U.S. Marines seize the customs house, Veracruz, Mexico.  
 1970: Earth Day first celebrated.  
 1982: Félix Tecu Jerónimo, Achí campesino, catechist and delegate of the Word, Guatemala.  
 1997: The army attacks the Japanese embassy in Lima killing 14 militants of the MRTA occupying it.  
 2009: The remains of Bishop Angelelli are exhumed to confirm the status of his death as a martyr.

## Mother Earth Day (UN)

Full Moon: 05h24m (UTC) in Scorpio



# 23 Saturday

Acts 13,44-52 / Ps 97

George, Toyohiko Kagawa Jn 14,7-14  
 1971: Indigenous peoples rise up against nuclear testing that contaminates the island of Anchitks, Alaska.  
 1993: César Chávez, Mexican-American labor activist, dies.

## World Book and Copyright Day

Since on this day in 1616 Inca Garcilaso de la Vega, Miguel de Cervantes and William Shakespeare all died.

April

# 24

Fifth Sunday of Easter

Acts 14,21b-27 / Ps 144

Apoc 21,1-5a / Jn 13,31-33a.34-35

Fidel

1915/17: Death and deportation of almost one and a half million Armenians  
 1965: 40,000 U.S. soldiers invade the Dominican Republic.  
 1985: Laurita Lopez, a catechist, is martyred for her faith in El Salvador.



# 25 Monday

1Pet 5,5b-14 / Ps 88

Mark  
1667: Pedro de Betancourt, apostle to the poor of Guatemala, dies.  
1974: Carnation Revolution restores democracy to Portugal.  
1975: The Indigenous Association of the Argentinean Republic (AIRA) is established.

# 26 Tuesday

Acts 14,19-28 / Ps 144

Anacleto, Marcelino, Isidoro.  
1995: Quim Vallmajó, Spanish missionary, assassinated in Rwanda.  
1998: Bishop Juan José Gerardi is assassinated after publication of the church report "Guatemala: Never Again" on massive human rights abuses.

# 27 Wednesday

Acts 15,1-6 / Ps 121

Zita, Montserrat  
1977: Rodolfo Escamilla, a Mexican priest, is murdered by a death squad targeting social activists.  
1994: First democratic general election in South Africa.

April





# 28 Thursday

Acts 15,7-21 / Ps 95

Peter Chanel  
 1688: The Portuguese Royal Letter reestablishes slavery and a just war against Indigenous peoples.  
 1965: Lyndon Johnson orders the invasion of the Dominican Republic.  
 1985: Cleusa Carolina Coelho, Religious, is assassinated for defending the Indigenous peoples of Labrea, Brazil.  
 1987: Ben Linder, a development worker, is murdered by U.S.-funded Contras in Nicaragua.

# 29 Friday

Acts 15,22-31 / Ps 56

Catherine of Sienna  
 1982: Enrique Alvear, bishop and prophet of the Chilean Church, dies.  
 1991: Moisés Cisneros Rodríguez, a Marist priest, martyred due to violence and impunity in Guatemala.  
 2009: Judge Garzón opens a process to judge those responsible for torture in the Guantánamo prison during the Bush administration.

National Day of Mourning for Workplace Deaths (Canada)

# 30 Saturday

Acts 16,1-10 / Ps 99

Jn 15,18-21  
 1803: USA agrees to pay France 60 million francs for its Louisiana Territory.  
 1948: Twenty-one countries sign the founding charter of the OAS (Organization of American States) in Bogota.  
 1977: The Mothers of May Square is formed to witness to the violation of human rights in Argentina.

Last quarter: 03h29m (UTC) in Aquarius



MAY

1

Sixth Sunday of Easter

Acts 15,1-2.22-29 / Ps 66

Apoc 21,10-14.22-23 / Jn 14,23-29

Joseph the Worker  
 Philip and James

1980: Conrado de la Cruz, priest, and Herlindo Cifuentes, catechist, are kidnapped and killed in Guatemala.  
 1981: Raynaldo Edmundo Lemus Preza from the Guadalupe Christian Base Community of Soyapango, El Salvador, and his friend, Edwin Lainez, are disappeared for their Christian commitment.

International Labor Day





# FROM THE IMPOSSIBLE DREAM TO THE POSSIBLE FUTURE

DAVID MOLINEAUX

*Santiago de Chile*

In ever greater numbers, the world's people dream of inequality. Or rather: they dream of being part of the privileged minority that enjoys a lifestyle equivalent to that of Australia or the United States.

At this point it is clear, however, that if every family in China or India were to buy an automobile, several key Earth systems would collapse – and in short order.

Despite this undeniable reality, the “American Dream” shines like a beacon for a vast multitude of those who live in the so-called developing world. Media images, the ubiquity of shopping malls and fast-food restaurants, and the easy availability of credit cards appear to place this dream within reach.

Evidence of the power of this understandable but destructive fantasy is the huge number of lottery tickets sold in all our countries. Buyers do not consciously realize they are seeking inequality: they merely desire, for themselves and their families, the lifestyle enjoyed by a small, privileged minority of the planet's inhabitants.

This dream has managed to overshadow the social, political and religious ideals that not long ago guided the imaginations and daily decisions of millions of people. A trivial but significant symbol of this fascination is the enthusiasm generated by images of Santa Claus, even in countries such as Japan, China and India.

This enormous cultural shift can be attributed above all to the globalized communications media and their skilful use of images capable of triggering behavior even before those who perceive them have a chance to reflect and weigh them rationally.

## **The transforming power of images**

Common sense leads modern people to suppose that human beings -- and the course of history itself -- are most often governed by reason and logic. We assume that human societies respond to their current circumstances with plans, programs, and strategies that determine the course of history.

Careful examination of the mechanisms that bring about historical change shows, however, that in one situation after another it is prompted by something

quite different.

With surprising frequency, the most significant change is driven by images, symbols and stories that generate fascination and lead to collective action. To illustrate, let me offer a few examples.

First off, let us examine the Biblical account of the Chosen People's exodus from their servitude in Egypt. While it is true they suffered intolerable oppression and exploitation under the Pharaohs, the key factor that led to their uprising and exodus from Egypt was a dream: the divinely inspired promise of “a land flowing with milk and honey.”

Another example, three millennia later, would be the European Renaissance. This movement arose not so much as a reaction against the miserable living conditions that afflicted so many inhabitants of medieval fiefdoms. Rather, it grew out of new fascinations: classical art and literature, the emerging empirical sciences, and the urge to explore frontiers unknown to inhabitants of the medieval countryside and villages. These fascinations led Europe into an unimagined historical transformation: the rise of the modern world.

Or recall the great 19th-century migrations across the ocean from Europe to the Western hemisphere. It is true that European living conditions were often close to intolerable. However, it was the dream of a New World, symbolized by images such as the Statue of Liberty, sparked one of the greatest human migrations in history. Tens of millions of men, women and children left everything behind and embarked for an unknown future on the myth-laden shores of America.

Historical precedent suggests that not even the most dire circumstances can in themselves assure the emergence of significant change.

In the mid-14th century, for example, the Black Death exterminated at least 30 percent of Europe's population. Far from generating new social and cultural movements, however, this scourge led to political instability and economic stagnation. It triggered an enormous upsurge in superstitious and fanatical behavior – including atrocities such as the widespread murder of people suffering from skin diseases like acne and psoriasis. In its trail it left a deep pessi-



mism that weighed on the entire Western world and for more than a century, paralyzing movements for change.

### **Our contemporary world: the impossible dream**

Turning our attention to the present, researchers in widely differing fields warn that our current model of economic and technological development is leading us to the brink of environmental catastrophe.

At the same time we are witnesses, on our screens and in the written press, to near-daily acts of shocking and atavistic violence committed by makeshift bands of armed militants in the Middle East and sub-Saharan Africa.

Many analysts have pointed to the key role of climate change in the emergence of these groups. The spread of climate-induced draught has created desert-like conditions that have displaced great numbers of farming and herding families, forcing them to take refuge in urban slums. Many recruits to Yihad-inspired bands are young men condemned to lives of permanent unemployment: they seek some affiliation capable of providing a sense of meaning in their lives.

It is here that we can glimpse, in specific situations, the kinds of chaos that threaten to spread to other areas of the world as they begin to suffer the environmental consequences of our globalized economic system.

Those who are aware of these threats have not always responded in helpful ways. Often we have painted apocalyptic scenarios designed generate fear; or else we have incited feelings of guilt, reproaching our listeners for their supposed complicity in contaminating the environment or squandering non-renewable resources.

And despite efforts to raise awareness of these and other problems, the impossible dream – the dream of a U.S.-style consumer paradise – continues to capture imaginations. This fascination has all the earmarks of an addiction, including its alarming self-destructive bent.

### **A possible dream**

At the same time we need to acknowledge is that this very dream, despite its illusory and damaging components, contains an element that is not only legitimate but indispensable: a yearning for the abundant life. For perhaps the first time in the long human journey, the great masses can aspire – somewhat

realistically – not only to the basic necessities of life but also to those elements that will allow them to live full and creative lives, enjoy beauty and pleasure, and offer their children the possibility of seeking fulfillment as men and women.

But as we have seen, perhaps more than any other factor it is dreams and myths – affect-laden images – that generate major historical change.

Let me dare to suggest that in the depths of the “American dream” we can glimpse elements of a new and powerful myth, one capable of awakening the collective energies needed to construct viable, profoundly life-giving alternatives for humanity.

And this “impossible dream” emerges not only in the collective longings of humanity: it appears to be rooted in the dynamics that govern the entire biosphere that surrounds, sustains, and nourishes us.

Thanks to the evolutionary sciences, we have achieved a more and more detailed understanding of the long and transforming journey of living beings on Planet Earth. This four-billion-year adventure shows an unmistakable directionality: the march (inevitably beset by false starts and setbacks) toward ever greater fullness of being. Life’s gradual burgeoning has reached maximum splendor during the Cenozoic Era, the so-called the Age of Mammals, which began around 65 million years ago. This most recent period – the era in which we humans appeared on Earth – has witness the most wildly varied manifestations of emergent beauty: the colors and aromas of flowers; the taste of fruit and honey; butterflies and fireflies; the flight of birds; the songs of whales; and the manifold sensitivities and intelligences of mammalian species.

All this beauty would appear to anticipate the upsurge, in the human realm, of an incalculably greater abundance made possible by the birth, still awaited, of a new and transformative myth capable of capturing imaginations and unleashing prodigious collective energies.

With a generous dose of both humor and hyperbole, mathematical physicist Brian Swimme speaks of the demands facing humanity: “We find ourselves in a moment of supreme crisis. We cannot allow ourselves the luxury of any action that is not of the greatest urgency and undeniable effectiveness. Let us sit down, then: let us tell one another stories.”



# 2016

*April*

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2

Monday

Athanasius

Acts 16,11-15 / Ps 149

Jn 15,26-16,4a

Day of the Honduran Martyrs (First Sunday of May)

1979: Ten year-old Luis Alfonso Velásquez is murdered by the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

1997: Paulo Freire, Brazilian educator and liberationist author of "Pedagogy of the Oppressed," dies.

1981: The Indigenous Nations Union is founded in Brazil.

1994: Sebastián Larrosa, campesino student, martyr to solidarity among the poor, Paraguay.

3

Tuesday

Philip and James

1Cor 15,1-8 / Ps 18

Jn 14,6-14

1500: Fray Henrique de Coimbra, first European missionary to touch Brazilian soil.

1963: The police force in Birmingham, Alabama violently repress civil rights protestors.

1991: Felipe Huete, delegate of the Word, and four companions are martyred during the agrarian reform in El Astillero, Honduras.

Press Freedom Day (UN)

4

Wednesday

Ciriaco, Mónica

Acts 17,15,22-18,1 / Ps 148

Jn 16,12-15

1493: Pope Alexander VI issues a papal bull "Inter caetera" dividing the new world between Spanish and Portuguese crowns.

1521: † Pedro de Córdoba, first American catechism's author.

1547: † Cristóbal de Pedraza, bishop of Honduras, «Father of the Indigenous peoples».

1970: Four students die when the Ohio National Guard opens fire on an anti-Vietnam war protest at Kent State University.

2010: Martínez de Hoz, ideological superminister of the dictatorship, is arrested at the age of 84, Buenos Aires.





5

## Thursday

Acts 18,1-8 / Ps 97

Jn 16,16-20

Máximo

1862: Mexico defeats the French in Puebla.

1893: Birth of Farabundo Martí in Teotepeque, Department of La Libertad, El Salvador.

1980: Isaura Esperanza, Legion of Mary catechist who identified with the struggle of the Salvadoran people, is martyred.

2001: Barbara Ann Ford, a Sister of Charity, is assassinated in Quiché, Guatemala.

6

## Friday

Acts 18,9-18 / Ps 46

Jn 16,20-23a

Heliodoro

1977: Oscar Alarjarin, Methodist activist, is martyred in the cause of solidarity in Argentina.

1994: The Constitutional Court of Colombia legalizes "personal doses" of narcotics.

New Moon: 19h30m (UTC) in Taurus

7

## Saturday

Acts 18,23-28 / Ps 46

Jn 16,23b-28

Augusto, Flavia, Domitila

1937: Sentencing of Prestes to 16 years of prison, Brazil.

1539: Guru Nanak, founder of Sikhism, dies.

1984: Idalia López, 18 year-old catechist and humble servant of the people, is assassinated by civil defense forces in El Salvador.

MAY

8

The Ascension of the Lord

Acts 1,1-11 / Ps 46

Eph 1,17-23 / Lk 24,46-53

Víctor y Acacio

1753: Birth of Miguel Hidalgo, Father of Mexico.

1770: Carlos III orders "the various Indigenous languages to be extinguished and Spanish be imposed."

1987: Vincente Cañas, a Jesuit missionary, is murdered by people seeking to take land from indigenous people he was accompanying in Mato Grosso, Brazil.

1989: Dutch priest Nicolas van Kleef is assassinated by a soldier at Santa María, Panama.

International Red Cross Day



9

Monday

Acts 19,1-8 / Ps 67

Pacomio, Gregorio Ostiense

Jn 16,29-33

1502: Columbus sails from Cadiz, Spain on his fourth and final voyage to the Caribbean.

1982: Luis Vallejos, Archbishop of El Cuzco, Peru, committed to the 'preferential option for the poor' dies in a mysterious 'accident' after receiving death threats.

1994: Nelson Mandela takes office as President of South Africa after the first multiracial elections in the history of the country. He was S. Africa's longest serving living political prisoner.

10

Tuesday

Acts 20,17-27 / Ps 67

Juan de Ávila, Antonino

1795: José Leonardo Chirino, Afro-American, leads the Coro insurrection of Indigenous and Black peoples, Venezuela.

1985: Ime García, priest, and Gustavo Chamorro, activist, are martyred for their commitment to justice and human development in Guanabana, Colombia.

1986: Josimo Morais Tavares, priest and land reform advocate, murdered by a large landowner in Imperatriz, Brazil.

11

Wednesday

Acts 20,28-38 / Ps 67

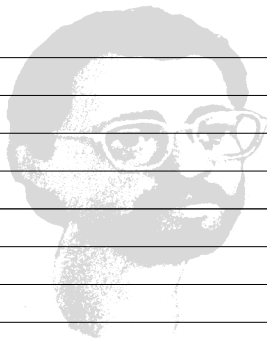
Jn 17,11b-19

Anastasius

1974: Carlos Mugica, priest in the 'villas miserias' of Argentina, dies in their defense. [www.carlosmugica.com.ar](http://www.carlosmugica.com.ar)

1977: Alfonso Navarro, priest, and Luis Torres, altar server, martyrs in El Salvador.

Josimo Morais





**PZ** Acts 22,30;23,6-11 / Ps 15  
Nereo, Aquiles, Pancracio Jn 17,20-26  
Day dedicated to Anastasia, a slave who symbolizes all the  
Afro-Americans who have been raped and tortured to  
death by White hacienda owners, Brazil.  
1957: The ILO (Int'l Lnabor Organization) adopts Convention  
107 on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples that  
protects them.  
1885: Métis armed resistance to Canadian expansion ends at  
Batoche, Saskatchewan.  
1980: Walter Voedeckers, a Belgian missionary committed to  
the cause of the campesinos, is martyred in Escuintla,  
Guatemala.

Jn 17,20-26

1888: Slavery is abolished in Brazil.

1977: Luis Arédez, medical doctor, is martyred for his solidarity with the poor of Argentina.

1998: The headquarters of the Justice and Peace Commission of the National Conference of Religious of Colombia is invaded by the army.

First quarter: 17h02m (UTC) in Leo



Acts 25,13-21 / Ps 102  
Jn 21,15-19

Jn 21,15-19

Acts 1,15-17.20-26 / Ps 112  
 Mathias Jn 15-17  
 1811: Independence of Paraguay. National Holiday.  
 1980: Massacre of the Sumpul River, El Salvador, where  
 more than 600 persons perished.  
 1980: Juan Cacaya Chipana, worker, activist, victim of police  
 repression in Peru.  
 1981: Carlos Gálvez Galindo, priest, martyred in Guatemala.  
 1988: Campesino martyrs for the cause of peace, Caya, Peru.  
 1991: Porfirio Suny Quispe, activist and educator, martyr to  
 justice and solidarity in Peru.

Jn 15,9-17

1811: Independence of Paraguay. National Holiday.

1980: Massacre of the Sumpul River, El Salvador, where more than 600 persons perished.

1980: Juan Caccya Chipana, worker, activist, victim of police repression in Peru.

1981: Carlos Gálvez Galindo, priest, martyred in Guatemala.  
1988: Campesino martyrs for the cause of peace, Cayara, Peru.

1991: Porfirio Suny Quispe, activist and educador, martyr to justice and solidarity in Peru.

**15** Pentecost  
Acts 2, 1-11 / Ps 103  
1Cor 12, 3b-7. 12-13 / Jn 20. 19-23

Isidro, Juana de Lestonnac  
1903: Victoriano Lorenzo, Panamanian guerrilla leader and national hero, is shot at Chiriqui.

1986: Nicolás Chuy Cumes, evangelical journalist, is martyred in the cause of freedom of expression in Guatemala.

1987: Indigenous martyrs, victims of land evictions, Bagadó, Colombia.

## Pentecost

Acts 2.1-11 / Ps 103

1Cor 12.3b-7.12-13 / Jn 20.19-23

Isidro, Juana de Lestonnac

1903: Victoriano Lorenzo, Panamanian guerrilla leader and national hero, is shot at Chiriqui.

1986: Nicolás Chuy Cumes, evangelical journalist, is martyred in the cause of freedom of expression in Guatemala.

1987: Indigenous martyrs, victims of land evictions, Bagadó, Colombia.

**International Family Day (UN)**



# 16 Monday

Jas 3,13-18 / Ps 18

John Nepomucene, Ubaldo

1818: King João II welcomes Swiss settlers fleeing hunger in their homeland to Brazil.

1981: Edgar Castillo, a journalist, is assassinated in Guatemala.

# 17 Tuesday

Mk 9,14-29 Pascal Baylon

1961: USA begins a commercial blockade against Cuba in reaction to the governmental agrarian reform.

1980: Attack by Sendero Luminoso on a polling station in the town of Chuschi, Peru, marks the beginning of two decades of violence and repression.

**World Telecommunication Day.** A call to eliminate the imbalance in the production of messages and programs.

# 18 Wednesday

Jas 4,1-10 / Ps 54

Mk 9,30-37 Rafaela M<sup>a</sup> Porras

1525: Founding of Trujillo (Honduras).

1781: José Gabriel Condorcanqui, Tupac Amaru II, leader of an indigenous rebellion in Peru and Bolivia, is executed.

1895: Augusto C. Sandino, Nicaraguan patriot, is born.

1950: The National Black Women's Council meets in Rio de Janeiro.

Tupac Amaru II



May



# 19 Thursday

Christ High Priest / Gen 14,18-20

Peter Celestine Ps 109 / 1Cor 11,23-26 / Lk 9,11b-17  
 1895: José Martí, Cuban national hero, dies in the struggle for independence.  
 1995: Jaime Nevares dies, bishop of Neuquén, prophetic voice of the Argentinean Church.  
 1997: Manoel Luis da Silva, landless farmer, is assassinated at São Miguel de Taipu, Brazil.

# 20 Friday

Jas 5,9-12 / Ps 102

Bernardine of Sienna Mk 10,1-12  
 1506: Christopher Columbus dies in Valladolid (Spain).  
 1976: Exiled Uruguayan politicians Hector Gutiérrez and Zelmor Michellini are murdered in Argentina as part of the U.S. supported Operation Condor.  
 1981: Pedro Aguilar Santos, priest, martyr to the cause of the poor, Guatemala.  
 1993: Destitution of the President of Venezuela, Carlos Andrés Pérez.  
 1998: Francisco de Assis Araujo, chief of the Xukuru, is assassinated at Pesqueira, Pernambuco, Brazil.

# 21 Saturday

Jas 5,13-20 / Ps 140

Felicia y Gisela, *John Eliot* Mk 10,13-16  
 1897: Gregorio Luperón, independence hero of the Dominican Republic, dies in Puerto Plata.  
 1981: Pedro Aguilar Santos, priest, martyr, Guatemala.  
 1991: Irene McCormack, missionary, and companions, are martyred in the cause of peace in Peru.

**World Cultural Diversity Day (UN)**

Full Moon: 04h53m (UTC) in Cancer



MAY

# 22

The Most Holy Trinity

Pet 8,22-31 / Ps 8

Rom 5,1-5 / Jn 16,12-15

Joaquina Vedral, Rita de Casia  
 1937: Government massacre of members of a messianic community at Caldeirão, Brazil.  
 1942: Mexico declares war on Axis powers.  
 1965: Requested by the United States. Brazil sends 280 soldiers to support a State Coup in Santo Domingo.

**International Day for Biodiversity**

22% of mammal species are in danger of extinction as are 23 % of amphibians and 25% of reptiles. Between 1970 and 2005, globally, biodiversity was reduced by 30%.



# 23 Monday

1Pet 1,3-9 / Ps 110

Mk 10,17-27

Desiderio, *Ludwig Nommensen*

1977: Elisabeth Käseman, German Lutheran activist, is martyred in the cause of the poor in Buenos Aires, Argentina

2008: The constitutive treaty of the Union of South American Nations (UNASUR) brings together 12 countries of South America.

**Week of Solidarity with the Peoples of Non-Self-Governing Territories (UN)**

# 24 Tuesday

1Pet 1,10-16 / Ps 97

Mk 10,28-31

Vincent of Lerins

1822: Battle of Pichincha, Independence of Ecuador.

1986: Ambrosio Mogorrón, a Spanish nurse, and his campesino companions are martyred in the cause of solidarity in San José de Bocay, Nicaragua.

2005: Edickson Roberto Lemus, campesino organizer, assassinated El Progreso, Honduras.

2011: The marriage of environmentalists Jose Claudio Ribeiro da Silva and Maria Do Espirito Santo, in Nova Ipxuna, PA, Brazil, assassinated for their struggle against lumber companies.

# 25 Wednesday

1Pet 1,18-25 / Ps 147

Mk 10,32-45

Vicenta López Vicuña

Gregory VII

1810: The May Revolution marks the beginning of self-government in Argentina.

1987: Bernard López Arroyave, a priest, is martyred by landowners and Colombian military.

May





Philip Neri,  
Mariana Paredes

1Pet 2,2-5.9-12 / Ps 99

Mk 10,46-52

1969: Enrique Pereira Neto, 28 year old priest, martyr for justice in Recife, Brazil.

1989: Maria Gómez, Colombian teacher and catechist, martyred for her commitment to her Simitri people.

**27 Friday**

Augustine of Canterbury  
*John Calvin*

1514: Conversion of Bartolomé de Las Casas to the Indigenous People's Cause.

1812: Women from Cochabamba join the fight for independence against Spain at the Battle of La Coronilla in Bolivia.

1975: Quechua becomes an official language of Peru.

2008: 98 ex-agents of the DINA (local Intelligence Agency), are imprisoned for "Operation Colombo" in which 119 people were assassinated.

2011: Adelino Ramos, peasant leader, victim for his struggle against a destructive landowner in Porto Velho, RO, Brazil.

**28 Saturday**  
June 1

1Pet 4,7-13 / Ps 95

Mk 11,11-26

Emilio y Justo

1830: U.S. President Andrew Jackson signs The Indian Removal Act, thus paving the way for the forced relocation of Native Americans from southeastern states.

1926: A State Coup brings right-wing Salazar to power in Portugal until his death in 1970.

1993: Javier Cirujano, a missionary, is martyred for peace and solidarity in Colombia.

2001: The French justice system indicts Henry Kissinger, implicated in the assassination of French citizens under Pinochet.

2004: Central America signs a Free Trade Agreement with the USA, to be ratified by the Congress of each country.

Jude 17,20b-25 / Ps 62

Mk 11,27-33

# May

29

Heart of Jesus

Gen 14,18-20 / Ps 109

1Cor 11,23-26 / Lk 9,11b-17

Maximino, *Jiri Tranovsky*

1969: The «cordobazo»: a social explosion against the dictatorship of Onganía, in Córdoba, Argentina.

1978: Guatemalan soldiers open fire on Mayan Q'eqchi' demonstrators seeking recovery of ancestral lands in Panzos.

1980: Raimundo Ferreira Lima, "Gringo", a peasant labor union organizer, is martyred in Brazil.

2009: One of the soldiers who executed Victor Jara is detained in Santiago, Chile, after 35 years.

Last quarter: 12h12m (UTC) in Pisces





# INEQUALITY AND ECOLOGY: 9 INVESTIGATORS

ENRIQUE MARROQUÍN

Mexico DF, Mexico

The capitalist economic system, based on unrestricted free markets, tends by its very nature to a concentration of wealth. Its apologists claim that “thanks to that freedom”, products are improved and cheaper; they also insist that wealth so obtained gets spread automatically, by a kind of “spill-over-process” into the lower strata of the population. For the capitalist -- the State as “night watchman”—ought to limit its regulation of competition to mere antitrust laws, and to simple arbitration.

But what becomes clear is that the pursuit of maximal profits at any price leads to the concentration of wealth becoming worse throughout history. (1% of the world’s population hordes wealth equal to the wealth of 55% of the remaining population). At the same time, it provokes increasing impoverishment in large sections of the remaining population and the destruction of our planet. This situation is stimulating critical investigators to search for a new paradigm to throw light upon a transforming activity.

**Thomas Piketty** is the author who has best demonstrated how this concentration of capital has been increasing throughout history. His well received work (*Capital in the Twenty-first Century* -- University of Harvard Press, 2014) is a devastating, rigorously scholarly, and till now unchallenged book. He wipes out the myth of the U.S. of North America being a land of opportunity, where anyone who has a bit more talent and works a bit more and harder, can increase her or his capital.

He goes on to prove that capital is the fruit not of labor, but rather of assets owned particularly through inheritance. His central thesis is that growth-rates of capital steadily exceeding those of production and income, bring about unsustainable mechanisms of inequality. Wealth grows impressively -- but not through the production of goods but through financial speculation. Piketty proposes a policy of scaled-up taxation and a differential treatment of the public debt.

**Julio Boltvinik**, an analyst of the economy, questions the defense by the neo-liberal model of its “success” in reducing poverty. Statistics apparently

confirm certain achievements, at least with regard to extreme poverty; - but the author holds that this may simply be due to the criteria used in measuring poverty. The U.S. of North America considers “paupers” those with an income of less than two dollars a day; but this depends on the standard of living in each country. As an alternative indicator of “extreme poverty” he proposes: un-satisfaction of the most basic needs (food, clothing, housing); and for the “moderate poverty” of the lower middle class, an inferior quality in three other indicators: health, education and recreation.

**William I. Robinson** studies the new reality of world capitalism, characterized by its expansion – both extensive and intensive – up to the point that such expansion will soon reach its limits and then its contradictions will indicate the “end of history”.

It is presently passing from a world economy to a global economy. This “trans-nationalization” of the economy tends to replace the capitalist Nation-state, with a world-dominating Trans-national-state, dominated by an equally trans-national capitalist class. (*A Theory of Global Capitalism*, edit. “From below”, Bogotá 2007).

**David Rothkopf** analyzes this “super-class”, the “elite of the elite” -- some 6,000 people – (one for every million of the population) -- of origins that are international, intercultural and interracial: together with their social networks, their links between powers that are military, political, economic and cultural (arts, sports, informatics, communications). Of course, there is an hegemony of citizens of the U.S. of North America, but globalization involves interconnected economies, including those of emerging nations and therefore multi-national corporations; but all are un-fettered by national governments. (*Super-class, the global power-elite and the world they are making*, Farrar, Strauss and Ginoux, New York 2008).

**Joseph E. Stiglitz**, Nobel Laureate in Economics, discusses how this excessive inequality is seriously compromising our future. Not only does it cause slower growth and lower GNP, but also instability,

Translation by Justiniano Liebl



weak democracy, pollution, unemployment, but most important of all is moral impoverishment and the degradation of values: if everything goes, nobody is responsible! (free Spanish digital version: The Price of Inequality: the 1% who have what the 99% need).

**Annie LEONARD** pedagogically explains the mechanisms of the economic system and its effects, not only on wealth inequality, but for its impact on nature, including the body. Her thesis is on YouTube «The Story of Stuff» with cartoons, and has received over 12 million visits.

**Victor TOLEDO** develops a thesis of “political ecology”, which incorporates an holistic view (nature and society), and surpasses the neo-liberal “techno-science”: 1) the world is sliding into a chaos or collapse due to capital’s double exploitation of both nature and human labor. These phenomena are inextricably linked and spring from unequal societies; 2) their spatial expression extends from the global to the local, and vice versa; 3) the succession of crises in recent decades, responds to a crisis of civilization. All this results from increased social inequality through the concentration of wealth due to the ineffectiveness of the principle institutions of the modern world. The only solution will be a radical transformation that is both peaceful and profound.

**James O’CONNOR**, studies from an “ecological Marxism”, the relationship between capitalist society and nature, observing a new kind of crisis: the sub-production of capital caused by ecological degradation. Rising ecological costs contribute to reduce capital’s profits and lead to a crisis of accumulation. The contradiction of today’s capitalism is not only that which existed between the productive forces and social relations of production (leading to over-production), but another contradiction, springing up between the outcome (or appropriation) and the plusvalía; between production and circulation of capital. That’s why the agents for switching over to socialism will be not only the proletariat, but also the new social movements. (*Causas naturales. Ensayos sobre marxismo ecológico*, Siglo XXI, México 2001)

**John Bellamy Foster** goes deeper into this discussion, explaining how all these elements go to form “relations of production”, in which not all profits are due to capitalist industry, but also to “fictitious commodities”. In this way “ecological Marxism”

complements the traditional Marxist thesis with a second and contradictory one, which links ecological scarcity, to economic crisis and. growth of new movements for social change. As ecological damage translates into economic crisis, a feed-back mechanism is activated: a) capital tries to stop the rising costs related to undermining of relations of production, while social movements push for capital to assume these costs; b) both factors push capital to ecologically sustainable forms of production; c) this gives rise to an opportunity for the left to form an alliance between a class-based labor movement and new social movements. However, capitalism maintains its capacity to accumulate wealth by managing to use the very ecological destruction itself, and to making profit from destroying Mother Earth to a point of no return.

I conclude warning about global collapse, which not only threatens the neo-liberal model, but the very survival of human life on the planet, which some estimate now in decades. The risk is all the more probable, as the unbridled ambition of the “super rich” does not permit corrections that would endanger their profits.

To justify themselves this super-class has its anesthetizing power of the mass-media. And should “manipulation by consensus” fail, there is always the deterrent “power of coercion”: the most sophisticated technology for total espionage, which incorporates a giant data bank of all the information for millions of people (messages and phone calls, credit cards, internet, face-book... and soon, even DNA!), [as revealed by WikiLeaks of Edward Snowden]. This information is available for the new “smart-armament” (remotely-controlled drones plus ammunition): these can be launched from any of a thousand small bases scattered about the ocean, focused on killing somebody carrying a certain cell phone, wherever she or he might be located.

Nevertheless there is hope: multitudes of people, communities and social movements use the same network to interface globally and struggle to correct the current life cycle of goods and services, towards cyclical self-sustainable processes. It is probable that in the event of the economic system collapsing, such experiences would be the ones to survive and recompose the future.



2016

May

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2	3	4	5	6	7	8	23	24	25	26	27	28	29
9	10	11	12	13	14	15	30	31					

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
30 Lunes	31 Martes	1 Miercoles	2 Jueves
6	7	8	9
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M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	July	
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<div>Friday</div> <div>Viernes</div>			<div>Saturday</div> <div>Sabado</div>			<div>Sunday</div> <div>Domingo</div>			<div>JUNE</div>	
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# 30 Monday

2Pet 1,1-7 / Ps 90

Fernando, Joan of Arc

1431: 19 year old Joan of Arc is burned at the stake by a pro-English tribunal.

1961: Dominican dictator, Rafael Leónidas Trujillo, is assassinated.

1994: Maria Cervellona Correa, Franciscan sister and defender of the Mby'a people of Paraguay, dies.

# 31 Tuesday

Zeph 3,14-18 / Int.: Isa 12,2-6

Visitation of Mary

1986: First meeting of Afro-American pastoral workers in Duque de Caxias and São João de Meriti, Brazil

1990: Clotario Blest dies: first president of the Chilean Labor Federation (CUT), Christian labor prophet.

World Day without Tobacco

# 1 Wednesday

2Tim 1,1-3.6-12 / Ps 122

Mk 12,18-27

1989: Sergio Restrepo, Jesuit priest, is martyred in his fight for the liberation of peasants of Tierralta, Colombia.

1991: João de Aquino, union president of Nueva Iguaçu, Brazil, is assassinated.

2009: General Motors announces the largest suspension of payments in the industrial history of the USA with 122,550 million in debts.

June





2

## Thursday

2Tim 2,8-15 / Ps 24

Mk 12,28b-34

Pedro y Marcelino

1537: Pope Paul III issues a papal bull condemning slavery.

1987: Sebastian Morales, evangelical deacon, martyred for faith and justice in Guatemala.

3

## Friday

Corazón de Jesús / Ezek 34,11-16 / Ps 22

Rom 5,5b-11 / Lk 15,3-7

Charles Luanga

John XXIII

1548: Juan de Zumárraga, bishop of Mexico, protector of the Indigenous peoples, dies.

1621: The Dutch West Indies Company gains a mercantile trade charter to aid in colonizing Americas.

1758: The Commission on Limits meets with the Yanomami people of Venezuela.

1885: St. Charles Luanga and companions, Ugandan martyrs, patrons of African youth.

1963: Pope John XXIII dies.

4

## Saturday

Heart of Mary / Isa 61,9-11

Int: 1Sam 2,1-8 / Lk 2,41-51

Francisco Caracciolo

1559: El Oidor Fernando Santillán informa de las 1559:

Fernando Santillán, judge, reports on the massacres of Indigenous peoples in Chile.

1980: José Maria Gran, missionary, and Domingo Batz, sacristan, are martyred in El Quiché, Guatemala.

1989: Chinese government violently suppresses Tiananmen Square pro-democracy demonstrators resulting in thousands of casualties.

International Day of Innocent Children  
Victims of Aggression

June

5

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

1Kings 17,17-24 / Ps 29

Gal 1,11-19 / Lk 7,11-17

Boniface

1573: Execution of Tanamaco, Venezuelan cacique.

1968: Robert F. Kennedy shot in Los Angeles, California.

1981: The first case in history of AIDS is discovered in Los Angeles, USA.

1988: Agustin Ramirez and Javier Sotelo, workers, are martyred in the fight for the marginalized in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

2000: The Court of Santiago removes Pinochet's immunity. He is accused of 109 crimes in the Chilean tribunals and sought internationally.

World Environment Day

New Moon: 03h00m (UTC) in Gemini



6

## Monday

1Kings 17,1-6 / Ps 120

Norbert

Mt 5,1-12

1940: Marcos Garvey, Black Jamaican leader, mentor of Pan-Africanism dies.

1980: José Ribeiro, leader of the Apuníña people, is assassinated in Brazil.

1989: Pedro Hernández and companions, indigenous leaders, martyrs in the struggle for traditional land rights in Mexico.

2014: Swiss justice sentences Erwin Sperisen the Guatemaltecan-Swiss co-author of murders and tortures.

Ramadan begins

7

## Tuesday

1Kings 17,7-16 / Ps 4

Mt 5,13-16

Roberto, *Seattle*

1494: Castilla and Portugal sign the Treaty of Tordesillas, thus negotiating their expansion in the Atlantic region.

1872: Trade Union Act (Canada).

1978: The Unified Black Movement (MNU) is inaugurated.

1990: Sister Filomena Lopes Filha, apostle of the favelas, is assassinated in Nueva Iguacú, Brazil.

1998: White supremacists drag James Bryd Jr. to his death in Jasper, Texas.

2005: After 30 years of struggle, the lands of the campesinos in the Paraguayan Agrarian Leagues are returned to them.

8

## Wednesday

1Kings 18,20-39 / Ps 15

Mt 5,17-19

Salustiano, Medardo

1706: A Royal Decree orders the capture of the first typographer of Brazil, in Recife.

1982: Luis Dalle, bishop of Ayaviri, Peru, threatened with death for his option for the poor, dies in a provoked "accident" that has never been clarified.

1984: Student leader, Willie Miranda, murdered by Guatemalan military.

June





# 9 Thursday

1Kings 18,41-46 / Ps 64  
 Efrén, Columbano, Aidan, Bede  
 Mt 5,20-26  
 1597: José de Anchieta, from the Canary Islands, evangelizer of Brazil, "Principal Father" of the Guarani.  
 1971: Héctor Gallego, Colombian priest, disappeared in Santa Fe de Veraguas, Panama.  
 1979: Juan Morán, Mexican priest, martyred in defense of the indigenous Mazahuas people.  
 1981: Toribia Flores de Cutipa, campesino leader, victim of repression in Peru.

# 10 Friday

1Kings 19,9a.11-16 / Ps 26  
 Crispulo y Mauricio  
 Mt 5,27-32  
 1521: The Indigenous people destroy the mission of Cumaná (Venezuela) built by Las Casas.  
 1835: A death penalty without appeal is ordered for any slave that kills or causes trouble for the owner, Brazil.  
 1898: U.S. forces land on Cuba during Spanish-American War.  
 1992: Norman Pérez Bello, activist, is martyred for his faith and his option for the poor.

# 11 Saturday

Acts 11,21b-26;13,1-3 / Ps 97  
 Barnabas  
 Mt 10,7-13  
 1964: Nelson Mandela is sentenced to life in a South African prison.  
 1980: Ismael Enrique Pineda, Caritas organizer, and companions are disappeared in El Salvador.  
 2008: Canada apologizes for residential schools.

# 12

Eleventh Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 2Sam 12,7-10.13 / Ps 31  
 Gal 2,16.19-21 / Lk 7,36-8,3

Gaspar, Juan de Sahagún  
 1514: The the first time the "requerimientos" are read (to Cacique Catarapa) by Juan Ayora, on the coast of Santa Marta.  
 1963: Medgar Evers, civil rights activist, assassinated in Jackson, Mississippi.  
 1981: Joaquin Nevés Norté, lawyer for the Naviraí Rural Workers Union in Paraná, Brazil, is assassinated.  
 1935: The war over the Paraguayan Chaco ends.

**World Day Against Child Labour**

First quarter: 08h10m (UTC) in Virgo





# 13 Monday

1Kings 21,1-16 / Ps 5

Anthony of Padua

Mt 5,38-42

1645: The Pernambucan Insurrection begins with the aim of expelling Dutch rule from Brazil.

1980: Walter Rodney, political activist and author of *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa*, is assassinated in Guyana.

2000: Argentine President Fernando de la Rúa apologizes for his country's role in harboring Nazis after World War II.

2003: The Supreme Court of Mexico orders the extradition to Spain of Ricardo Cavallo, a torturer during the Argentinean dictatorship.

# 14 Tuesday

1Kings 21,17-29 / Ps 50

Mt 5,43-48

Eliseo, *Basil the Great*,

*Gregory Nazienzen*, *Gregory of Nyssa*

1905: Sailors mutiny aboard the Russian battleship *Potemkin* demanding political reforms.

1977: Mauricio Silva, Uruguayan priest working with street sweepers in Buenos Aires, is kidnapped.

1980: Cosme Spessoto, Italian priest, pastor, martyr in El Salvador. 30 years.

1983: Vicente Hordanza, missionary priest at the service of the campesinos, Peru.

2005: The Supreme Court of Argentina declares unconstitutional the laws of "Due Obedience" and of "Full Stop."

# 15 Wednesday

2Kings 2,1.6-14 / Ps 30

Mt 6,1-6.16-18

M<sup>a</sup> Micaela, Vito

1215: Magna Carta sealed by King John of England, affirms primacy of rule of law.

1932: Bolivia and Paraguay begin the war over the Chaco region.

1952: Víctor Sanabria, Archbishop of San José de Costa Rica, defender of social justice.

1987: Operation Albania: 12 people are assassinated in Santiago, Chile, by security forces.

2005: The Supreme Court of Mexico declares not-binding the crime of ex-President Echeverría for genocide due to the massacre of students in 1971.





# 16 Thursday

Sir 48,1-15 / Ps 96  
Mt 6,7-15  
Juan Francisco de Regis  
1976: Soweto Massacre claims the life of 172 students when South African police open fire on protestors.  
1976: Aurora Vivar Vásquez, champion of women's labor rights, is murdered in Peru.

# 17 Friday

2Kings 11,1-4.9-18.20 / Ps 131  
Mt 6,19-23  
Ismael y Samuel  
1703: Birth of John Wesley, England.  
1983: Felipe Pucha and Pedro Cuji, campesinos, are martyred in the struggle for land in Culluctuz, Ecuador.  
1991: End of apartheid in South Africa.

World Anti-desertification Day

# 18 Saturday

2Chr 24,17-25 / Ps 88  
Mt 6,24-34  
Germán  
1815: The defeat of the French at the Battle of Waterloo ends the Napoleonic era.  
1997: Brazil approves a law permitting the privatization of Communications.

June

# 19

Twelfth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Zech 12,10-11;13,1 / Ps 62  
Gal 3,26-29 / Lk 9,18-24

Romuald

1764: José Artigas, liberator of Uruguay and father of agrarian reform, is born.  
1867: Maximiliano, Emperor imposed on México is executed by a firing squad.  
1986: Massacre of El Fronton penitentiary prisoners in Lima, Peru.



# 20 Monday

2Kings 17,5-8.13-15a.18 / Ps 59

Silverio

Day of the African Refugee.

1820: Manuel Belgrano dies, Father of Argentina.

1973: Right-wing terrorists open fire on Peronist demonstrators killing 13, near the Ezeiza Airport in Buenos Aires.

1979: Rafael Palacios, priest, is martyred for his work with Salvadoran Christian base communities.

1995: Greenpeace wins the struggle to stop Shell and Esso from sinking the petroleum platform, Brent Spar, into the ocean, thus avoiding the sinking of 200 others as well.

World Refugee Day (UN)

Solstice, summer/winter at 22h34m (UTC)

Full Moon: 11h02m (UTC) in Sagittarius



# 21 Tuesday

2Kings 19,9b-11.14-21.31-35a.36

Louis Gonzaga, Onésimo Nesib

Ps 47 / Mt 7,6.12-14

1964: Civil rights activists; James Chaney, Michael Schwerner and Andrew Goodman are murdered by racists in Philadelphia, Mississippi.

1980: 27 union leaders from the National Workers' Central in Guatemala are disappeared. American military advisors participate.

1984: Sergio Ortiz, seminarian, is martyred during the persecution of the Church in Guatemala.

1998: **Pe. Leo Comissari, mártir de los líderes sociales de São Bernardo do Campo, SP, Brasil, asesinado.**

National Aboriginal Day (Canada)

Andean New Year

# 22 Wednesday

2Kings 22,13;23,1-3 / Ps 118

John Fisher, Thomas More

Mt 7,15-20

1534: Benalcázar enters and sacks Quito.

1965: Arthur MacKinnon, a Canadian Scarborough missionary, is assassinated by the military at Monte Plata, Dominican Republic for his defense of the poor.

1966: Manuel Larraín, bishop of Talca, Chile and president of the Latin American bishop's organization, dies.

June





# 23 Thursday

2Kings 24,8-17 / Ps 78

Zenón, Marcial

Mt 7,21-29

1524: The "Twelve Apostles of Spain," Franciscans, arrive on the coast of Mexico.

1936: Birth of Carlos Fonseca, Nicaragua.

1967: Miners and their families die in the massacre of San Juan in Siglo XX, Bolivia.

1985: Terrorist bomb destroys Air India Flight 182 bound from Canada to India. It is the largest mass murder in Canadian history.

# 24 Friday

Isa 49,1-6 / Ps 138

Birth of John the Baptist

Acts 13,22-26 / Lk 1,57-66.80

1541: Mixton War, Indigenous rebellion against the Spanish sweeps western Mexico.

1821: Simon Bolivar leads troops in a decisive Battle of Carabobo for the independence of Venezuela.

1823: The Federation of the United Provinces of Central America is established but lasts only a short time.

# 25 Saturday

Lam 2,2.10-14.18-19 / Ps 73

William, Maximus

Mt 8,5-17

*Confession of Ausburg, Philip Melancton*

1524: Talks between priests and Aztec wise men with the "Twelve Apostles of Mexico."

1767: Mexican Indigenous riot against Spanish crown as their Jesuits missionaries are ordered to leave.

1975: Martyrs of Olancho: Colombian Ivan Betancourt and Miguel "Casimiro", priests, and seven Honduran peasant companions.

June

# 26

Thirteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

1Kings 19,16b.19-21 / Ps 15

Gal 5,1.13-18 / Lk 9,51-62

Pelayo

1541: Violent death of Pizarro.

1822: Encounter between San Martín and Bolívar in Guayaquil.

1945: United Nations Charter signed in San Francisco, California.

1987: Creation of the Confederation of Indigenous Peoples of Mexico.

Internat'l Day against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking

International Day in Support of Torture Victims



# MORAL INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY

TERESA FORCADES I VILA

Montserrat, Catalunya, Spain

Translation by Alice Mendez

There are people who are born smart and others are born with limited intellectual capacities. There are people who are born healthy and strong and others are born ill. There are people who are born beautiful and others are born ugly. There are people who are born smart, strong or beautiful and later suffer during their lives an accident or an illness that deprives them or diminishes significantly those attributes.

Sometimes the inequality in attributes when born is caused by a human act or by social injustice, like, for example, when a mother takes some medicine or substances during pregnancy or when environmental contamination by glyphosate (RoundUp), Monsanto's star product, is allowed in rural areas. Accidents and illnesses that appear during a lifetime may also be a consequence of human direct actions or of an unequal distribution of resources, like for example when there is an earthquake and the only houses destroyed burying their inhabitants are those of the poorest, or when there is unequal access to healthcare, or when there are workplace accidents due to bad conditions or even inhuman conditions such as those in the coltan mines in Congo.

Despite the very numerous cases in which inequality of attributes when born or the fact of being the victim of an accident or illness during a lifetime are a consequence of social inequality, it is clear that there are also very many cases in which inequality is not the fruit of human individual or collective acts. I call this inequality that is not fruit of human acts, "natural inequality".

What is the cause of natural inequality? Is it dear to God? Does it form part of his creative will?

In the Parable of the Talents (Mt 25, 15-30), narrated by Mathew just before the Parable of the Final Judgment, we find Jesus comparing God to a man that, having decided to trust his goods to his servants, he does not give them out in an equitable way: he gives one of them five talents, another two and to the third only one.

Why are some people born intelligent, healthy and

beautiful and others are born without any of these attributes? Why this initial inequality? If we start from an initial inequality is not social inequality inevitable?

Social inequality is undoubtedly inevitable if society is organized around competitiveness and also considers private property an absolute right. In the capitalist society, those born with less capacity to compete or have a serious illness or accident are usually left socially marginalized and poor. Their children though intelligent, healthy and beautiful, are born marginalized and poor. The social privilege that wealth gives in our society compensates the competitive natural disadvantage and the end result is a world where the gap between the rich and the poor is ever increasing. According to Oxfam Intermon's last report, in the year 2016 the 1% wealthiest in the world will have accumulated more wealth than the other 99%.

If we start from an initial inequality, is social inequality inevitable? According to the Rule of Saint Benedict (VI C), which is in force in my monastery, the answer is no: *It is written: "There was distribution according to what each needed". But here we do not wish to say there is discrimination of people, God forbid! but consideration of frailty. Therefore, he who needs less must thank God and never feel sad; but he who needs more, be humble and do not feel proud for the attention given. In this way all the members in the community will live in peace (Rule of St Benedict, chapter 34: All must receive equally the necessary things).*

God does not want inequality. He expects from us a reaction against natural inequality through solidarity, so it does not end in social inequality.

Nevertheless, if God does not want inequality, why does he give five talents to one person and only one to another? Why is there natural inequality? Would it not be more logical if he created a world where this inequality did not exist, instead of an unequal world



and expecting us to restore equality giving each according to his needs? Does God place responsibility on us for what he has not done? Why did God not create a world where each had diverse gifts and peculiarities, but where there was no ugliness or illness or persons born or left after an accident deprived of their personal autonomy? Why did not God create a world where the diverse personal gifts would not imply a competitive disadvantage? The answer is simple: because God does not wish or expect us to organize ourselves socially in a competitive way.

When does diversity –which is a positive value-, become inequality, considered a social disadvantage? In our world there are people today who suffer because they were born with dark skin instead of white skin or were born a woman instead of a man. It is not hard to realize that these are cases of “natural diversity” that become “inequality” only as a result of discriminating practices and structures fruit of the human action. On the contrary, to be born less intelligent up to the point of not being autonomous is different, that is definitely real “natural inequality”... or is it not? Is it possible to think that what I have named “natural inequality” is really an enriching diversity that only becomes a disadvantage and, hence, an injustice, due to certain social practices and structures?

There are today associations of people that claim what is socially considered their “personal disgrace” (for example, to be deaf-mute) is really a “functional diversity” and does not imply any “natural disadvantage” but a peculiarity that must be accepted as such without judgment and actually represents an enrichment for the whole of society. In the case of blindness, there have been spectacular changes that endorse this perspective. Throughout history, social collectives have had a tendency to consider a blind person as “punished by God” or “simply unfortunate” and to abandon him to his fate or the charity of his family or charities. Thanks specially to the tactile method of reading and writing developed by Braille in 1825, to the change in mentality this implied and the multiple structural adaptations socially implemented since then, blind people who have access to these measures may avoid social marginality today and are generally respected as particularly sensible people

who provide a deeper and more balanced vision of the world that is saturated with visual stimuli.

We should also emphasize the revalorization of children and adults with Down syndrome. From hiding them at home and considering them a family shame, we have gone to socially discovering their special emotional intelligence and value them for it and for the challenge their presence supposes to our false competitive values. When there is a child with Down syndrome in class, what is the point of rewarding those students that have the best marks? What is being rewarded through that action? Everybody knows the child with Down syndrome will never be the best in the class. And that is not because there is no personal merit or personal effort. The child with Down syndrome helps his classmates to question the social organization based on competitiveness, the flagrant injustice this supposes and how absurd it is to opt for it when we can organize ourselves according to principles of solidarity: “There was distribution according to what each needed”.

The VII report from FOESSA about exclusion and social development in Spain (2014) shows very well that social inequality is not due in the first place to the crisis, but to the model of social organization we have chosen: a model based on competitiveness that puts no limits to the accumulation of goods and considers private property an absolute right. Of every three persons that are today in a situation of social exclusion in Spain, two have arrived there before the crisis started, that is to say, during the years in which “Spain was doing well” and was experimenting a spectacular economic growth.

The problem is not the crisis; it is the socio-economic model. And to eradicate this model for ever, the necessary and urgent structural changes must go hand in hand with a change in the anthropological perspective, a profound change of orientation. It is not only a matter of trying to avoid the fact that a natural inequality becomes a social inequality, but of questioning up to what point what we consider natural inequality is really an enriching diversity, and organizing ourselves to deal charitably with those we consider naturally disadvantaged, but recognizing them as simply our equals.



# 2016

June

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
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27	28	29	30			

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
27 Lunes	28 Martes	29 Miércoles	30 Jueves
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25	26	27	28



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# 27 Monday

Am 2,6-10.13-16 / Ps 49

Cyril of Alexandria

Mt 8,18-22

1552: Domingo de Santo Tomás and Tomás de San Martín, Dominicans, first bishops of Bolivia, defenders of Indigenous peoples.

1954: U.S. backed rebels overthrow the legally elected Guatemalan government of Jacobo Arbenz.

1982: Juan Pablo Rodríguez Rán, indigenous priest, is martyred in the struggle for justice in Guatemala.

1986: The International Tribunal of the Hague declares the USA "guilty of violating International Law for its aggression against Nicaragua."

2007: Brazilian military police anti-drug action results in the Complexo do Alemão massacre in Rio de Janeiro.

Last quarter: 18h19m (UTC) in Aries



# 28 Tuesday

Am 3,1-8;4,11-12 / Ps 5

Ireneus

Mt 8,23-27

1890: Brazil opens the door to European immigrants; Africans and Asians can only enter with the authorization of Congress.

1918: U.S. marines land in Panama.

2001: Vladimiro Montesinos enters the prison at the Naval Base of El Callao, Peru.

# 29 Wednesday

Acts 12,1-11 / Ps 33

Peter and Paul

2Tim 4,6-8.17-18 / Mt 16,13-19

1974: Isabel Peron becomes first female president of Argentina after her husband, Juan Peron, falls ill.

1995: Land conflict in São Félix do Xingú, Brazil leaves six farmers and a policeman dead.

1997: The three "intellectual authors" of the assassination of Josimo Tavares are condemned (Brazil, 1986).

June





# 30 Thursday

Am 7,10-17 / Ps 18

Mt 9,1-8

Protomartyrs of Roma

*John Olaf Wallin*

Day of the Guatemalan Martyrs (previously, Day of the Army)

1520: "Sad Night," defeat of the conquistadores in Mexico.

1927: A.C. Sandino issues his 'Political Manifest' in Nicaragua.

1975: Dionisio Frias, a peasant, is martyred in the struggle for land in the Dominican Republic.

1978: Hermógenes López, founder of Rural Catholic Action, martyr to the campesinos, Guatemala.

2008: Manuel Contreras, ex-police chief of the during the dictatorship is condemned to two life sentences for the assassination of the former chief commander of the Chilean Army, Carlos Prats and his wife, in Buenos Aires in 1974. Seven other agents of the DINA were also condemned.

# 1 Friday

Am 8,4-6.9-12 / Ps 118

Mt 9,9-13

Casto, Secundino, Aarón

*Catherine Winkworth, John Mason Neale*

Canadian National Holiday

1968 :Medicare begins in Canada.

1974: Juan Domingo Perón, three times president of Argentina, dies.

1981: Tulio Maruzzo, Italian priest and Luis Navarrete, catechist, are martyred in Guatemala.

1990: Mariano Delauney, teacher, is martyred in the cause of liberation education in Haiti.

2002: The International Criminal Court becomes operational in spite of US opposition.

# 2 Saturday

Am 9,11-15 / Ps 84

Mt 9,14-17

Vidal, Marcial

1617: Rebellion of the Tupinambas (Brazil).

1823: Defeat of loyalists to the Portuguese crown in the province of Bahia leads to Brazilian monarchy.

1917: White rioters burned entire black sections of East St. Louis, Illinois shooting the inhabitants as they try to escape. 48 die.

1925: African revolutionary, Lumumba, is born.

1991: First legal Conference of the African National Congress, South Africa, alter 30 years.

July

# 3

Fourteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Isa 66,10-14c / Ps 65

Gal 6,14-18 / Lk 10,1-12.17-20

Thomas the Apostle

1848: Denmark frees the slaves in their West Indian colony.

1951: The Afonso Arinos law is approved in Brazil. Discrimination because of race, color and religion is condemned as a contravention.

1978: Pablo Marcano García and Nydia Cuevas occupy the Consulate of Chile in San Juan to denounce the absurdity of celebrating the independence of the United States while denying the same to Puerto Rico.

1987: Tomás Zavaleta, a Salvadoran Franciscan, is martyred in Nicaragua.



4

## Monday

Hos 2,16.17b-18.21-22 / Ps 144

Elizabeth of Portugal

Mt 9,18-26

1776: Independence of the USA, National Holiday.

1976: Alfredo Kelly, Pedro Dufau, Alfredo Leaden, Salvador Barbeito and José Barletti, martyrs to justice, Argentina.

1998: Neo-Nazis murder civil rights activists Daniel Shersty and Lin Newborn just outside Las Vegas, Nevada.

2014: The justice system confirms that Bishop Angelelli was assassinated and condemns two of the ex-military involved to life in prison.

New Moon: 11h01m (UTC) in Cancer

5

## Tuesday

Hos 8,4-7.11-13 / Ps 113b

Antonio M<sup>a</sup> Zaccaria

Mt 9,32-38

1573: Execution of Tamanaco, Indigenous leader, Venezuela.

1811: Independence of Venezuela, National Holiday.

1920: Bolivia orders land to be given to "naturals."

1981: Emeterio Toj, Indigenous co-operative leader, is kidnapped and tortured by Guatemalan security forces.

2012: Rafael Videla, coup leader in 1976, charged with 50 years for the theft of babies during the Argentine dictatorship.

Ramadan ends

6

## Wednesday

Hos 10,1-3.7-8.12 / Ps 104

María Goretti

Mt 10,1-7

1415: John Huss dies, in Czechoslovakia.

1907: Frida Kahlo, Mexican painter and political activist, is born.

1943: Nazaria Ignacia March Mesa dies in Buenos Aires, foundress of the Religious of the "Crusades of the Church." She founded the first women's worker's union in Latin America in Oruro (Bolivia).

1967: Biafran War erupts in Africa, over 600,000 die.

1986: Rodrigo Rojas, activist, martyr to the struggle for democracy among the Chilean people.

July



7

Thursday

Hos 11,1-4.8c-9 / Ps 79

Mt 10,7-15

Fermín

1976: Arturo Bernal, campesino leader of the Agrarian Leagues, dies of torture, Paraguay.

1991: Carlos Bonilla, a martyr for the right to work, dies in Citalepetl, Mexico.

2005: Coordinated terrorist bombings on London's transit system kill 52 and injure hundreds.

8

Friday

Hos 14,2-10 / Ps 50

Mt 10,16-23

Eugenio, Adriano, Priscila

1538: Violent death of Almagro.

1954: Carlos Castillo Armas takes over presidency of Guatemala after U.S. backed coup.

1991: Martin Ayala, night guard for the Council of Marginal Communities, murdered by a Salvadoran death squad.

9

Saturday

Isa 6,1-8 / Ps 92

Mt 10,24-33

Rosario de Chiquinquirá

1793: Upper Canada legislature passes an act prohibiting slavery.

1816: At the Congress of Tucumán the United Provinces of the La Plata River declare their independence from Spain. National Holiday, Argentina.

1821: San Martín proclaims the independence of Peru.

1880: Joaquín Nabuco founds the Brazilian Society against Slavery that engaged broadly in activities in public places and clubs.

1920: Pedro Lersa, Recife, struggled for the rights of workers. Taken prisoner, he died there.

July

10

Fifteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Deut 30,10-14 / Ps 68

Col 1,15-20 / Lk 10,25-37

Christopher

1509: Birth of Calvin, in France.

1973: Independence of the Bahamas.

1980: Faustino Villanueva, Spanish priest, martyr in the service of the Indigenous people, Guatemala.

1988: Joseph Lafontant, lawyer, martyred in defense of human rights in Haiti.

1993: Rafael Maroto Pérez, priest and tireless fighter for justice and liberty in Chile, dies.

2002: A seven-million-year-old skull is discovered in Chad; oldest known hominoid.



# 11 Monday

Isa 1,10-17 / Ps 49

Benedict  
1968: Founding of the American Indian Movement.  
1977: Carlos Ponce de Leon, bishop of San Nicolas, Argentina, is martyred for the cause of justice.  
1990 : Oka Crisis (Canada).  
1995: Bosnian-Serb forces take-over of Srebrenica leads to the murder of more than eight thousands inhabitants.

World Population Day

# 12 Tuesday

Isa 7,1-9 / Ps 47

John Gualbert  
1821: Bolivar creates the Republic of Great Colombia.  
1904: Pablo Neruda, Chilean Nobel Literature laureate, is born.  
1917: General strike and insurrection in São Paulo.  
1976: Aurelio Rueda, priest, is martyred for his work on behalf of slum dwellers in Colombia.

First quarter: 00h52m (UTC) in Libra

# 13 Wednesday

Isa 10,5-7.13-16 / Ps 93

Henry  
1982: Fernando Hoyos, a Jesuit missionary, and his 15 year-old altar server are killed in a military ambush in Guatemala.  
1991: Riccy Mabel Martinez raped and assassinated by the military, symbol of the struggle of the people of Honduras against military impunity.  
2007: The end of legal impunity in Argentina: the Supreme Court declares the amnesty of the repressors void.



CB

July





# 14 Thursday

Isa 26,7-9.12.16-19 / Ps 101

Francisco Solano, Camilo de Leis

Mt 11,28-30

Death penalty abolished (Canada)

1616: Francisco Solano, Franciscan missionary, apostle to the Indigenous peoples of Peru.

1630: Hernandarias publishes the first norms for the defense of the Indigenous people in Paraguay.

1789: The French Revolution begins with the storming of the Bastille Prison.

1969: The "Football War" breaks out between El Salvador and Honduras over the expulsion of Salvadoran settlers from Honduras.

# 15 Friday

Isa 38,1-6.21-22.7-8 / Int: Isa 38

Bonaventure, Vladimir

Mt 12,1-8

1972: Héctor Jurado, a Methodist pastor, is tortured and murdered in Uruguay.

1976: Rodolfo Lunkenbein, missionary, and Lorenzo Simão martyred for the rights of the indigenous in Brazil.

1981: Misael Ramírez, campesino, community animator and martyr to justice, Colombia.

1991: Julio Quevedo Quezada, catechist, El Quiché, assassinated by the State, Guatemala.

# 16 Saturday

Mic 2,1-5 / Ps 9

Carmen

Mt 12,14-21

1750: José Gumilla, missionary, defender of the Indigenous people, Venezuela.

1769: Founding of mission of San Diego de Alcalá marks expansion of Spanish colonization into California.

1976: Carmelo Soria, a Spanish diplomat who granted asylum to opponents of the Pinochet regime, found assassinated in Santiago, Chile.

1982: The homeless occupy 580 houses in Santo André, São Paulo, Brazil.

2000: Elsa M. Chaney (\*1930) dies, outstanding American feminist with studies on women in Latin America.

July

# 17

Sixteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gen 18,1-10a / Ps 14

Col 1,24-28 / Lk 10,38-42

Alejo, Bartolomé de las Casas

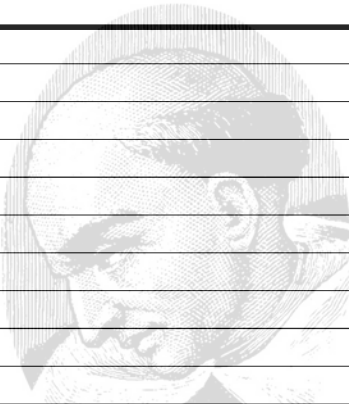
1566: Bartolomé de Las Casas dies at 82, prophet, defender of the cause of Indigenous peoples.

1898: U.S. troops seize Santiago, Cuba, during the Spanish American War.

1976: Sugar refinery workers martyred at Ledesma, Argentina.

1980: Bloody military coup in Bolivia led by Luis García Meza.

Bartolomé de Las Casas





# 18 Monday

Mic 6,1-4.6-8 / Ps 49

Arnulfo, Federico

Mt 12,38-42

1872: The great Indigenous Zapoteca, Benito Juárez, dies.  
1976: Carlos de Dios Murias and Gabriel Longueville, priests, kidnapped and killed, martyrs to justice in La Rioja, Argentina.

1982: Over 250 campesinos from around the community of Plan de Sánchez are massacred by military as part of the Guatemalan government's scorched earth policy.

1992: Peruvian military death squad disappears professor Hugo Muñoz Sánchez and nine students from a university in Lima.

# 19 Tuesday

Mic 7,14-15.18-20 / Ps 84

Mt 12,46-50

Justa y Rufina, Arsenio

1824: Iturbide, emperor of Mexico, is executed by a firing squad.

1848: Father Marcelino Domeco Jarauta is shot in Guanajuato for his refusal to cease his resistance to the U.S. invaders after the peace accord giving away 40% of Mexican territory was signed.

1979: The Sandinista Revolution succeeds in overthrowing the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua.

Full Moon: 22h57m (UTC) in Capricorn



# 20 Wednesday

Jer 1,1.4-10 / Ps 70

Mt 13,1-9

1500: A royal document orders the liberation of all Indigenous persons sold as slaves in the Peninsula. They are to be returned to The Indies.

1810: Independence of Colombia. National Holiday.

1848: Declaration at women's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York demands women's legal equality with men and the right to vote.

1923: Doroteo Arango, «Pancho Villa», Mexican General and revolutionary, is assassinated.

1924: 200 Tobas and supporters demonstrating for a just wage are machine gunned at Napalpi, Argentina.

1969: In the person of Commander Neil Armstrong, a human being steps onto the moon for the first time.

1981: Massacre of Coyá, Guatemala: three hundred women, elderly persons and children, are killed.

July



# 21 Thursday

Jer 2,1-3,7-8.12-13 / Ps 35

Lawrence of Brindisi

Mt 13,10-17

1980: Wilson de Souza Pinheiro, trade unionist and peasant activist, assassinated in Brasília AC, Brazil.

1984: Sergio Alejandro Ortiz, seminarian, dies in Guatemala.

1987: Alejandro Labaca, Vicar of Aguairico, and Inés Arango, missionary, die in the Ecuadorian jungle.

# 22 Friday

Cant 3,1-4 / Ps 62

Jn 20,1.11-18

Mary Magdalene

1980: Jorge Oscar Adur, priest and former president of JEC youth organization, is kidnapped by Argentine military.

2002: Bartolomeu Morais da Silva, organizer of land occupations by the poor, is tortured and killed in Brazil.

# 23 Saturday

Jer 7,1-11 / Ps 83

Mt 13,24-30

1978: Mario Mujía Córdoba, «Guigui», worker, teacher, pastoral agent, martyr to the cause of workers in Guatemala.

1983: Pedro Angel Santos, catechist, is martyred in solidarity with the Salvadoran people.

1987: Over a hundred peasant supporters of land reform are massacred by a paramilitary force of landowners and junta in Jean-Rabel, Haiti.

1993: 8 street children are assassinated by a death squad while they sleep in the square in front of the church of the Candelaria in Rio de Janeiro.

# 24

Seventeenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Gen 18,20-32 / Ps 137

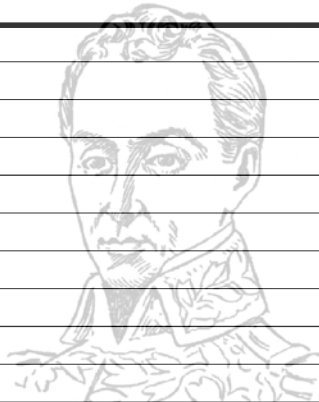
Col 2,12-14 / Lk 11,1-13

Cristina, Sharbel Makhluf

1783: Simon Bolivar is born in Caracas, Venezuela.

1985: Ezequiel Ramin, Colombian missionary, is martyred at Cacoal, Brazil for defending squatters.

Simon Bolivar





# 25 Monday

Acts 4,33;5,12,27-33;12,2 / Ps 66

Saint James, Apostle  
 1898: The United States invades Puerto Rico.  
 1976: Wenceslao Pedernera, campesino pastoral leader, martyr in La Rioja, Argentina.  
 1980: José Othomaro Cáceres, seminarian and his 13 companions, martyrs El Salvador.  
 1981: Spaniard Angel Martínez and Canadian Raoul Légère, lay missionaries, are martyred in Guatemala.  
 1983: Luis Calderón and Luis Solarte, advocates for the homeless, are martyred at Popayán, Colombia.  
 1981: Angel Martínez Rodrigo y Raúl José Léger, catechists lay missionaries, Guatemala.

# 26 Tuesday

Jer 14,17-22 / Ps 78

Joaquim and Ana  
 1503: The Cacique Quibian (Panamá) destroys the city of Santa María, founded by Columbus.  
 1847: Repatriated free black settlers from the USA declare Liberia's independence.  
 1927: First aerial bombardment in the history of the Continent, undertaken by the USA against Ocotlán, Nicaragua, where Sandino had established himself.  
 1952: Eva Peron, charismatic leader and wife of Juan Peron, dies of cancer.  
 1953: Assault on the military camp of Moncada in Cuba.  
 Last Moon: 22h00m (UTC) in Taurus



# 27 Wednesday

Jer 15,10.16-21 / Ps 58

Celestine  
 1865: First settlers from Wales arrive in the Chubut Valley in southern Argentina.  
 1991: Eliseo Castellano, priest, dies in Puerto Rico.

July





# 28 Thursday

Jer 18,1-6 / Ps 145

Innocent, John Sebastian Bach,

Heinrich Schütz, George Frederic Handel

1821: Independence of Peru, National Holiday

1980: Seventy peasants massacred by the military in San Juan Cotzal, Guatemala.

1981: Stanley Rother, an American priest, is murdered in Santiago de Atitlán because of his dedication to the poor.

1986: International workers, Yvan Leyvraz (Swiss), Bernd Koberstein (German) and Joël Fieux (French) are assassinated by the Contras in Zompopera, Nicaragua.

Mt 13,47-53

# 29 Friday

Martha

Mary, Martha and Lazarus of Bethania, Olaf

1Jn 4,7-16 / Ps 33

Jn 11,19-27

# 30 Saturday

Jer 26,11-16.24 / Ps 66

Mt 14,1-12

Peter Chrysologus

1502: Columbus reaches Honduras.

1811: Miguel Hidalgo, priest and hero of the Mexican independence struggle, is executed.

1958: Frank Pais, student leader and opponent of the Batista dictatorship in Cuba, is shot by police.

July

# 31

Eighteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sir 1,2;2,21-23 / Ps 89

Col 3,1-5.9-11 / Lk 12,13-21

Ignatius of Loyola

1981: Omar Torrijos, general and political leader who negotiated the return of sovereignty over the Canal Zone to Panama, dies in a suspicious plane crash.

2002: Pope John Paul II canonized Nahuatl peasant Juan Diego, to whom tradition says Mary, Mother of Jesus, appeared in Mexico.



# AN UNSUSTAINABLE MODEL

YAYO HERRERO

Madrid, Spain

Humanity is at a crossroads, and what is in crisis today is the material foundation of life, menaced by the economic, social and political type of organization that Western societies have developed and imposed.

The various manifestations of this civilization's crisis –ecological risk, difficulties for social reproduction and the deepening of inequalities- are interconnected and are aiming at a systemic conflict. We are now in a situation of planetary emergency, because what is being threatened is survival in dignified conditions for the social majorities.

Humans are radically eco-dependent. All we need to maintain life and satisfy our material needs comes from nature, on the basis of a physically limited planet. To assume these physical limits implies inevitably the understanding that nothing, absolutely nothing, may grow in a limitless way.

But, what is more, humans are also inter-dependent beings. During all their life, but mainly at some points in the vital cycle (infancy, old age, functional diversity, illness, etc.), people would not be able to survive without the time that other persons devote to care for them.

The capitalist economic system and the cultural frame around it have developed in opposition to the relations of eco-dependence and inter-dependence. The capital regime ignores the existence of physical limits of the planet, and hides and exploits the necessary times for daily social reproduction, which are mostly assigned to women. The capitalist economy grows at the expense of the destruction of all we do need to survive. It is based on a belief that is both illusory and dangerous: that the individuals are autonomous with respect to nature and the rest of the people.

We could ask ourselves how we have reached this way of organizing the economy which it could be said has declared war on life... What the hegemonic economic science imagines is full of myths. It considers that only what can be measured in economic terms

has economic value, ignoring everything that, being essential for life, cannot be expressed with the measuring tool of money. Pollination, water cycle, giving birth, caring for the elderly, for example, disappear in those economic analyses.

Economic growth per se is celebrated, without discriminating if it has been achieved producing goods or services socially necessary, or artifacts that are socially unwelcome at the expense of the destruction or depletion of finite materials or damaging the regenerative capacity of nature.

Just a couple of centuries working under this logic, have generated a deep decline of fossil fuels and many other materials without which the global economic metabolism cannot be conceived; the climate change threatens with expulsion from the biosphere a great part of the living world, including the human species; and there appears a great crisis in social reproduction and deepening of inequalities among people in all axis of domination.

**Capitalism has shown its inability** to satisfy the vital needs of the majority of the population. In its economic metabolism what predominates is cannibalism: privileged social sectors carry a style of life and consumption that is only possible exploiting the working class and seizing a vast amount of work that women perform in the invisible space of their homes, and metabolizing forests, rivers, soils and minerals very quickly.

**Inequality has grown at an alarming rate** in the so called welfare societies: a great part of the population is sinking into precariousness and millions of people find themselves in a situation of exclusion: they no longer count nor are they seen.

There is an important **structural unemployment** and the economy is incapable of creating jobs under the same productive logics with which it created them in times of economic boom. A process of weakening the right of labor has appeared. Many people are employed but are poor workers. Employment, the basis on which Western societies of well being were built,

Translation by Alice Méndez



is now unable to protect from poverty and exclusion. Labor no longer secures rights.

The massive loss of jobs and their precarious characteristic come together with a **progressive dismantling of public services**. This situation causes a deepening of inequalities between men and women. As the resources previously destined to systems of social protection are put at the service of the regeneration of rates of capital gain, all that was protected now goes unattended and the families are who come to take charge of solving vital precariousness.

Stripped of social rights and protection, many human beings have only the family to try and avoid exclusion. And within homes, where **patriarchal and unequal relations** predominate, it is women who mainly take the burden of those tasks the public resources stopped providing. They are, due to the sexual division of labor in patriarchal societies, who have most difficulties to access the basic resources.

We find hence a model of relationships that are unequal and delegitimized, both due to the inability to generate a dignified life for the majorities and to the inability to adjust to the limits of the planet.

### Some unavoidable issues

The first is **the need to cope with the inevitable decrease** in the material field of the economy: humanity, like it or not, will live with less energy and materials. It is not an option, it is a starting fact. There will be a material decrease one way or another (in a planned, democratic and fair way or at the expense of the fact that those who have economic and/or military power continue with their style of material life based on expulsion and precariousness of many people who will not be able to access the material minimal for a dignified life).

The second is a **radical distribution of wealth and obligations**. If we have a planet with limited resources, which as well is partially degraded and decreasing, the only possibility of justice is the distribution of wealth. To fight against poverty is the same as to fight against the accumulation of wealth. Inevitably, then, will be to desecrate and to question the legitimacy of property linked to accumulation which prevents a decent life for many people. In the field of obligations, on the one hand material sufficiency will have to have a normative dimension that will limit

excesses, and on the other hand, jobs derived from inter-dependence will have to be distributed: caring must be performed by men and women on equal terms.

The third is that this transition **will not be simple or done without conflict**. Would it be possible to face this change without the powerful and rich feeling threatened by solutions that permit to solve the civilization's crisis? Can the privileges of the elites be maintained and at the same time a decent life for the majorities secured and the ecologic sustainability too? Obviously no.

Therefore, we are on the ground of dispute. Dispute of **economic hegemony** (with the challenge of designing a productive model that is adjusted to the bio-capacity of the earth and minimizes economic and patriarchal inequalities), dispute of the **political hegemony** (to obtain a democratic organization that displaces markets as epicenter and situates good living in the center) and dispute of the **cultural hegemony**.

And it is this last field of dispute that we find crucial. The **ecocidal and unjust system of life** that we see today can only continue because it counts on the unconscious complicity of the majorities, because it has been able to make people see with the same eyes than those who oppress them. It has been able to make people see as theirs the notions of progress, wealth, property, freedom or hierarchy that are indispensable for the preservation of the regime. To become aware of eco-dependence and inter-dependence is a necessary condition to change. We need to culturally rearm ourselves.

In this path, debates and progress about the good living that Latin American peoples contribute are an indispensable reference. The treatment that their new constitutions give to nature as subject of law, communal rights or the logic of the commons must feed the struggles that are appearing in the Global North. It is about helping the global movement grow to stop the extractive dynamics (natural and social) and the massive expulsion of people, and to foster and demand governments who already are on this path, and to eradicate from institutions those who continue the biocidal logic. It is now a question of survival.



# 2016

*July*

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# AUGUST

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1

## Monday

Jer 28,1-17 / Ps 118

Mt 14,13-21

Alfonso Ligouri

1917: Frank Little, a mine worker organizer, is tortured and murdered in Butte, Montana.

1920: Gandhi begins his civil disobedience campaign in India.

1975: Arlen Siu, 18 year old student, Christian activist, martyr in the Nicaraguan revolution.

1979: Massacre at Chota, Peru.

2

## Tuesday

Jer 30,1-2.12-15.18-22 / Ps 101

Mt 14,22-36

Eusebius Vercelli

1943: Prisoners at Nazi extermination camp of Treblinka in Poland revolt.

1981: Carlos Pérez Alonso, apostle of the sick and fighter for justice, disappeared in Guatemala.

New Moon: 20h44m (UTC) in Leo

3

## Wednesday

Jer 31,1-7 / Int: Jer 31

Mt 15,21-28

Lydia

1492: Columbus sets sail from Palos de la Frontera on his first visit to the Western Indies.

1960: Niger gains its independence from France.

1980: Massacre of miners in Caracoles, Bolivia, following a State coup: 500 dead.

1999: Ti Jan, a priest committed to the cause of the poor, assassinated in Puerto Príncipe, Haiti.

August





4

## Thursday

Jer 31,31-34 / Ps 50

Mt 16,13-23

John Vianney

1849: Anita Garibaldi, Brazilian heroine and fighter for liberty in Brazil, Uruguay and Italy, dies in a retreat from Rome.

1976: Enrique Angelelli, bishop of La Rioja, Argentina, prophet and martyr to the poor. 38 years after the fact, the justice system confirms that his death was an assassination.

1979: Alirio Napoleón Macías, Salvadoran priest, is machine-gunned while celebrating Mass.

2006: Julio Simón is condemned as a State terrorist: the first case following the abrogation of the laws of "Full Stop" and "Due Obedience" in Argentina.

5

## Friday

Nah 2,1.3;3,1-3.6-7 / Int.: Deut 32

Mt 16,24-28

1499: Alonso de Ojeda arrives at La Guajira, Colombia.

1940 : Unemployment insurance begins (Canada).

2000: Carmen Sánchez Coronel, a teacher's union representative, and six others are murdered at a military barracks in Sardinata, Colombia.

6

## Saturday

Dan 7,9-10.13-14 / Ps 96

2Pet 1,16-19 / Mt 17,1-9

Transfiguration

1325: Founding of Tenochtitlan (Mexico, DF).

1538: Founding of Santa Fe de Bogotá, Colombia.

1524: Battle of Junín.

1825: Independence of Bolivia, National Holiday.

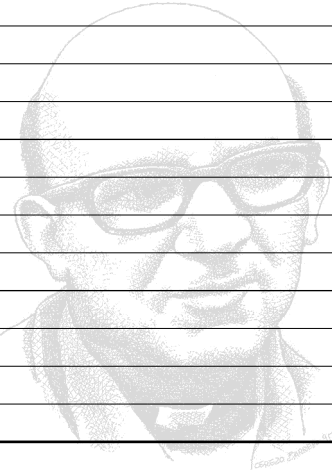
1945: The United States drops an atomic bomb on the civilian population of Hiroshima, Japan.

1961: Kennedy creates the Alliance for Progress.

1962: Independence of Jamaica, National Holiday.

2000: Argentinean Jorge Olivera is arrested in Italy and charged with the disappearance of a young French woman during the Argentinean military dictatorship.

Enrique Angelelli



7

Nineteenth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wis 18,6-9 / Ps 32

Heb 11,1-2.8-19 / Lk 12,32-48

Sixtus and Cayetan

1819: With the victory of Boyacá, Bolívar opens the way to the Liberation of Nueva Granada (Colombia).

1985: Christopher Williams, evangelical pastor, is martyred for faith and solidarity in El Salvador.

2002: In continuing repression of Zapatista communities in Chiapas, Mexico, José López Santiz, is assassinated in front of his two small sons.



8

Monday

Ezek 1,2-5.24-28c / Ps 148

Dominic of Guzman

Mt 17,22-27

1873: Birth of Emiliano Zapata, campesino leader of the Mexican Revolution. His call for land reform inspired other social struggles globally.

1994: Manuel Cepeda Vargas, a Unión Patriótica senator, is assassinated in on-going civil strife in Bogotá, Colombia.

1997: General strike in Argentina, 90% participation.

2000: The Supreme Court of Chile removes parliamentary immunity from ex-dictator Pinochet.

9

Tuesday

Ezek 2,8-3,4/ Ps 118

Mt 18,1-5.10.12-14

Fabio, Román

1945: The U.S.A. drops an atomic bomb on Nagasaki.

1984: Eduardo Alfredo Pimentel, Christian activist for human rights and against the Argentinean dictatorship.

1989: Daniel Espitia Madera, Colombian campesinos leader, assassinated.

1991: Miguel Tomaszek and Zbigniew Strzalkowski, Franciscan missionaries in Peru, murdered by Sendero Luminoso.

1995: Military police kill ten landless workers and brutally arrest 192 others in Corumbiara, Rondônia, Brazil.

2007: The French BNP Paribas bank blocks three investment funds: the world economic crisis beings.

UN Indigenous Peoples' Day

10

Wednesday

Ezek 9,1-7;10,18-22 / Ps 112

Mt 18,15-20

Lawrence

1809: First cry for independence in continental Latin America, that of Ecuador, National Holiday.

1960 : Canadian Charter of Rights passed

1974: Tito de Alencar, a Dominican priest, commits suicide as a result of being tortured in Brazil.

1977: Jesús Alberto Páez Vargas, leader of the communal land movement, kidnapped and disappeared, Peru.

2000: Union leader, Rubén Darío Guerrero Cuentas, kidnapped, tortured and murdered by paramilitaries in Guacamayal, Colombia.

First quarter: 18h21m (UTC) in Scorpio



August





# 11 Thursday

Ezek 12,1-12 / Ps 77

Clare of Assisi

Mt 18,21-29

1898: U.S. forces occupy Mayagüez, Puerto Rico during the Spanish-American War.

1972: Last U.S. ground combat force pulled from South Vietnam.

1992: The march of 3,000 landless peoples begins in Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

1997: The "Asian Crisis" begins and affects finances throughout the world.

# 12 Friday

Ezek 16,1-15.60.63 / Int.: Isa 12

Julian

Mt 19,3-12

1546: Francisco de Vitoria dies in Salamanca, Spain.

1952: On orders from Joseph Stalin, 13 of the most prominent Jewish writers in the Soviet Union are murdered.

1972: After a failed escape attempt, 16 political prisoners from Rawson, Argentina are executed at the Argentine naval base at Trelew.

1976: 17 Latin American bishops, 36 priests, religious and laity are arrested by the police in Riobamba, Ecuador.

1981: IBM launches the marketing of personal Computers, a revolution in human life.

1983: Margarita Maria Alves, president of the Rural Union of Alagoa Grande, Brazil, martyr to the earth.

UN International Youth Day

# 13 Saturday

Ezek 18,1-10.13b.30-32 / Ps 50

Mt 19,13-15

Polycarp, Hippolyto

1926: Fidel Castro is born near Mayari, Cuba.

1961: Construction of the Berlin wall began.

1999: Colombian journalist and political satirist, Jaime Garzón Forero, is murdered by right-wing paramilitaries.

2014: Maria Lucia do Nascimento, trade union activist, murdered in União do Sul, MT, Brasil.

# 14

Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Jer 38,4-6.8-10 / Ps 39

Heb 12,1-4 / Lk 12,49-53

Maximilian Kolbe

1816: Francisco de Miranda, Venezuelan Father of the Nation, precursor of independence, dies in prison.

1984: Campesinos martyred at Aucayacu, Ayacucho, Peru.

1985: Campesino martyrs of Accomarca, department of Ayacucho, Peru.

2000: Robert Canarte, union activist, is found dead after being kidnapped two weeks earlier by paramilitaries in Galicia, Colombia.



# 15 Monday

Assumption  
Apoc 11,19a;12,1,3-6a,10ab / Ps 44  
1Cor 15,20-27a / Lk 1,39-56  
1914: The Panama Canal formally opens. An estimated 27,500 workmen died during French and American construction efforts.  
1980: José Francisco dos Santos, president of the Union of Rural Workers in Corrientes (PB), Brazil, is assassinated.  
1984: Luis Rosales, union leader, and companions seeking justice for Costa Rican banana workers are martyred.  
1989: María Rumlada Camey, catechist and representative of GAM, captured and disappeared in front of her husband and children, Escuintla, Guatemala.

# 16 Tuesday

Rock, Stephen of Hungary  
Ezek 28,1-10 / In.: Deut 32  
Mt 19,23-30  
1819: Calvary charge into peaceful crowd advocating for parliamentary reform leaves 11 dead and hundreds injured in Manchester, England.  
1976: Coco Erbetta, catechist, university student, martyr to the struggles of the Argentinean people.  
1993: Indigenous Yanomani martyrs in Roraima, Brazil.  
2005: Roger Schutz, founder of the ecumenical Taizé movement, is assassinated.  
2006: Alfredo Stroessner, Paraguayan dictator accused of crimes against humanity, dies in Brasilia.  
2014: Josias Paulino de Castro and Ireni da Silva Castro, rural leaders, murdered in Colniza, MT, Brasil

# 17 Wednesday

Jacinto  
Ezek 34,1-11 / Ps 22  
Mt 20,1-16  
1850: José San Martín, Argentine general and key independence leader, dies.  
1962: Berlin Wall claims its first victim as 18 year old Peter Fechter is shot attempting to cross it.  
1997: The Landless Peoples' Movement (MST) occupies two haciendas in Pontal do Paranapanema, SP, Brazil.





# 18 Thursday

Ezek 36,23-38 / Ps 50  
Mt 22,1-14

Helen

1527: Cacique Lempira is assassinated during a peace conference (Honduras).  
1952: Alberto Hurtado SJ, Chile's apostle to the poor, dies. He is canonized in 2005.  
1989: Luis Carlos Galán, a Colombian presidential candidate, is assassinated by drug cartel hit men in Bogotá.  
1993: Indigenous Ashaninkas martyrs, Tziriri, Peru.  
2000: Two military police in Rondonia are judged guilty of the massacre of Corumbiara against the landless, Brazil.



Full Moon: 09h27m (UTC) in Aquarius

# 19 Friday

Ezek 37,1-14 / Ps 106  
Mt 22,34-40

John Eudes

1936: Federico Garcia Lorca, poet and dramatist, murdered by Spanish fascists.  
1953: CIA assisted coup overthrows the government of Iran and reinstates the Shah who then awards 40% of Iran's oilfields to U.S. corporations.  
1991: Attempted State coup in the USSR.

# 20 Saturday

Ezek 43,1-7a / Ps 84  
Mt 23,1-12

Bernard

1778: Birth of the Father of the Chilean Nation, Bernardo O'Higgins.  
1940: Exiled Russian revolutionary, Leon Trotsky, is assassinated by a Stalinist agent in Mexico City.  
1982: América Fernanda Perdomo, a Salvadorian human rights activist, kidnapped along with 5 others including a child.  
1998: The U.S.A. bombards Afghanistan and Sudan.

# 21

Twenty-first Sunday in Ordinary Time  
Isa 66,18-21 / Ps 116  
Heb 12,5-7.11-13 / Lk 13,22-30

Pius X

1680: Pueblo Indians revolt and drive the Spanish from Santa Fe, New Mexico.  
1971: Maurice Lefevre, Canadian missionary, is assassinated in Bolivia.



# 22 Monday

2Thess 1,1-5.11b-12 / Ps 95

Queenship of Mary

Mt 23,13-22

1988: Jürg Weis, Swiss theologian and evangelical missionary, is martyred in the cause of solidarity with the Salvadoran people.

2000: Henry Ordóñez and Leonardo Betancourt Mendez, Colombian teacher, union leaders, are assassinated.

# 23 Tuesday

2Thess 2,1-3a.14-17 / Ps 95

Mt 23,23-26

Rose of Lima

1821: Spain signs the Treaty of Cordoba granting Mexico independence as a constitutional monarchy.

1833: Slavery Abolition Act passed abolishing slavery in the British colonies.

1948: Founding of the World Council of Churches..

1975: The National Institute of Indigenous People is created in Paraguay.

# 24 Wednesday

Apoc 21,9b-14 / Ps 144

Jn 1,45-51

Bartholomew

1572: King of France orders massacre of Huguenots.

1617: Rosa of Lima, patroness and first canonized saint in America.

1977: First Congress of Black Cultures of the Americas

1980: 17 union leaders, meeting on the farm of the Bishop Escuintla, Guatemala, are disappeared.

International Day of Remembrance of the Victims  
of Slavery and its Abolition

August





# 25 Thursday

1Cor 1,1-9 / Ps 144

Mt 24,42-51

Joseph of Calasanz, Louis of France

1825: Independence of Uruguay, National Holiday.

1991: Alessandro Dordi Negroni, missionary promoting human dignity, is martyred for his faith, in Peru.

2000: Sergio Uribe Zuluaga, member of the Teacher's Union of Antioquia (FECODE), is killed by paramilitaries in Medellin, Colombia.

2009: The Attorney General of the United States decides to investigate cases of possible torture by the CIA during the Bush government.

Last Moon: 03h41m (UTC) in Gemini



# 26 Friday

1Cor 1,17-25 / Ps 32

Mt 25,1-13

Teresa Jornet

1968: The Conference of Medellin opens.

1977: Felipe de Jesus Chacón, peasant catechist, is assassinated by the military in El Salvador.

2000: Luis Mesa, a member of the university professor's union (ASPU), is murdered in Barranquilla, Colombia.

# 27 Saturday

1Cor 1,26-31 / Ps 32

Mt 25,14-30

Monica

1828: Independence of Uruguay.

1847: The English Superintendent and the Miskito King announce the abolition of slavery in the Atlantic Coast of Nicaragua.

1928: Kellogg-Briand Pact signed by sixty nations "providing for the renunciation of war as an instrument of national policy."

1987: Héctor Abad Gómez, medical doctor, martyr for the defense of human rights in Medellin, Colombia.

1993: Law 70/93 recognizes the territorial, ethnic, economic and social Rights of the Black communities of Colombia.

1999: Hélder Câmara, bishop, brother of the poor, prophet of peace and hope, dies in Brazil.

August

# 28

Twenty-second Sunday Ordinary Time

Sir 3,17-18.20.28-29 / Ps 67

Heb 12,18-19.22-24a / Lk 14,1.7-14

Augustine

1963: Martin Luther King, Jr. gives his famous *I have a dream* speech before 200,000 at a civil rights rally in Washington, D.C..

1994: Jean-Marie Vincent, Montfortian priest and co-operative organizer, assassinated in Puerto Principe, Haiti.

Jean-Marie Vincent





# SHOCKING EXPERIENCE: ENCOUNTER WITH JOSÉ MUJICA

LEONARDO BOFF

*Petrópolis, RJ, Brasil*

Participating in an Ibero-American Congress on family and community medicine, held in Montevideo on 18-22 March, I had the opportunity I've always dreamt of, and had an encounter with the former President of Uruguay José Mujica. Finally a meeting was possible on March 17, towards the 16: 00 hours. The encounter was at his farm, on the outskirts of the capital Montevideo.

We found a person that, once seen and heard, we immediately had to remember to classical figures of the past, as León Tolstoi, Mahatma Gandhi... up to Francis of Assisi. There he was, with his shirt sweaty and torn by the work in the field, with very used sport pants and rough sandals, which let us see his feet caked with dust, like someone who comes from working in the fields. He lives in a humble House; on the side is the old Volkswagen fusca, that doesn't run more than 70 km per hour. Already been offered one million dollars for it; he has rejected the offer out of respect for the old truck carrying him daily to the Presidential Palace, and with regard to the friend who had given it to him.

He does not accept being considered poor. He says: «I'm not poor, because I have everything that I need to live; poor is to not have... It is to be outside the community; I'm not».

He belonged to the resistance against the military dictatorship. He spent thirteen years in prison, and a good time inside a hole, and he has to deal with the consequences to this day. But he never talk about that, nor shows the least bit of resentment. He says that life made him go through many difficult situations; but all were good because they provided wise lessons and made him grow.

We talked more than one hour and a half. We started with the situation of Brazil and, in general, of Latin America. He showed solidarity with

Dilma, especially in her determination to demand a thorough investigation and a punishment appropriate to the corrupt and the corrupters of the distressing case of Petrobras. It did not stop pointing out that there is a policy orchestrated from the United States to destabilize Governments trying to carry out an autonomous country project. That is what is happening in the North of Africa and may also be happening in Latin America and Brazil. Always in collaboration with the richest and most powerful in each country, sectors that are afraid of the social changes that may endanger their historical privileges. But the bulk of the conversation was about the situation of the system-life and system-Earth. There I realized the wide horizon of his vision of the world. He stressed that for him the main question today is not the concern for Uruguay, their country, or by our Latin American continent, but the fate of our planet and the future of our civilization. He said, between meditative and worried that maybe we will have to witness major disasters, until the heads of State will realize the gravity of our situation as kind and take measures. Otherwise, we are going to meet an unimaginable ecological-social tragedy.

The sad thing, said Mujica, is to realize that between heads of State, especially those of the great economic powers, do not perceived any concern for organizing a plural and global management of the planet Earth, now that those problems are planetary. Each country prefers to defend their particular rights, without attending to the General threats that weigh on the totality of our destiny.

But the high point of the conversation, which I want to return to, was the urgency of creating an alternative culture to the dominant, the culture of the capital. Little does it matter, he emphasized, to change the mode of production,

*Translation by Ditter Chávez, Yolanda Chávez*



distribution and consumption, if we maintain the habits and values proclaimed by the culture of the capital. This imprisoned all humanity with the idea that we need to grow unlimited and search for material well-being without limits. This culture separates the rich and the poor. It leads the poor to want to be like the rich. It takes hold of all media so that they become consumers. More inserted into consumption, they want more to consume, because induced desire is unlimited, and never satisfies the human being. Alleged promises of happiness turn into great dissatisfaction and existential vacuum. The culture of the capital, emphasized Mujica, can not give happiness, because we are dealing completely, with the desire to accumulate and grow, it leaves us no time to simply live, nor to celebrate the coexistence with others and feel immersed in nature. That culture is anti-life and anti-nature, devastated by the productivist and consumerist greed. It is important to live what we think; If not, just thinking how we live: the infernal spiral of ceaseless consumption. He imposes voluntary simplicity on himself, and shares sobriety and communion with people and with all reality. It is difficult, noted Mujica, to lay the foundation for this humane and friendly culture of life. We must begin with ourselves.

I told him: "you offer us a living example that it is possible and is within the scope of the human powers". In the end, we embraced each other firmly, and I told him: "I confess with sincerity and humility: I see two people in the world who inspire me and give me hope: Pope Francisco and Pepe Mujica". He didn't say anything. He looked at me deeply and I saw his eyes completely well up with emotion.

I came out of the meeting as someone who has lived a positive existential shock: he confirmed to me that which so many others think and try to live. And I thanked God for giving us someone with so much charisma, so much simplicity, so much strength, and so irradiated with life and love.

## HE DONATED 90% OF HIS SALARY

**JOSÉ MUJICA**

*Ex-president, Montevideo, Uruguay*

<http://www.pepemujica.uy>

400 thousand dollars from the salary of the Uruguayan President Jose "Pepe" Mujica were donated to a housing plan and the rest were contributions to the party "Frente Amplio" (FA). The President said that with these donations "we feel and multiply our commitment with society".

The President of Uruguay, Jose "Pepe" Mujica, revealed in his weekly radio program, that he donated 550 thousand dollars of his salary during his five years in Government. Of this amount, 400 thousand dollars were earmarked for social housing plan created in 2010, while the rest were contributions to the ruling party "Frente Amplio" (FA).

Mujica said he was aware that these donations do not change the world, "but we feel and multiply our commitment with society". He also criticized the distribution of wealth and social solidarity "endangered" in his country.

«Unfortunately, there, where the State does not intervene by regulating in some way, the distribution of wealth that is spontaneously generated in the evolution of the market tends to concentrate and that concentration, If we left it so, it creates two societies: one that progresses beautifully and multiplies all of its wealth, and another that is left at the side of the road", he said.

Mujica, who left the Presidency of Uruguay in the hands of Tabare Vazquez on March 1, is known as the President with the most solidarity and the most humble of the world, since during his time he donated almost 90% of their salary to social.

According to its last statement of assets, Mujica has a heritage of about 200 thousand dollars with his wife: his house (the farm), two old Volkswagen 'beetle' cars, and three tractors.

[www.telesur.tv.net](http://www.telesur.tv.net)



# 2016

*August*

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21

M	T	W	T	F	S	S
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

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M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	October
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16	31							

3 4 5 6 7 8 9 24 25 26 27 28 29 30								
10 11 12 13 14 15 16 31								
Friday			Saturday			Sunday		
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# 29 Monday

Jer 1,17-19 / Ps 70

Martyrdom of John the Baptist  
 1533: Baptism and execution of Inca Atahualpa by Spanish conquistadors in Peru.  
 1563: The Royal Tribunal of Quito is created.  
 1986: In spite of the prohibition of the Cardinal of Rio de Janeiro, the Third Meeting of Black Religious and Priests takes place in that city.  
 2000: Insurance worker's union leader, Moises Sanjuan, is assassinated by forces believed linked to Colombian military in Cucuta.

# 30 Tuesday

1Cor 2,10b-16 / Ps 144

Félix, Esteban Zudaire  
 1985: 300 FBI agents invade Puerto Rico and arrest more than a dozen activists struggling for independence.  
 1993: A death squad and police execute 21 people in the Rio de Janeiro slum of "do Vigário Geral" in Brazil.  
 1999: East Timor votes for independence in a UN supervised referendum.

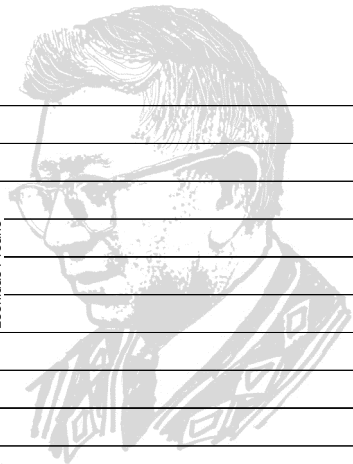
International Day of the Disappeared  
 (Amnesty International and FEDEFAM)

# 31 Wednesday

1Cor 3,1-9 / Ps 32

Raymond Nonatu  
 1925: The U.S. Marines end 10 years of occupation of Haiti.  
 1962: Independence of Trinidad and Tobago.  
 1988: **Leónidas Proaño**, bishop to the Indigenous peoples, dies in Riobamba, Ecuador.  
 2002: Adolfo de Jesús Munera López, former Coca-Cola worker, murdered by paramilitaries in Barranquilla, Colombia.

Leonidas Proaño





# 1 Thursday

1Cor 3,18-23 / Ps 23

Lk 5,1-11

Gil  
Night of the ascension of Mohammed: moved from Mecca to Jerusalem.  
1971: Julio Spósito Vitali, Christian Uruguayan activist, martyr to the people's struggles, assassinated by the police.  
1976: Inés Adriana Coblo, Methodist, activist, martyr to the cause of the poor, Buenos Aires.  
1978: The Black Conscience Union group emerges, followed by that of Black Pastoral Workers.  
1979: Jesús Jiménez, campesino and Delegate of the Word, is martyred in El Salvador.  
2000: Hernando Cuartas, a union activist at a Nestle's plant, is assassinated in Dosquebradas Risaralda, Colombia.  
2011: Reinel Restrepo, parish priest of Marmato (Caldas, Colombia), opposition leader to the mega-exploitations of the mining industry, assassinated..

## Annular Solar Eclipse in the Atlantic

New Moon: 09h03m (UTC) in Virgo



# 2 Friday

1Cor 4,1-5 / Ps 36

Lk 5,33-39

Antolín, Elpidio  
1885: White miners massacre 28 Chinese co-workers at Rock Spring, Wyoming.  
2000: Gil Bernardo Olachica, a teacher's union member (FECODE) is killed by paramilitaries in Barrancabermeja, Colombia.

# 3 Saturday

1Cor 4,6b-15 / Ps 144

LK 6,1-5

Gregory the Great  
1759: Jesuits are expelled by Lisbon from their Brazilian colony for the "usurpation of the state of Brazil".  
1971: Bernardino Díaz Ochoa, a campesino union organizer, is murdered in Matagalpa, Nicaragua by Somoza forces.  
1976: Death of Ramón Pastor Bogarín, bishop, founder of the University of Asunción, prophet in the Church of Paraguay.



Twenty-third Sunday Ordinary Time

Wis 9,13-18 / Ps 89

Philemon 9b-10.12-17 / Lk 14,25-33

Rosalía, *Albert Schweitzer*

1970: Electoral victory of the Unidad Popular, Chile.  
1977: Death of Ernest Schumacher, economic thinker whose book, *Small is Beautiful*, influenced a generation of environmentalists and community activists.  
1984: Andrés Jarlán, French priest, shot by police while reading the Bible in La Victoria, Santiago, Chile.  
1995: World Conference on Women, Beijing.  
2005: Judge Urso sends Jorge Videla to prison along with 17 other oppressors in the military dictatorship in Argentina.



5

# Monday

1Cor 5,1-8 / Ps 5  
Lk 6,6-11

Lawrence and Justinian

1877: Tasunka witko or Crazy Horse, Lakota leader committed to preserving traditions and values of his people, is killed in Nebraska.

1960: Ajax Delgado, Nicaraguan student leader, is assassinated.

1983: The unemployed hold a sit-in in the Legislative Assembly in São Paulo.

6

# Tuesday

Juan de Ribera, Zacarías

1522: Juan Sebastian Elcano, Magellan's second in command, completes first circumnavigation of the globe with one of the original five ships and eighteen other survivors.

1860: Jane Addams, social reformer and first woman to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, is born.

1990: Fred Upshaw, first Black leader of a major union (Canada).

1995: 2,300 landless people occupy the Boqueirão hacienda, Brazil. They will be expelled.

1Cor 6,1-11 / Ps 149  
Lk 6,12-19

7

# Wednesday

Regina

1822: "Cry of Ipiranga" marks the independence of Brazil from Portugal, National holiday.

1968: The Medellin Conference ends.

1981: Inaugural national assembly of the Black Conscience Union.

1992: South African troops fire on African National Congress demonstrators.

1Cor 7,25-31 / Ps 44  
Lk 6,20-26

September





# 8 Thursday

Nativity of Mary  
 1522: Magellan's ship, the Juan Sebastián Elcan, completes the first trip round the World.  
 1941: The Nazi siege of Leningrad begins. A million civilian and Red Army defenders die.  
 1943: Julius Fučík, Czechoslovakian resistance leader, tortured and executed by the Nazis.  
 1974: Ford offers Nixon a "full and absolute pardon for all the crimes he might have committed when he occupied the Presidency."

International Literacy Day

# 9 Friday

Peter Claver  
 1654: Pedro Claver, apostle to black slaves, dies in Cartagena, Colombia.  
 1613: Uprising of Lari Qaxa, Bolivia (Aymaras and Quichuas confront the Spanish).  
 1990: Hildegard Feldman, a nun, and Ramon Rojas, a catechist are martyred for their service to Colombian peasants.

First Moon: 11h49m (UTC) in Sagittarius

# 10 Saturday

Nicholas of Tolentino  
 1897: Sheriff's deputies open fire on unarmed immigrant miners at a peaceful demonstration near Hazleton, Pennsylvania. More than 19 die.  
 1924: U.S. Marines occupy various cities in Honduras to support the presidential candidate.  
 1984: Policarpo Chem, catechist and co-operative leader, kidnapped and tortured by government forces in Vera-paz, Guatemala.

# 11

Twenty-fourth Sunday in Ordinary Time  
 Ex 32,7-11,13-14 / Ps 50  
 1Tim 1,12-17 / Lk 15,1-32

Proto y Jacinto

1973: State coup in Chile against President Allende.  
 1981: Sebastiana Mendoza, Indigenous catechist, martyr to solidarity, Guatemala.  
 1988: Martyrs of the Church of San Juan Bosco, in Puerto Príncipe, Haiti.  
 1990: Myrna Mack, anthropologist and human rights advocate, is assassinated in Guatemala.  
 2001: Attack on the Twin Towers, New York.  
 2008: Massacre of farmers in El Porvenir, Pando, Bolivia, to the orders of industrialists and landowners, with the knowledge of the Prefect Leopoldo Fernandez, today in prison.

Islamic Feast of Sacrifice, Eid al-Adha



# 12 Monday

1Cor 11,17-26.33 / Ps 39

Leoncio y Guido

Lk 7,1-10

1977: Steve Biko, Black Consciousness Movement leader, is martyred in South Africa.

1982: Alfonso Acevedo, catechist, martyr in his service to the internally displaced persons in El Salvador.

1989: Valdecio Barbosa dos Santos, head of rural worker's union, shot at Pedro Canário, Brazil.

2001: Barbara Lee, California congresswoman, votes against granting Bush the power to invade Afghanistan.

# 13 Tuesday

1Cor 12,12-14.27-31a / Ps 99

John Chrysostom

Lk 7,11-17

1549: Juan de Betanzos retracts his earlier opinion that Indigenous people are not human.

1589: Bloody rebellion of the Mapuches, Chile.

1973: Georges Klein, Arsenio Poupin and 19 others persons are shot by soldiers two days after being captured during the coup, in the Presidential Palace (La Moneda) in Santiago, Chile.

1978: The U.N. reaffirms the right of Puerto Rico to independence and free self-determination.

1980: Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, an Argentinean architect and human rights advocate, jailed and tortured by the military, receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

# 14 Wednesday

Num 21,4b-9 ó Phil 2,6-11

Ps 77 / Jn 3,13-17

Exaltation of the Cross

1843: Birth of Lola Rodríguez, author of the insurrectional hymn, «la Borinquenea», in the Sept. 23, 1868 insurrection against Spanish rule in Puerto Rico.

1847: Under U.S. General Winfield Scott, military take control of Mexico City.

1856: Battle of San Jacinto, defeat of the filibusters of William Walker in Nicaragua.

1920: Birth of Mario Benedetti, Uruguayan author, poet, and activist, writer of exile.

1992: The First Assembly of the People of God (APD) opens. The term «macro-ecumenism» is coined.

September





# 15 Thursday

Heb 5,7-9 / Ps 30

Jn 19,25-27

Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows

1810: The «Cry of Pain» in Mexico.

1821: Independence of Central America, National Holiday in all the countries of Central America.

1842: Francisco de Morazán, Central American labor leader, is executed by a firing squad in San José, Costa Rica.

1973: Arturo Hillerms, medical doctor, martyr in his service to the poor of Chile.

1973: Víctor Jara, Chilean folk singer, and political activist, tortured and shot by military in Santiago, Chile.

1981: Pedro Pío Cortés, Indigenous Achí, celebrator of the Word, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala, martyr.

# 16 Friday

1Cor 15,12-20 / Ps 16

Lk 8,1-3

Cornelius and Cyprian

1501: The king authorizes the governor of the Caribbean islands to import African slaves.

1821: Mexican independence, National Holiday.

1931: Founding of the "Frente Negro Brasileiro" in São Paulo. It will later be closed down by Getúlio Vargas.

1955: Civic-military insurrection that deposes Constitutional President Peron, Argentina.

1983: Guadalupe Carney, north-american jesuit, is assassinated in Honduras, by the Honduran army.

World Ozone Day (U.N.)

Eclipse penumbral of the sun, visible in Europa Oeste



Full Moon: 04h53m (UTC) in Cancer

# 17 Saturday

1Cor 15,35-37.42-49 / Ps 55

Lk 8,4-15

Robert Bellarmine

1981: John David Troyer, a Mennonite missionary, martyred for justice in Guatemala.

1983: Carlos Alirio and Fabián Buitrago, Giraldo Ramirez and Marcos Marin, campesinos, catechists, are assassinated at Cocomá, Colombia.

1983: Julián Bac, Delegate of the Word, and Guadalupe Lara, catechist, martyrs in Guatemala.

# 18

Twenty-fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Am 8,4-7 / Ps 112

1Tim 2,1-8 / Lk 16,1-13

Joseph of Cupertino

Dag Hammarskjöld

1810: Independence of Chile, National holiday.

1969: The «Rosariozo»: Citizens force the police to retreat, in Rosario, Argentina.

1973: Miguel Woodward Iriberry, a priest from Valparaíso, Chile, is assassinated by the Pinochet dictatorship.

1998: Miguel Ángel Quiroga, a priest, is murdered at a paramilitary base in Chocó, Colombia.



# 19 Monday

Pet 3,27-34 / Ps 14

Januarius  
 1973: Juan Alsina, Omar Venturelli, and Etienne Pesle, priests, victims of the Pinochet police.  
 1983: Independence of Saint Kitts and Nevis.  
 1985: Earthquake in Mexico City.  
 1986: Charlot Jacqueline and companions, martyrs to liberating education, Haiti.  
 1994: The United States lands in Haiti to return Jean Bertrand Aristide.  
 2001: Yolanda Cerón, Director of Pastoral Ministry for the Diocese of Tumaco, Colombia, assassinated.

# 20 Tuesday

Pet 21,1-6.10-13 / Ps 118

Andrew Kim, Fausta  
 1519: Hernando de Magallanes sets sail from Sanlúcar.  
 1976: In Washington, Orlando Letellier, the former Chancellor of the popular regime of Allende, is assassinated.  
 1977: The Indigenous peoples of Latin America raise their voices for the first time in the Palace of the Nations in Geneva.  
 1978: Francisco Luis Espinosa, priest, and companions are martyred at Estelí, Nicaragua.  
 1979: Apolinar Serrano, José Lopez, Félix García Grande and Patricia Puertas, campesino labor leaders, are martyred in El Salvador.

# 21 Wednesday

Eph 4,1-7.11-13 / Ps 18

Matthew  
 1956: Dictator Anastasio Somoza dies at the hands of Rigoberto López Pérez, Nicaragua.  
 1904: Chief Joseph, Nez Perce humanitarian and resistance leader, dies in exile in Washington state.  
 1973: Gerardo Poblete Fernández, Salesian priest, assassinated in Iquique, Chile by the Pinochet regime.  
 1981: Independence of Belize.

**International Peace Day (U.N.)**





# 22 Thursday

Eccl 1,2-11 / Ps 89

Maurice

1977: Eugenio Lyra Silva, lawyer, martyred for justice in Santa Maria da Vitoria, Brazil.

1862: Slaves in the United States are legally freed.

2000: Omar Noguera, member of the municipal employees union in Cali, Colombia, dies of wounds received in attacks targeting trade unionists.

Equinox, autumn/spring at 14h21m (UTC)

# 23 Friday

Eccl 3,1-11 / Ps 143

Lk 9,18-22

Lino y Tecla

1850: José Artigas, a national hero of Uruguayan independence, dies in exile.

1868: «Cry of Lares»: Ramón Betances begins the emancipation movement from slavery in Puerto Rico.

1905: Francisco de Paula Victor dies; considered a saint by the Brazilian Afro-American community.

1973: Pablo Neruda dies.

1989: Henry Bello Ovalle, activist, martyred for his solidarity with Colombia's youth.

1993: Sergio Rodríguez, worker and university employee, martyr to the struggle for justice, Venezuela.

2008: "Day of the Overshoot": we start spending 30% more resources than are available on the planet.

Last quarter: 09h56m (UTC) in Cancer



# 24 Saturday

Eccl 11,9-12,8 / Ps 89

Lk 9,43b-45

Peter Nolasco

1533: Caupolicán, leader of the Mapuche, executed by Spanish conquistadors.

1810: The Bishop of Michoacán excommunicates Miguel Hidalgo, pastor of Dolores, for calling for Independence.

1976: Marlene Kegler, student, martyr of faith and service among university students of La Plata, Argentina.

1976: Independence of Trinidad and Tobago.

# 25

Twenty-sixth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Am 6,1a.4-7 / Ps 145

1Tim 6,11-16 / Lk 16,19-31

Cleofás

Sergio de Radonezh

1513: Vasco Núñez de Balboa crosses the Isthmus of Panama and reaches the Pacific Ocean.

1849: Lucas da Feira, fugitive slave and chief of the resisting Sertanejos of Brazil, is hanged.

1963: Pro-USA military coup in the Dominican Republic. Bosh, an admirer of the Cuban revolution, is deposed.

Bible Day, in some countries of America



# 26 Monday

Job 1,6-22 / Ps 16

Cosmos and Damian

Lk 9,46-50

1944: Brazilian troops wrest control from the Nazis of the Serchio valley on the central front of the Gothic Line in Italy after 10 days of fighting.

1974: Lázario Condo and Cristóbal Pajuña, Christian leaders of their communities fight for agrarian reform, are assassinated in Riobamba, Ecuador.

# 27 Tuesday

Job 3,1-3.11-17.20-23 / Ps 87

Vincent de Paul

Lk 9,51-56

Day of Enriquillo, Quisqueyano Indigenous, who resisted the Spanish conquest in the Dominican Republic.

1979: Guido Léon dos Santos, a hero of the working class, is a victim of political repression in Minas Gerais, Brazil.

1990: Sister Agustina Rivas, Good Shepherd Religious, martyr in La Florida, Peru.

2002: Mexican military court charges three army officers with the killings of 143 people during the "dirty war" of the 1970's.

# 28 Wednesday

Job 9,1-12.14-16 / Ps 87

Wenceslaus and Lawrence Ruiz

Lk 9,57-62

551 B.C.E.: Birth of Confucius in China.

1569: Casiodoro de Reina delivers his translation of the Bible to the printer.

1868: Attempt by ex-slaves to defend a white supporter results in a massacre of up to 300 blacks at Opelousas, Louisiana.

1871: Brazilian law of the "Free Belly" separates Black infants from their slave parents: the first "abandoned minors."

1885: Brazilian law of the "Sixty year-old," throws Blacks over 60 into the street.

1990: Pedro Martinez and Jorge Euceda, activist journalists, are martyred for the truth in El Salvador.





# 29 Thursday

Dan 7,9-10.13-14 / Ps 137

Michael, Gabriel, Raphael

Jn 1,47-51

1871: The Benedictines are the first religious order in Brazil to free their slaves.

1941: Babi Yar massacre results the death of at least 33,771 Jews from Kiev and its suburbs at the hands of the Nazis.

1906: Second US armed intervention in Cuba. It will continue for 2 years, 4 months.

1992: Congress deposes President Collor, Brazil.

# 30 Friday

Job 38,1.12-21;40,3-5 / Ps 138

Lk 10,13-16

1655: Coronilla and companions, Indigenous caciques, martyrs to liberation, Argentina.

1974: Chilean General Carlos Prats and his wife, witnesses for democracy, are assassinated in Argentina at the beginning of Operation Condor.

1981: Vincente Matute and Francisco Guevara, peasants, murdered in the struggle for their land in Yoro, Honduras.

1981: Honorio Alejandro Núñez, Celebrator of the Word and seminarian, martyr to the Honduran people.

1991: José Luis Cerrón, university student, martyr to solidarity, Huancayo, Peru.

1991: State coup against Constitutional President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti.

1991: State coup against the constitutional government of Jean-Bertrand Aristide, Haiti.

# 1 Saturday

Job 42,1-3.5-6.12-16 / Ps 118

Lk 10,17-24

Therese of the Child Jesus

1949: Victory of the Chinese Revolution, China's National Day.

1542: The war of Araucanía begins.

1991: The military expel the constitutional president of Haiti, Aristide, and begin a massacre.

1992: Julio Rocca, Italian volunteer, is martyred in Peru in the cause of solidarity.

**International Day of Elderly Persons**

New Moon: 00h11m (UTC) in Libra



# 2

Twenty-seventh Sunday in Ordinary Time

Hab 1,2-3;2,2-4 / Ps 94

2Tim 1,6-8.13-14 / Lk 17,5-10

Guardian Angels

1869: Mahatma Gandhi is born.

1968: Tlatelolco Massacre sees the Mexican army massacre hundreds of students peacefully protesting in the Plaza of the Three Cultures in Mexico City.

1972: Beginning of the invasion of the Brunka territory in Honduras by the United Brand Company.

1989: Jesus Emilio Jaramillo, bishop of Arauca, Colombia, martyred for peace in service of the people.

1992: Police repression of the prisoners at Carandirú, São Paulo: 111 dead and 110 wounded.

**International Day for Non-violence (UN)**

**Islamic New Year: 1438**



# HOMELESS PEOPLE, VACANT HOUSES

WHEN ACCUMULATION MULTIPLIES DISPOSSESSION AND INEQUALITY

**FERNANDO GUZMÁN**

*Justice & Peace - Claretian Missionaries  
Buenos Aires, Argentina*

The Universal Declaration of Rights of Man and of the Citizen -considered as one of the French Revolution basic documents- has established principles; thus, giving way to a new legitimacy in opposition, of course, to the Ancient Regime. A brand-new illusion glittered: freedom and rights made their own way through subjugation and authoritarianism. But some "old" values far from being removed, quite the opposite, they were firmly reinforced.

One of these values "with neither time nor revolution" was Private Property. In this regard, the Argentinian jurist Eduardo Barcesat points out an interesting data: Among the 17 rights included in the Declaration, property was the only one preceded by the term "sacred". In fact, the text states: "Since Property is an inviolable and sacred right, no one may be deprived thereof, unless an indisputable public necessity, legally ascertained, requires it; and a fair and prior indemnity has been paid for".

Nowadays in our Region, the inviolable and sacred character of the Private Property- explicitly promoted in Occident at the end of 18th Century- became stronger enough to be considered the "normal way" of interaction with goods (ahead of the relationships of gratuity, reciprocity, mutuality and cooperation).

Later on, after last half of 20th century, from the global pulpit that are the encyclicals, Pope Paul VI had collected the rich and powerful biblical tradition and that of the Fathers of the Church. He had pronounced a death sentence to its sacredness: "Private Property does not constitute for anyone an absolute and unconditioned right. There is no reason in keeping the exclusive use of what is not needed when others are in lack of necessities (*Populorum Progressio*, n° 23).

Objections were arisen by the sacred story about Private Property, but just a few people were ready to accept the whole powerful message that undermined the capitalism basis.

## Housing situation in Buenos Aires

The best sign of contradiction between exclusive use and collective need is housing, that is, the urban expression of land. Housing deficit affects Latin America (*Nuestramérica* \*) as a whole. Let's watch the situation in the capital city of Argentina, Buenos Aires.

The Buenos Aires housing crisis is started long ago, longer than a century ago. In the late 19th century, the first migration wave shocked the city and, together with, an incipient working class -anarchist and socialist- would dwell tenements called "*conventillos*" -"tiny convents" for their resemblance to convents-. In the city, the first "housing revolt" was organized in these collective tenements. Indeed, in 1907, Buenos Aires was the focal point of this historical fact: the first rent strike was led by brave anarchists and socialists during three months. What did they reclaim? They protested against the disproportionate rent increase that owners wanted to apply for this precarious and uncomfortable housing.

Fifty years later, as a result of the working class struggle, and its undeniable role in negotiations with the employers, new social rights are conquered. The constitutional status as of 1957, in the Argentine Republic, is awarded to one of them: housing. Article 14bis fully embodies it, and an adjective with a strong meaning was added: *decent* housing. The conquest of this fundamental right is surrounded by a new context defying their effective enforcement in Buenos Aires: Nowadays, a second wave of migration -this time, internal migration and from neighboring countries-. They are lodged in this city as it is possible: by occupying the so-called "slums" in the metropolis periphery (at that time).

In 2007, another fifty years later, the present Buenos Aires City political administration has won the elections for the first time. Many historic social organizations had an unavoidable sense of *déjà vu*: this administration drafted political rules similar to



those of the Military Dictatorship; housing politic, for instance. The intensive and aggressive privatization of the public space, the wild evictions executed – favored and speeded up by courts-, the gentrification\*\* process in different neighborhoods and the City Housing Institute (*Instituto de Vivienda de la Ciudad -IVC*) stripping, all has severely undermined housing accessibility .

Look at some numbers. Many social organizations are denouncing that more than 500 000 inhabitants are undergoing housing emergency. At the same time, 340 000 houses are vacant, there are 700 000 tenants. And the last link in the chain of exclusions 18 800 homeless; according to data provided by *Médicos del Mundo* (The World Medical Association) and by the local *Proyecto 7* (Project 7).

Therefore, we wonder why in the capital city of Argentina -which shows the highest per capita income in the country, and also being one of the highest in Latin America- the access to a decent house is unaffordable by most of the people. Which conditions would explain the “dispossession” currently under way?

#### **According to Picketty: housing for a few people**

Constitución is a southern neighborhood in Buenos Aires City, which is partially under a gentrification process. In 2010, a building -owned by a company, whose aim is wealth accumulation-, was in a process of eviction. Around 15 impoverished families, beaten by the polymorphic capital and living in a “vacant” building were about to be pushed out. Resistance and negotiations took place during a year. The company pushed to vacate the property as soon as possible, because it was committed to an important building development. In 2011, these families had to abandon their poor rooms. Bringing their belongings and in City Government “custody”, they quit. Many of them moved to a more impoverished housing; many others fell immediately in the “homeless” euphemism. The building development was never carried out. The building front is walled-up and covered with desperate messages scrawled on its grey walls: “Give us our house back “.

\* Nuestramérica: Our America, that is to say Latin America.

\*\*gentrification: the buying and renovation of houses and stores in deteriorated urban neighborhoods by upper- or middle-income families or individuals, thus improving property values but often displacing low-income families and small businesses.

The Picketty book success is due to its clear and popular way of explaining following equation: if capital accumulation grows more than economy, inequality increases. In our case, in the city, a strong property concentration -in hands of holdings, corporations, building brokers , and so on,- has grown exponentially, but detached of economic growth and of social production wealth. Both realities -increasingly far apart- have been triggered by the growing inequality to access to such a basic good as housing.

The Norwegian Eide Asbjorn, intellectual reference when thinking about Human Rights, points out: if a State wants to fulfill civil and political rights, there are many things it must not do: to repress, to force, to kill, etc. But, if the same State wants to grant economic, social and cultural rights (such as housing), a proactive attitude is necessary. It ought to establish conditions and measures for giving accessibility to rights, and to make their exercise possible.

As there is a perceived dead threat to decent housing right made by building speculation, the only way to halt the progress of this process is through people’s organization reclaiming their rights from the State, and a firm resistance against profit-intentions and illicit transactions.

In the words of the sociologist and philosopher John Holloway, “Dignity and capital are mutually incompatible. The further dignity progresses, far further away flees the capital”.

In May 2012, during a national situation marked by a growing and healthy politicization discussions, Osvaldo Bayer - writer, historian and political activist- pointed out in *Sudestada* magazine :“As I always say, if there are slums, there is no true democracy. Because it must at least ensure decent housing to families with children (...). We must not be content with just placing a piece of paper in the ballot box every two years, because that is not true democracy”. Bayer raises a key issue for further analysis: our peoples will retain full validity of Human Rights only by conquering deeply rooted participatory democracies. This task will be developed within the framework of “the second and definitive independence”, as it was called by many social organizations and struggle collective movements.

Let’s go for it. Neither homeless, nor vacant houses: decent housing for everybody.



2016

September

M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
			1	2	3	4	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	26	27	28	29	30		
12	13	14	15	16	17	18							

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
26 Lunes	27 Martes	28 Miercoles	29 Jueves
3	4	5	6
10	11	12	13
17	18	19	20
24	25	26	27
31			







3

## Monday

Gal 1,6-12 / Ps 110

Francis Borgia

Lk 10,25-37

1838: Black Hawk, leader and warrior of the Sauk tribe dies after a life of resistance to encroachment of the United States on Indigenous lands.

1980: Maria Magdalena Enriquez, Baptist and press secretary of the Human Rights Commission of El Salvador, is martyred for her defense of the poor.

1990: Reunification of Germany.

**World day of the homeless** (first monday of october)

4

## Tuesday

Gal 1,13-24 / Ps 138

Francis of Assisi, *Theodore Fliedner*

Lk 10,38-42

1226: Death of Francis of Assisi, patron saint of Catholic Action and the environment.

1555: The provincial council of Mexico forbids priesthood to Indigenous people.

1976: Omar Venturelli is martyred for his work among the poor in Temuco, Chile.

2007: The widow and five sons of Pinochet go to prison for appropriation of public funds.

**Jewish New Year: 5777**

5

## Wednesday

Gal 2,1-2.7-14 / Ps 116

Plácido y Mauro

Lk 11,1-4

1984: Illegal U.S. aid to Nicaraguan Contras confirmed when Nicaraguan government shots down a cargo plane and captures a survivor.

1995: The Guatemalan army massacres 11 peasants from the "Aurora 8th of October" community to discourage the return of refugees who had fled to Mexico.

**World Teachers' Day**

October





6

## Thursday

Gal 3,1-5 / Int.: Lc 1

Lk 11,5-13

Bruno

William Tyndal

1976: Over 300 peacefully protesting students are massacred by a coalition of right-wing paramilitary and government forces in Bangkok, Thailand.

1981: Assassination of Anwar al-Sadat, Nobel Peace Prize recipient and President of Egypt.

7

## Friday

Gal 3,7-14 / Ps 110

Lk 11,15-26

Rosario, *Henry Melchor, Muhlberg*

Our Lady of Rosary, patroness of blacks, Brasil.

1462: Pius II officially censures the reduction of Africans to slavery.

1931: \*Desmond Tutu, South African Archbishop, and Nobel Peace Prize recipient.

1973: An army lieutenant and a group of police massacre 15 persons at Loquén, Chile.

1980: José Osmán Rodríguez, peasant Delegate of the Word, is martyred in Honduras.

1980: Manuel Antonio Reyes, pastor, martyr of dedication to the poor, in El Salvador.

1998: Matthew Shephard tortured, tied to a fence, and left to die in Laramie, Wyoming because of his sexual orientation.

2001: The USA begins the invasion of Afghanistan.

8

## Saturday

Gal 3,22-29 / Ps 104

Lk 11,27-28

Tais y Pelagia

1970: Néstor Paz Zamora, seminarian and son of a Bolivian general, is martyred in the struggle for the liberation.

1974: The first Amerindian parliament of the Southern Cone meets in Asunción.

1989: Penny Lernoux, journalist, author and defender of the poor in Latin America, dies.

1990: Police fire leaves 17 Palestinians dead and over 100 wounded on the Temple Mount in Jerusalem.

9

Twenty-eighth Sunday in Ordinary

2Kings 5,14-17 / Ps 97

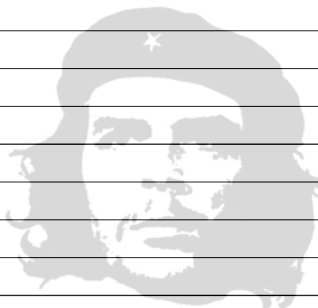
2Tim 2,8-13 / Lk 17,11-19

Dionisio, Luis Beltrán

1581: Death of Luis Beltrán, Spanish missionary in Colombia, Dominican, preacher, canonized in 1671, principal patron of Colombia since 1690.

1967: Ernesto Che Guevara, Argentine physician and Cuban revolutionary, is executed in Bolivia.

First quarter: 04h48m (UTC) in Taurus





# 10 Monday

Gal 4,22-24.26-27.31-5,1 / Ps 112

Tomás de Villanueva  
1868: The Grito de Yara proclaims Cuba's independence at Carlos Céspedes plantation at La Demajagua.  
1987: First Encounter of Blacks of South and Southeast Brazil, in Rio de Janeiro.  
1970: Pierre Laporte, the Vice-Prime Minister and Minister of Labor of Quebec is kidnapped by the FLQ.  
2007: Life imprisonment for Christian Von Wernich, chaplain to torturers Argentina.

# 11 Tuesday

Gal 5,1-6 / Ps 118

Soledad Torres Acosta  
1531: Ulrich Zwingli dies in Switzerland.  
1629: Luis de Bolaños, Franciscan, precursor of the reductions, apostle to the Guarani.  
1810: Francisco Javier Lizana, Archbishop of Mexico, confirms the excommunication against Hidalgo and his followers for calling for the independence of Mexico.  
1976: Marta Gonzalez de Baronetto and companions are martyred for their service to the people of Córdoba, Argentina.  
1983: Benito Hernández and indigenous companions are martyred in the struggle for land, in Hidalgo, Mexico.

# 12 Wednesday

Gal 5,18-25 / Ps 1

Pilar, Serafín  
Cry of the excluded in various countries of L.A.  
1492: At 2 AM, Columbus sees the Guanahani Island, which he will call San Salvador (today, Watling).  
1909: The pedagogue, Francesco Ferrer I Guardia faces a firing squad in Barcelona.  
1925: 600 US Marines land in Panama.  
1958: First contact with the Ayoreos Indigenous people, Paraguay.  
1976: Juan Bosco Penido Burnier, a Jesuit missionary, is martyred for his charity in Ribeirão Bonito, Brazil.  
1983: Marco Antonio Orozco, an Evangelical pastor, is martyred in the cause of the poor in Guatemala.

**International Day for Natural Disaster Reduction**  
Second Wednesday of October





**13 Thursday**

Edward

Eph 1,1-10 / Ps 97

Lk 11,47-54

1629: Dutch West Indies Co. granted religious freedom to residents of its West Indian territories.

1987: 106 landless families occupy farmlands in various parts of Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil.

1996: Josué Giraldo Cardona, a human rights activist, is killed by Colombian paramilitaries.

**14 Friday**

## Calixtus

1964: Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. becomes the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize for his

1973: 77 university students demanding a democratic government in Thailand are killed and hundreds wounded.

## 15 Saturday

Eph 1,15-23 / Ps 8

Lk 12,8-12

1535: Pedro de Mendoza moves up the Río de la Plata with 12 ships and 15.000 men.

1880: Vitorio, Apache resistance leader, is killed by Mexican troops.

1994: Aristide takes power again in Haiti after the interruption of a military coup led by Raoul Cedras.

2008: General Sergio Arellano Stark, head of the Caravan of Death, is sent to prison 35 years later, Chile.

## 16

Twenty-ninth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Ex 17,8-13 / Ps 120

2Tim 3,14-4,2 / Lk 18,1-8

Margaret Mary Alacoque

1975: Greg Shackleton and four other journalists are killed at Balibo by Indonesian troops invading East Timor.

1992: Guatemalan Rigoberta Menchú, advocate of indigenous rights, receives the Nobel Peace Prize.

1997: Fulgêncio Manoel da Silva, labor leader and politician is assassinated in Santa Maria da Boa Vista, Brazil.

1998: Pinochet is arrested in London. More than 3,100 persons were tortured, disappeared and/or assassinated during his 17-year dictatorship.

2008: Garzón opens the first case against the Franco regime.



Full Moon: 04h33m (UTC) in Aries

**World Food Day (FAO, 1979)**



# 17 Monday

Eph 2,1-10 / Ps 99  
Lk 12,13-21

Ignatius of Antioch

1806: Jean-Jacques Dessalines, revolutionary leader and a founding father of Haiti, is assassinated.

1961: Over a hundred unarmed Algerian Muslim demonstrators are killed by Paris police and special troops.

2003: Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada, President of Bolivia, is defeated by a popular uprising.

International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

Jewish feast of Sukkot

# 18 Tuesday

2Tim 4,9-17a / Ps 144  
Lk 10,1-9

Luke

1859: Anti-slave uprising in Kansas, USA.

1570: Death of Manuel da Nóbrega, Jesuit missionary and defender of the Indigenous peoples of Brazil.

1977: Over 100 workers at Aztra sugar mill in Ecuador are massacred when they demand payment of backwages.

1991: "Torture, Never Again" identifies 3 victims secretly buried in São Paulo.

# 19 Wednesday

Eph 3,2-12 / Int.: Isa 12,2-6  
Lk 12,39-48

Peter of Alcantara

Paul of the Cross

1983: Maurice Bishop, ousted Prime Minister of Grenada, is executed along with Vincent Noel and key New Jewel Movement leaders.

2001: Digna Ochoa, human rights lawyer, is assassinated in Mexico City.





# 20 Thursday

Eph 3,14-21 / Ps 32

Lk 12,49-53

Laura

1548: Founding of the city of La Paz.

1883: End of the border war between Chile and Peru.

1944: Ubico, dictator, is thrown out in Guatemala by a popular insurrection.

1975: Raymond Hermann, an American priest serving the Quechua of Bolivia, is martyred.

1978: Oliverio Castañeda de Leon, student leader and symbol of the struggle for liberty in Guatemala, is killed.

# 21 Friday

Eph 4,1-6 / Ps 23

Lk 12,54-59

Ursula, Celina, Viator

1971: Chilean Pablo Neruda is awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature.

1973: Gerardo Poblete, Salesian priest and a martyr for peace and justice in Chile, is tortured, then murdered.

# 22 Saturday

Eph 4,7-16 / Ps 121

Lk 13,1-9

María Salomé

1976: Ernesto Lahourcade, Argentine trade unionist, is martyred for justice.

1981: Eduardo Capiáu, Belgian Religious, martyr to solidarity in Guatemala.

1987: Nevarado Fernández is martyred in the struggle for indigenous rights in Colombia.

2009: Víctor Gálvez, catechist, human rights promoter, is assassinated for his resistance to transnational mining and electrical companies. Malacatán, San Marcos, Guatemala.

Last Moon: 09h46m (UTC) in Libra



# 23

Thirtieth Sunday in Ordinary Time

Sir 35,12-14.16-18 / Ps 33

2Tim 4,6-8.16-18 / Lk 18,9-14

Juan Capistrano

St James of Jerusalén

1956: Hungarian uprising against Soviet rule begins with peaceful demonstrations.

1986: Vilmar José de Castro, pastoral worker and land rights activist is assassinated in Caçú, Goiás, Brazil, by the UDR of the landowners.

1987: Joao "Ventinha", a peasant farmer, is killed by three gunmen at Jacundá, Brazil.



# 24 Monday

Eph 4,32-5,8 / Ps 1  
Lk 13,10-17

Anthony Mary Claret  
1945: The United Nations is founded.  
1977: Juan Caballero, Puerto Rican union leader, is assassinated by a death squad.  
2005: Rosa Parks "Mother of the Modern-Day Civil Rights Movement" dies in Detroit, Michigan.

World Development Information Day

United Nations Day

Aniversary of the Signing of the U.N. Charter, 1945.

Disarmament Week (UN), Oct. 24-30.

# 25 Tuesday

Eph 5,21-33 / Ps 127  
Lk 13,18-21

Crisanto, Gaudencio  
1887: A sector of the Brazilian Army, in solidarity with the people, refuses to destroy the Black stockades.  
1974: Antonio Llidó, Spanish priest, disappeared, Chile.  
1975: Vladimir Herzog, journalist, assassinated by the military dictatorship in São Paulo.  
1983: The US invades Granada.  
1987: Carlos Pérez y Salvador Ninco, Indigenous; Luz Estela and Nevarado Fernandez, workers, Colombia.  
1988: Alejandro Rey and Jacinto Quiroga, pastoral workers, martyrs to the faith, Colombia.  
2002: Death of Richard Shaull, Presbyterian liberation theologian and missionary in Brazil and Colombia.

# 26 Wednesday

Eph 6,1-9 / Ps 144  
Lk 13,22-30

Felícisimo, Evaristo  
*Felipe Nicolai, Johann Heemann, Paul Gerhard*  
1981: Ramón Valladares, Salvadoran human rights activist, is assassinated.  
1987: Hubert Luis Guillard, a Belgian priest is assassinated by an army patrol in Cali, Colombia.  
1987: Herbert Anaya, Sawyer, martyr to Human Rights, El Salvador.





# 27 Thursday

Eph 6,10-20 / Ps 143

Gustavo

Lk 13,31-35

1553: Miguel Servet, Spanish theologian, physician, and humanist, condemned by Catholics and Protestants alike, is burnt at the stake in Geneva.

1561: Lope de Aguirre, brutal Spanish conquistador, murdered by own men after, in Venezuela.

1866: Peace of the Black Hills between the US Army and the Cheyenne, Sioux and Navajo peoples.

1979: Independence of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, National Holiday.

2011: Sentence over the mega cause ESMA, major torture and death centre in Argentina. Life sentence for Alfredo Astiz, "angel of death" and 15 other.

# 28 Friday

Eph 2,19-22 / Ps 18

Simon and Jude

Lk 6,12-19

Procession of the Black Lord of the Miracles (Christ) in Lima, according to an Afro-Peruvian tradition.

1492: Columbus arrives in Cuba on his first voyage..

1962: Soviet leader Khrushchev and U.S. president Kennedy agree on a way to end the Cuban Missile Crisis.

1907: Birth of Sergio Méndez Arceo, Bishop of Cuernavaca, Mexico and social activist.

1986: Mauricio Maraglio, missionary, martyr to the struggle for land, Brazil.

# 29 Saturday

Phil 1,18b-26 / Ps 41

Lk 14,1.7-11

1626: The Dutch buy the island of Manhattan from the Indigenous people for 24 dollars.

1987: Manuel Chin Sooj and companions, Guatemalan peasant catechists, are martyred.

1989: 14 fishermen in El Amparo, Venezuela are shot by a military and police force.

# 30

Thirty-one Sunday in Ordinary Time

Wis 11,22-12,2 / Ps 144

2 Tess 1,11-2,2 / Lk 19,1-10

Alonso Rodríguez

1950: Nationalist insurrection in Puerto Rico, directed by Pedro Albizu Campos.

1979: Santo Dias da Silva, 37 year-old metal worker and Christian labor activist, is martyred for Brazilian workers.

1983: Raúl Alfonsín is elected president in Argentina after the military dictatorship.

1987: Nicaragua approves a multi-ethnic Caribbean autonomous region, the first in Latin America.

1999: Dorcelina de Oliveria Folador, a physically handicapped activist with the landless movement is assassinated for her denunciation of the powerful in Brazil.



New Moon: 13h14m (UTC) en Aquarius



# 1616 - 2016: GALILEO AND THE INQUISITION, 400 YEARS

THE CONFLICT FAITH/SCIENCE CONTINUES, BUT IS NOT A PROBLEM ANYMORE

**JOSÉ MARÍA VIGIL**

Panama, Panama

On 3 February 1616 the Inquisition banned Galileo to teach that the Earth orbits around the Sun. The harassment grew more complicated until Galileo had to forswear before the Inquisition of all he had written and taught, to avoid being tortured, although he was put under house arrest permanently. A few years before Giordano Bruno (Rome 1600) and Etienne Dolet (Paris 1546) had ended at the stake, burnt alive by the Catholics, and Jacques Grouet (Geneva 1547) and Miguel Servet (1553) by the Calvinists. Against the Gospels, historic Christianity has intended to control thinking rigorously and mercilessly.

Galileo's is an emblem case, because it comes down to a conflict between the Church and science, namely, if the Church accepts or not that science will make its own statements and Christians could accept them even when they seem to go against Christian doctrine. Galileo was a pious Christian, and never expressed himself over discussed orthodoxies; he limited himself to his discoveries in the field of experimental science: he saw the Sun did not move around the Earth but the other way round and that the Moon and planets were not celestial beings made of incorruptible matter, but astronomic bodies like the Earth.

Galileo's discovery confronted the current worldview which was geo-anthropocentric, based on the Bible itself (Joshua) and that, together with the Platonic and Aristotelian astronomic theory, was all together the official doctrine. The Catholic Church condemned the heliocentric theory, considered deceptive, because it overthrew humanity from the center of the cosmos (almost three centuries went by before it accepted it).

In 1992 the Inquisition, now called *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith*, erected a statue to commemorate Galileo in the Vatican gardens. In his speech, John Paul II expressed that utopia: the conflict faith/science belongs to the past. One can be Christian and accept the heliocentric theory.

But after Galileo, Astronomy has made new discoveries, no less disappointing to the doctrines which, once accepted the end of geo-centrism, were still tied to anthropocentrism: our human species continues to be the center (not the geometric center of the solar system, but the center in the sense of the cosmos, the purpose why God would have created the world...).

In fact, after that, Astronomy has said much more: that the Sun is not at the center either, nor is it the king of stars, but it is at the fringes of a galaxy that at the same time orbits around an unknown point in the cosmos, and that it is one more among thousands of millions of other galaxies distributed chaotically without a center... But the Inquisition has not bothered any scientist for prolonging and deepening Galileo's "disappointing" discoveries.

Since 1996 astronomic science is embarked in the exploration of the cosmos searching for "exoplanets", planets around other stars. In this few years it has found already some 2000, but it knows that there must be trillions of them in all the cosmos. It assumes that, with just a small percentage of them situated at affordable distances for life, there will be millions and millions of planets hosting life. Plant life? Animal life? Human life? Spiritual life?... Science has not yet discovered one planet with life, but is certain that we "are not alone" in this cosmos, that there may be millions of inhabited worlds. It was for this reason that Giordano Bruno was burnt alive.

But the *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith* is silent. It has decided that between faith and astrophysics there will be no conflict, and there is not, mainly for the reason that there is no conflict if one of the parts does not want it. Even the Astronomic Observatory at the Vatican allows itself to insinuate the possibility of the existence of other types of life different from the one we know and we are.

Is the conflict between science and faith resolved? If we scrutinize the present situation we

Translation by Alice Mendez



may say it is not. Even when the present Inquisition is not talking about it, it is with other sciences that there is conflict still, such as Anthropology and Epistemology, for example. Despite the humility that characterizes today the scientific method, these sciences believe they have plausible hypothesis about where religion comes from and how it develops, and about how it functions and what basis its knowledge has, showing that what we have said and still say with respect to the field of faith, leaves much to be desired, or is disqualified by the present “discoveries” of science, also considered “disappointing” by those who long for holding the center not of space but of meaning.

Here maybe is where the reason for the present struggle between religions and the world of science or the so called information society can be found. Many people, once they access the information of present science, cannot adopt doctrines, symbols or mythical stories as basis to sustain the meaning of their life or its profound religious dimension. It is not out of ill will, or pride: it is an epistemological inability (their minds work differently, in a way incompatible with the traditional axioms of mythical knowledge). And it is an irreversible transformation: it is not that they do not want, it is that they cannot go back. They cannot stop feeling they are subjects with dignity, that have dared think (*sâpere aude!*) and that feel a religion that denies this dimension of humanization, would be unworthy of the human being.

The conflict between religions and a free and critical thinking is not new, or starting from Galileo’s century. It comes from much earlier, maybe from the times of the first Greek thinkers, 25 centuries ago. The first act of faith was probably against Protagoras of which we have a historical account: his books were burnt at the square, after writing *About the gods* by the years 416 (2400 years ago!). The scientific-philosophical explanations, of the physicist-philosophers (Ionian) of that time, left the profession of diviners and the clergy, who promoted the persecution of philosophy, without foundations and clients. It appears to be Plato with whom for the first time the persecution of the “scientific” thinking was established: Plato proposed a very strict legislation against atheism (simply natural explanations) and “impiety” (to disobey the gods, which he associated to that ratio-

nal thinking). In *The Laws*, Plato proposes that atheists and ungodly people be punished with solitude, re-education, and that, if they do not repent, the punishment is death. Plato invented religious intolerance, inquisition and concentration camps thus.

All that effort of the Greek thinking of the first centuries was thwarted with the triumph of Platonic intolerance, later assumed by Christianity. The Middle Ages would be a dark tunnel, of ghosts and superstitions, of fear and lack of freedom. It was with the Renaissance when Western humanity was able to reconnect with that spiritual freedom that first rooted in the Ionic world, and it did so from a cleaner platform than that of philosophy: the one of experimental science. Trying hard to avoid the risk of subjectivism, the West worked to rebuild its knowledge opening eyes with sincerity, with no fears and with no myths. It was the project of modern science, from whose method Galileo was one of its founders.

Today science does not represent just a resource at hand, but a new way of being and living in the world. A new form of being human. A new state of conscience. The modern human being is deeply marked by science, which is now part of its being. On the contrary, submission to beliefs or mythical traditions, away from (or against!) science, no matter how venerable they are, is now unacceptable. Humanity claims the right and enjoyment of knowledge to be inalienable (not that of supposing, imagining, believing...), as a communal adventure, cooperative, hereditary, that redeems us from fear, ignorance and submission, and liberates us to face our responsibility before our existence. Every religion that does not accept these new rules of the game of this freshly implemented new stage in the evolution of humanity, and does not fill the new molds of human conscience with all its symbolic patrimony, will be overtaken.

The mythical thinking and the inquisitorial religions probably have still a long life ahead in history. But there are already uncountable heirs of Galileo, father of modern science: Miguel Servet, iconic defender of free thinking, Etienne Dolet, emblem of free thinking in Europe... have bet for the end of fear and darkness, and are in a religious attitude that does not cut their free thinking. 400 years later, the road opened by Galileo is still there, and 2016 is a good occasion to celebrate it.



2016

October

M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
					1	2	17	18	19	20	21	22	23
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	31						

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
31 Lunes	1 Martes	2 Miercoles	3 Jueves
7	8	9	10
14	15	16	17
21	22	23	24
28	29	30	1







# 31 Monday

Phil 2,1-4 / Ps 130

Reformation Day

Lk 14,12-14

All Saints

1553: Alonso Illescas founds the first Latin American black community not to have experienced slavery at Esmeraldas, Ecuador.

1973: José Matías Nanco, Evangelical pastor and his companions, martyrs to solidarity, Chile.

1989: Members of the National Federation of Salvadoran Workers Unions (FENASTRAS) are martyred in San Salvador, El Salvador.

World Savings Day

# 1 Tuesday

Apoc 7,2-4,9-14 / Ps 23

1Jn 3,1-3 / Mt 5,1-12a

1974: Florinda Soriano, "Doña Tingo", leader of the Federation of Christian Agrarian Leagues, martyred for the people of the Dominican Republic.

1979: All Saints Massacre at La Paz, Bolivia.

1981: Independence of Antigua and Barbados.

2004: The Chilean Army accepts responsibility for crimes during the dictatorship of Pinochet.

# 2 Wednesday

Job 19,1,23-27a / Ps 24

Phil 3,20-21 / Mk 15,33-39;16,1-6

1965: Norman Morrison, a Quaker, self-immolated in front of the Pentagon to protest United States involvement in Vietnam.

1989: Rape and torture of Sister Diana Ortiz provokes allegations of U.S. complicity in the Guatemalan civil war.





# 3 Thursday

Phil 3,3-8a / Ps 104

Martin de Porres

Lk 15,1-10

1639: Death of Saint Martin de Porres in Lima, Peru. Son of a Black slave, overcoming prejudice was accepted as a Religious by the Dominicans.

1903: Panama separates from Colombia with the support of the US, National Holiday.

1979: Sandi Smith, a nurse and civil rights activist, and four companions are shot down at an anti-Ku Klux Klan rally in Greensboro, North Carolina.

1991: Fifteen people are killed in the Barrios Altos neighborhood of Lima, Peru when a military death squad mistakenly attacks a barbeque party.

# 4 Friday

Phil 3,17-4,1 / Ps 121

Charles Borromeo

Lk 16,1-8

1763: The Ottawa (USA) go to battle against the Detroit.

1780: Rebellion against the Spanish led by Tupac Amaru, Peru.

1969: Carlos Mariguela is executed, São Paulo.

1984: Nicaraguans participate in the first free elections in 56 years. Daniel Ortega wins the presidency.

1995: Anti-peace accords extremist assassinates Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin.

# 5 Saturday

Phil 4,10-19 / Ps 111

Zacharias and Elizabeth

Lk 16,9-15

1838: Independence of Honduras.

1811: First battle fought in El Salvador's war of independence from Spain.

1975: Agustín Tosco, Argentine labor leader, dies when unable to seek medical attention due to political repression.

1980: Fanny Abanto, teacher, leader among educators, animator of BECs in Lima, witness to the faith.

1988: Araceli Romo Álvarez and Pablo Vergara Toledo, Christian activists, martyrs in the resistance against dictatorship in Chile.



Thirty-second Sunday in Ordinary Time

2Macc 7,1-2,9-14 / Ps 16

2Thess 2,16-3,5 / Lk 20,27-38

Leonard

1844: Spain grants independence to the Dominican Republic.

1866: Imperial Decree 3275 frees those slaves throughout Brazil who are prepared to defend the country in the war against Paraguay.

1988: José Ecelino Forero, pastoral agent, is martyred for faith and service in Colombia.

**International Day for Preventing the Exploitation of the Environment in War and Armed Conflict (UN).**



7

# Monday

Titus 1,1-9 / Ps 23  
Lk 17,1-6

Ernest

John Christian Frederik Heyer

1513: Ponce de Leon takes possession of Florida.

1917: Victory of the worker-campesino insurrection in Russia. The first experience of constructing socialism in the world begins.

1837: Elijah Lovejoy, an American abolitionist and journalist, killed by a pro-slavery mob intent on destroying his printing press in Alton, Illinois.

1978: Antonio Ciani, student leader, is disappeared on his way to San Carlos University in Guatemala City.

1983: Augusto Ramirez Monasterio, Franciscan, martyr to the defense of the poor, Guatemala.

First quarter: 19h51m (UTC) in Aquarius



8

# Tuesday

Titus 2,1-8.11-14 / Ps 36  
Lk 17,7-10

Adeodato

1897: Birth of Dorothy Day, co-founder of the Catholic Worker movement, pacifist and social activist.

1976: Carlos Fonseca, Nicaraguan patriot, teacher and founder of the Sandinista National Liberation Front, is killed.

1987: Indigenous martyrs of Pai Tavyterá, Paraguay.

9

# Wednesday

Titus 3,1-7 / Ps 22  
Lk 17,11-19

Theodore

1938: Kristallnacht sees Nazi pogrom destroy some 2,000 synagogues, thousands of Jewish businesses, kill 91 and arrest over 25,000 Jews.

1977: Justo Mejia, peasant unionist and catechist, is martyred for his faith in El Salvador.

1984: First Meeting of Black Religious, seminarians and priests in Rio de Janeiro.

1989: The Berlin Wall falls.





# 10 Thursday

Philemon 7-20 / Ps 145

Leo the Great

Lk 17,20-25

1483: Birth of Martin Luther in Germany.

1969: The Brazilian government forbids publication of news about Indigenous peoples, gerrillas, the Black movement and anything against racial discrimination.

1980: Policiano Albeño, Evangelical pastor, and, Raúl Albeño, martyrs for justice, El Salvador.

1984: Alvaro Ulcué Chocué, a priest and a Páez, the largest indigenous nation in Colombia, is assassinated in Santander.

1996: Assassination of Jafeth Morales López, popular Colombian activist, animator of BECs.

2004: The Commission against Torture turns over the testimony of 35,000 victims of the Pinochet dictatorship.

# 11 Friday

2Jn 4-9 / Ps 118

Lk 17,26-37

Martin of Tours

*Søren Kierkegaard*

1983: Sebastián Acevedo, activist, martyr to devoted love of the Chilean people.

1999: Death of Jacobo Timmerman, Argentine journalist and human rights advocate, jailed and tortured for writing about the government's role in disappearances.

# 12 Saturday

3Jn 5-9 / Ps 111

Lk 18,1-8

Josaphat

1838: Abolition of slavery in Nicaragua.

1980: Nicoláa Tum Quistán, catechist and Eucharistic minister, is martyred for solidarity in Guatemala.

1987: Miguel Angel del Tránsito Ortiz, pastoral animator, assassinated in Plan del Pino, El Salvador.

2008: Judge Baltasar Garzón orders the investigation of executions during the Franco regime in Spain.

# 13

Thirty-third Sunday in Ordinary Time

Mal 3,19-20a / Ps 97

2Thess 3,7-12 / Lk 21,5-19

Leandro

1969: Indalecio Oliveira Da Rosa, a 33 year-old priest, is martyred for his support of Uruguayan liberation movements.

1974: Karen Silkwood, labor activist and corporate critic, dies in a suspicious accident in Oklahoma.



# 14 Monday

Ap 1,1-4;2,1-5a / Ps 1

Diego de Alcalá

1817: Policarpa 'La Pola' Salavarría, heroine of Colombian independence, is executed by the Spanish.

1960: National strike of 400,000 railroad, port and ship workers, Brazil.

1984: Cesar C. Climaco, a Philippine politician and prominent critic of the Marcos dictatorship, is assassinated in Zamboanga City, Philippines.

Full Moon: 13h52m (UTC) in Taurus



# 15 Tuesday

Apoc 3,1-6.14-22 / Ps 14

Albert the Great

1562: Juan del Valle, Bishop of Popayán, Colombia, pilgrim in the Indigenous cause.

1781: Julián 'Tupac Katari' Apasa, leader of indigenous uprising in Bolivia, is executed by the colonial army.

1889: Brazil is declared a Republic.

1904: US Marines land in Ancón, Panama.

1987: Fernando Vélez, lawyer and human rights activist, is martyred in Colombia.

# 16 Wednesday

Apoc 4,1-11 / Ps 150

Lk 19,11-28

Margaret, Gertrude

Day of Sacrifice in Islam.

1982: Founding of the Latin American Council of Churches (CLAI).

1885: Louis Riel, Canadian Métis leader, is executed after a failed rebellion.

1989: Ignacio Ellacuría, his Jesuit companions and two female domestic employees of the University of Central America in El Salvador are massacred by the military.

International Day for Tolerance (UN)





**17 Thursday**  
Apoc

Apoc 5,1-10 / Ps 149

Lk 19,41-44 Elsa

Elizabeth of Hungary

1858: Death of Robert Owen, social reformer considered father of the cooperative movement.

1985: Luis Che, Celebrant of the Word, martyred for his faith, in Guatemala.

**18 Friday**

Apoc 10,8-11 / Ps 118

Lk 19,45-48

Elsa Lk 19,45-48  
1970: Gil Tablada is assassinated for his opposition to land grabs in La Cruz, Costa Rica.

1999: Íñigo Eguiluz Tellería, a Basque volunteer, and José Luis Maso, a priest, are assassinated by paramilitaries at Quibdó, Colombia.

2000: Alcira Del Carmen Herrera Pérez, wife of a labor leader killed in 1996, is taken from her home in Uraba Antioqueño, Colombia and shot.

**19 Saturday**  
Apoc

Apoc 11,4-12 / Ps 143

Lk 20,27-40

Abdías, Crispín

1681: Roque González, witness to the faith in the Paraguayan Church, and his companion Jesuits Juan and Alfonso, martyrs.

1915: Joe Hill, American labor activist, executed after a controversial trial.

1980: Santos Jiménez Martínez and Jerónimo 'Don Chomo', Protestant pastors, are martyred in Guatemala.

2000: Fujimori, while in Japan, presents his demission as president of Peru by fax.

## 20

## Christ the King

2Sam 5,1-3 / Ps 121

Col 1,12-20 / Lk 23,35-43

Felix of Valois. Octavio

1542: The New Laws regularize the encomiendas in the New Indies.

1695: Zumbi de los Palmares, leader of slave resistance in Brazil, is martyred, National Day for Black Consciousness in Brazil.

1976: Guillermo Woods, missionary priest, former US combatant in Vietnam, martyr, Guatemala.

1978: Ricardo Talavera is assassinated in Managua, Nicaragua by the National Guard.

2000: Enrique Arancibia, former agent of the Chilean DINA, is condemned for the attempts on the life of General Pratts in Buenos Aires on Sept. 30, 1984.

## Universal Children's Day

**Día mundial por la Industrialización de África**



# 21 Monday

Apoc 14,1-3.4b-5 / Ps 23

Presentation of Mary  
1831: Colombia declares itself a sovereign State, thus separating from Great Colombia.  
1927: Six striking coal miners are killed by police at the Columbine Mine in Colorado.  
1966: Founding of the National Organization of Women (NOW), Chicago.  
1975: Peasants of La Union, Honduras, are massacred by mercenaries hired by land barons.

# 22 Tuesday

Apoc 14,14-19 / Ps 95

Lk 21,1-4 Cecilia  
World Music Day.  
1910: João Cândido, the "Black Admiral," leads the Chibata revolt against near-slavery conditions in the Brazilian Navy.  
1963: John F. Kennedy is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.

# 23 Wednesday

Apoc 15,1-4 / Ps 97

Lk 21,12-19 Clemente  
1927: Miguel Agustin Pro, a Jesuit priest, executed by the Mexican government as part of the fiercely anti-clerical response to the Cristero Rebellion.  
1974: Amilcar Oviedo D., worker leader, dies in Paraguay.  
1980: Ernesto Abrego, pastor, disappeared with four of his Brothers in El Salvador.

World Television Day (UN)

Last quarter: 09h46m (UTC) in Libra





# 24 Thursday

Apoc 18,1-2.21-23;19,1-3.9a / Ps 99  
 Andrew Dung-Lac Lk 21,20-28  
 1590: Agustín de La Coruña, Bishop of Popayán, exiled and imprisoned for defending Indigenous people.  
 1807: Joseph 'Thayendanegea' Brant, Mohawk war chief and tireless negotiator for the Six Nations, dies in Ontario.  
 1957: Diego Rivera, Mexican muralist and husband of Frida Kahlo, dies in Mexico.  
 1980: The Russell Tribunal studies 14 cases of violation of human Rights against Indigenous peoples.

# 25 Friday

Apoc 20,1-4.11-21.2 / Ps 83  
 Catherine of Alexandria, Isaac Wats Lk 21,29-33  
 1808: A law is signed that concedes land to non-Black foreigners who come to Brazil.  
 1960: Maria Teresa, Minerva and Patria Mirabal, social justice activists and opponents of the Trujillo dictatorship are assassinated along with Rufino de la Cruz.  
 1975: Independence of Surinam, National Holiday.  
 1983: Marçal da Sousa, a Tupá'i leader, martyred in the struggle for Indigenous land rights in Brazil.  
 1997 : APEC protests in Vancouver (Canada).

# 26 Saturday

Apoc 22,1-7 / Ps 94  
 John Berchmans Lk 21,34-36  
 1883: Sojourner Truth, escaped slave, abolitionist and women's rights advocate, dies.  
 1984: Campesinos of Chapi and Lucmahuayco, Peru are martyred.

International Day for the Elimination  
 of Violence against Women

# 27

First Sunday of Advent / Cycle A  
 Isa 2,1-5 / Ps 121  
 Rom 13,11-14 / Mt 24,37-44

Virgil

1977: Fernando Lozano Menéndez, Peruvian university student, dies while being interrogated by the military.  
 1978: George Moscone, Mayor of San Francisco and Harvey Milk, a gay rights advocate and politician, are assassinated.  
 1980: Juan Chacón and companions, leaders of the FDR, martyrs in El Salvador.  
 1992: Attempted State coup in Venezuela.



# 2017: 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION

MAGALI DO NASCIMENTO CUNHA

Advisor to the World Council of Churches, São Paulo, SP, Brazil

We have already begun the countdown to the year 2017, when we will celebrate the 500 years of a religious movement that strongly marked our world: the Protestant Reformation. October 31 is the symbolic day for this movement which, sparked by a protest in Europe, proposed new ways of living the Christian faith and especially of standing up against the way in which the dominant Roman Catholic Church of the time, had placed for the forgiveness of their sins conditions upon the faithful that encouraged a practice of penance associated with a pecuniary element.

From this protest were born faith reflections by people like the German Martin Luther – and, among others, the Scotch John Knox, the French John Calvin, the Swiss Ulrich Zwingli and the German Thomas Müntzer who was a leader of landless people of the time. From all these were born the different *Protestant* traditions --- the Lutherans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Baptists.

## Common ground

Despite the diversity of the groups, we can identify a common ground. This base represents the greatest legacy of the Reformation, especially preached by Luther, as “the radicalism of Grace”. This is understood as the foundation of life and faith, as the sense of redemption of the human being: salvation is given as a grace, that is, forgiveness of sins results from the unconditional love of God, and to achieve this one must have faith. In this new vision, the Bible emerges as the foundation of a faith and life that resides in the Grace of God.

This heritage is grounded on five Latin phrases that summarize the sense of the Protestant Reformation: *Sola Gratia* (Grace alone), *Solus Christus* (Christ alone), *Sola Scriptura* (Scripture alone), *Sola Fide* (Faith alone) and *Soli Deo Gloria* (glory only to God). These five principles are a protest in opposition to the teachings of the Roman Church, which -- according to the reformers -- had monopolized the attributes of God, passing them over to the Church and its hierarchy, especially the Pope.

Derived from these is another important principle: “the universal priesthood of the faithful” which ques-

tions clericalism and places value on the role of the faithful in the missionary project. The various Protestant groups launched a popularization of reading the Bible, as well as a broad commitment to leadership by the laity. As a direct consequence Luther translated the Bible into the German language. This radically transformed the relationship of the faithful to The Book and opened the way for the free interpretation of the biblical text.

## A position

Writing about the “Protestant principle”, the twentieth century German Lutheran theologian Paul Tillich admitted that the prophetic, rebellious, Protestant dimension in the light of the position of Christ, is proper to Christianity as such. For Tillich, the Reformation meant the embodiment of this principle: a return to the very origins for being a Christian; even though it must be recognized that Tillich considered that this spirit is not the exclusive property of any religious group and can manifest itself in different religious, cultural and political forms.

What happened was that, during the process, the alliance of reformers with princes, landlords and bourgeois capitalists compromised the prophetic character of the movement. This confirms that the “Protestant principle” can be advanced by different groups, as was the case of farmers with Thomas Müntzer, who paid with his life the price of this faith commitment: a dimension that led sociologists like Max Weber to study the relationship between “the Protestant ethic” and the spirit of capitalism.

Be that as it may, those theological grounds shaped the doctrines of the various Protestant denominations that were established in Europe and the US of North America and later (from the seventeenth century) expanded across all continents, through missionary efforts. And that was how these Christian segments reached Latin America, nearly two centuries ago, where they suffered many changes, especially decades later with the arrival of the Pentecostals.

The “Protestant identity” was never really well affirmed by most of these groups, who always chose to be called “evangelicals”, disputing with Roman

Translation by Justiniano Liebl



Catholicism that populated the continent since the Iberian colonization. Unfortunately, history shows that the Protestant insertion into Latin America came with a sectarian perspective, mostly posing as the owners of the true Gospel, in order to differentiate themselves from Catholics.

### **In Latin America**

Nowadays the segment is so large and diverse, with such a significant and growing presence on the continent, that it's difficult to name, explain and group it by affinities. In theory, it would have a common root: the Protestant Reformation and its original movements. I say *theoretically*, because considering the transformations in the theology and lifestyle of many of the Latin American evangelicals, little or nothing was inherited from the Reformation.

This can be identified in many of the prevailing practices: # preaching and singing, for example; # that we no longer put much emphasis on the in-conditional love of God but to the contrary, the emphasis is on an image of a God who acts conditioned by human action; # for the amount of prayers and for the sacrifice (either through religious obligations or financial offerings) that must be made to achieve blessings, just as in the time of indulgences. # the power of religious leaders has suppressed the voice and action of the laity; # there is a fundamentalist, de-contextualized, sterilized reading of the Bible which erodes the very *raison d'être* of Protestantism.

Therefore, we need to do justice and recall the seeds of the Protestant charisma for living the faith in history: to those many Latin Americans evangelicals who have become literate through reading the Bible; to those who have paid with their lives their commitment to justice, filling the prisons of military dictatorships, resisting torture and facing death or exile; to those who worship in community celebrating the God of grace and life; to those who seek the strength to live in solidarity with the impoverished, drug addicts, prisoners, and victims of violence. How many Protestants are found on these fronts!

### **With ecumenical hope**

Recalling the 500th anniversary of the Protestant Reformation is also an opportunity to evaluate the root of so many ruptures among Christians and the scandal of divisions. At the same time we embrace the cause of unity and the many initiatives for dialogue

and cooperation during these five centuries of history which have produced inconformity with the separation, intolerance and competition that mutilate the body of Christ. Now is the occasion to reaffirm all those efforts expended in the field of missionary activity, theological reflection, biblical diffusion, Christian education and social action that signified the birth, as we passed from the 19th into the 20th century, of what today we call "ecumenical movement."

To emphasize what unites, rather than divides, and to witness to the visible unity of the body of Christ in a world so marked by ruptures and divisions, is the vocation of this movement, which finds concrete expression in bilateral and multilateral dialogues between faith confessions and in associative organizations and organizations for serving and promoting life.

Resulting from this process was the celebrated "Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification", signed in 1999 by representatives of the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation in Augsburg, Germany. It was there, in 1530, that followers of Luther, convened by Charles the fifth, signed a declaration of faith that broke with the Roman Church and adopted the "doctrine of salvation by grace". Passing into the XXI century, Catholics and Lutherans, by the *Joint Declaration* adopted an agreement on basic truths concerning the doctrine of justification by faith, one of the pillars of the Protestant Reformation. It was an important step, a proof that dialogue and cooperation are possible, even though there are other aspects that still have to be worked out in order to reach a total agreement between Lutherans and Catholics on the gospel meaning of "justification" in the life of the Church .

The Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation assume that the is not an ultimate goal, but an important step on the journey towards full visible unity. It is a witness and a stimulus for further actions involving other Christian denominations, on this journey of ecumenical hope.

We conclude by recalling to mind one of the principles of the Reformation that I have not mentioned: "A Reformed Church that is always reforming." This dynamic view is not just for evangelicals; it is for all Churches, and religions in general in order to renew life in many ways. That's why all people, in some way, can be protestants.





2016

November

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14	15	16	17	18	19	20							

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
28 Lunes	29 Martes	30 Miercoles	1 Jueves
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19	20	21	22
26	27	28	29



<div>Friday</div> <div>Viernes</div>			<div>Saturday</div> <div>Sabado</div>			<div>Sunday</div> <div>Domingo</div>			<div>DECEMBER</div>	
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# 28 Monday

Isa 2,1-5 / Ps 121  
Mt 8,5-11

Catherine Labouré

1975: FRETILIN, The Revolutionary Front for an Independent East Timor, proclaims the independence of the country.

1976: Lilitiana Esthere Aimetta, a Methodist, martyred for the poor in Argentina.

1978: Ernesto Barrera, «Neto», priest, workers, martyr to the BECs, El Salvador.

1980: Marcial Serrano, parish priest, is martyred for his work with Salvadoran peasants.

# 29 Tuesday

Isa 11,1-10 / Ps 71  
Lk 10,21-24

Saturnino

1810: Miguel Hidalgo, pastor of Dolores, makes public the first Proclamation of the Abolition of Slavery and Colonial Privileges, in Guadalajara Mexico.

1916: U.S. marines invade and establish a protectorate in the Dominican Republic.

1976: Pablo Gazzari, Argentinean priest, is kidnapped and thrown live into the sea from one of the notorious military "flights of death".

New Moon: 12h18m (UTC) in Sagittarius

# 30 Wednesday

Rom 10,9-18 / Ps 18  
Mt 4,18-22

Andrew Apostle

1966: Independence of Barbados, National holiday.

1967: The Brazilian Bishops' Conference (CNBB) protests against the imprisonment of priests.

1989: Luis Velez Vinazco, a union activist, is disappeared in Bugalagrande, Colombia.





1

## Thursday

Isa 26,1-6 / Ps 117

Mt 7,21.24-27

Eloy

1981: Diego Uribe, a Colombian priest, is martyred in the struggle for the liberation of his people.

2000: Vicente Fox is sworn in as Mexico's President ending 71 years of one party, PRI, domination.

2000: Chilean Judge Guzmán orders house imprisonment and a trial for Pinochet.

**World AIDS day (UN)**

2

## Friday

Isa 29,17-24 / Ps 26

Mt 9,27-31

Viviana

1823: Declaration of the Monroe Doctrine: "America for the Americans."

1956: The Granma lands in Cuba.

1980: Ita Ford, Maura Clarke, Maryknoll Sisters, Dorothy Kazel, Ursuline, and Jean Donovan, a lay person are raped and murdered by the Salvadoran military death squad.

1990: Peasants of Atitlán, Guatemala, are martyred.

**International Anti-Slavery Day (U.N.)**

3

## Saturday

Isa 30,19-21.23-26 / Ps 146

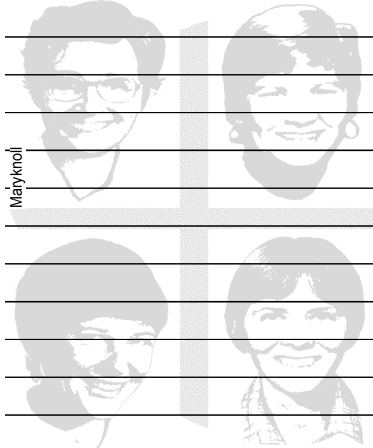
Mt 9,35-10,1.6-8

Francis Xavier

1502: Moctezuma is enthroned as Lord of Tenochtitlán.

1987: Víctor Raúl Acuña, priest, dies in Peru.

2002: Ivan Illich, priest, philosopher and sociologist of liberation, dies.



4

Second Sunday of Advent

Isa 11,1-10 / Ps 71

Rom 15,4-9 / Mt 3,1-12

John Damascene, Bárbara

1677: Portuguese forces under Fernán Carrillo attack the slave resistance settlement of Quilombo de Palmares, Brazil.

1969: Fred Hampton and Mark Clark, Black Panther leaders, are shot to death in their sleep by 14 Chicago police officers.



5

# Monday

Isa 35,1-10 / Ps 84

- Sabas  
1492: Columbus arrives in Hispaniola on his voyage to the Americas.  
1810: Miguel Hidalgo makes public the Proclamation of Restitution of Indigenous lands to Indigenous peoples, thus ending the system of encomiendas, arrendamientos and haciendas in Mexico.  
1824: The Brazilian Constitution, through a complementary law, forbids schooling for lepers and Blacks.  
1893: Farabundo Martí, Salvadoran revolutionary, is born.  
2000: Two former Argentinean generals during the dictatorship, Suárez Masón and Santiago Riveros, are condemned to life imprisonment by an Italian court.

International Volunteer Day

6

# Tuesday

Isa 40,1-11 / Ps 95

- Nicholas of Bari  
*Nicholas of Mira*  
1534: Founding of Quito.  
1928: Over a thousand striking United Fruit Company banana workers are killed in Colombian military crack down.  
1969: Death of João Cândido, the «Black Admiral», hero of the Revolt of Chibata in 1910.  
1982: Guatemalan government forces wipe out the village of Dos Erres. Over 300 die.  
1989 Montreal Polytechnique Massacre (14 women killed 14 wounded) - National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence against Women.

7

# Wednesday

Isa 40,25-31 / Ps 102

- Ambrose  
1975: The military government of Indonesia invades East Timor, killing 60,000 people in two months.  
1981: Lucio Aguirre and Elpidio Cruz, Honduran Ministers of the Word, are martyred because of their solidarity with Salvadoran refugees.  
First quarter: 09h03m (UTC) in Pices





8

## Thursday

Gen 3,9-15.20 / Ps 97

Immaculate Conception Eph 1,3-6.11-12 / Lk 1,26-38  
1542: Las Casas finishes his "Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies."

1965: The Second Vatican Council ends.

1976: Ana Garófalo, Methodist, martyr to the cause of the poor, Buenos Aires, Argentina.

1977: Alicia Domont and Leonie Duquet, Religious, are martyred for their solidarity with the disappeared in Argentina.

1997: Samuel Hermán Calderón, a priest who worked with campesinos in Oriente, Colombia, is assassinated by paramilitaries.

2004: 12 countries establish the South American Community of Nations: 361 million inhabitants.

9

## Friday

Isa 48,17-19 / Ps 1

Mt 11,16-19

Leocadia, Valerio

1569: Birth of Martín de Porres, patron saint of social justice, in Peru.

1824: Antonio Sucre leads independence forces to victory in the final battle against the Spanish at Ayacucho, Peru.

10

## Saturday

Sir 48,1-4.9-11 / Ps 79

Mt 17,10-13

Eulalia de Mérida

1898: Spain is defeated and cedes Puerto Rico and the Philippines to the USA.

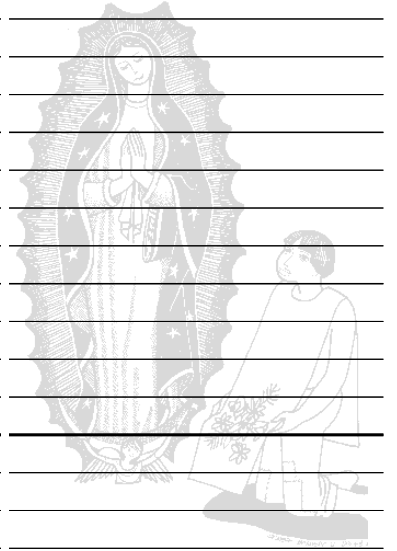
1948: The United Nations proclaims the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

1977: Azucena Villaflor, founder of the Mothers of May Square, is disappeared in Buenos Aires.

1996: The Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 is granted to José Ramos Horta, the author of the peace plan for East Timor and to Carlos Ximenes Belo, Bishop of Dili.

1997: The Socialist Government of France approves the reduction of the work week to 35 hours.

Human Rights Day (ONU)



11

Third Sunday of Advent

Isa 35,1-6a.10 / Ps 145

Jas 5,7-10 / Mt 11,2-11

Dámaso, Lars Olsen Skrefsrud

1978: Gaspar García Laviana, a priest, is martyred in the struggle for freedom in Nicaragua.

1994: The First American Summit, in Miami. The governments decide to create the FTAA, without the participation of the people. It will fall apart in 2005.



# 12 Monday

Zech 2,14-17 / Ps 95

Guadalupe, Juan Diego  
1531: The Virgin of Guadalupe appears to Juan Diego at Tepeyac, Mexico where the Nahuatl people venerated Tonantzin, "the venerable mother".  
1981: Massacre of "El Mozote." Hundreds of campesinos are killed in Morazán, El Salvador.  
1983: Prudencio "Tencho" Mendoza, seminarian, martyred in Huehuetenango, Guatemala.  
2002: Congress throws out former President Aleman for fraud of millions, Nicaragua.  
2009: Ronaldo Muñoz, theologian of liberation theology and an example of the coherence between faith, theology and practice, dies in Santiago, Chile.

# 13 Tuesday

Zeph 3,1-2,9-13 / Ps 33

Lucy  
1976: 22 political prisoners are executed in army operation "to eliminate terrorists" at Margarita Belén, Argentina.  
1978: Independence of St. Lucy.  
1937: The fall of Nanjing, China to Japanese troops begins several weeks of raping and killing of more than 200,000 civilians and prisoners.

# 14 Wednesday

Isa 45,6-25 / Ps 84

John of the Cross  
*Teresa of Avila*  
1890: Rui Barbosa orders archives on slavery in Brazil to be burned in order to wipe out the memory.  
1973: The UN identifies Puerto Rico as a colony and affirms its right to independence.  
1989: Death of Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov, Soviet nuclear physicist, human rights activist and 1975 Nobel Peace Prize recipient, 1975.  
2003: José María Ruiz Furlán, a priest who worked in slums of Guatemala with popular organizations, is assassinated.

Full Moon: 00h06m (UTC) in Gemini





**15 Thursday**

Isa 54,1-10 / SI 29

Lc 7.24-30

Valerian

1890: Sitting Bull or Ta-Tanka I-Yotank, a Lakota Sioux holy man and leader, is killed by police on the Standing Rock Indian Reservation, in South Dakota.

1975: Daniel Bombara, Argentinean university student, is martyred for his commitment to the poor.

**16 Friday**

Isa 56,1-3a,6-8 / Ps 66

Jn 5.33-36

Adelaida

1984: Eloy Ferreira da Silva, Brazilian labor leader, is assassinated for his defense of land rights.

1990: Jean-Bertrand Aristide, former priest, is elected President of Haiti in the country's first modern day democratic elections.

1991: Indigenous martyrs of Cauca, Colombia.

1993: Popular uprising in Santiago del Estero, Argentina.

**17 Saturday**  
Gen

Gen 49.2.8-10 / Ps 71

Mt 1.1-17

Juan de Mata, Lazarus Mt 1,1-17  
1819: The Republic of Great Colombia is proclaimed in  
Angostura.

1830: Death of Simon Bolivar, the Venezuelan-born independence leader of Spanish South America, near Santa Maria, Colombia.

1948: Uriel Sotomayor, a Nicaraguan student leader, is murdered in Leon for his opposition to Somoza dictatorship.

2009: Antonio Aparecida da Silva, Black Latin American theologian dies. in São Paulo-Marília, Brasil.

## 18

Fourth Sunday of Advent

Isa 7,10-14 / Ps 23

Rom 1,1-7 / Mt 1,18-24

Rufo y Zósimo

1979: Massacre of campesinos in Ondores, Peru.

1979: Massacre of peasants in El Porvenir, Opico, El Salvador.

1985: João Canuto and sons, labor leader in Brazil.

1992: Manuel Campo Ruiz, Marianist, victim of police corruption. Rio de Janeiro.

1994: The remains of Nelson MacKay are recovered, the first case of the 184 disappeared in Honduras during the 1980s.

**International Migrants Day (U.N.)**



# 19 Monday

Judg 13,2-7.24-25a / Ps 70

Nemesio

Lk 1,5-25

1994: Mexican economic crisis: 10 days later the devaluation of the peso reaches 100%.

1994: Alfonso Stessel, 65 year-old Belgian priest working with the poor, is assassinated in Guatemala by an agent of state security.

2001: After a speech by President De la Rúa, the Argentinean people take to the streets provoking his demission.

2001: Claudio "Pocho" Lepratti, dedicated servant of the poor, is killed by police in Rosario, Argentina (pochormiga.com.ar).

# 20 Tuesday

Isa 7,10-14 / Ps 23

Domingo de Silos, Ceferino

Lk 1,26-38

1818: Luis Beltrán, Franciscan, "first engineer in the liberation army of the Andes," Argentina.

1962: Juan Bosch wins presidency of the Dominican Republic in first free elections in 38 years.

1989: The United States invades Panama to overthrow the government of General Manuel Noriega.

# 21 Wednesday

Cant 2,8-14 / Ps 32

Peter Canisius, *Thomas Apostle*

Lk 1,39-45

1511: Homily of Fray Antonio de Montesinos in La Española.

1598: Cacique Pelentaru leads Mapuche in defeating Spanish at Battle of Curalaba and maintaining indigenous control of southern Chile for nearly 300 more years.

1907: Over 3500 miners striking for better living conditions are massacred at Santa María de Iquique, Chile.

1964: Guillermo Sardiña, priest, in solidarity with his people in the struggle against dictatorship, Cuba.

2009: Lula proposes a Brazilian Truth Commission to pass judgement on 400 deaths, 200 disappearances and 20,000 tortured during the military dictatorship from 1964 to 1985 in Brazil, with 24,000 agents of repression and 334 torturers.

Solstice, winter/summer at 05h48m

Last quarter: 01h56m (UTC) in Virgo





## Francis Cabrini

Lk 1.46-56

Lk 1.46-56

1997: 46 Tzotziles gathered in prayer are massacred at Acteal, Mexico by paramilitaries in the service of land barons and the PRI.

**Juan de Ketv**

Lk 1.57-66

Lk 1.57-66

1989: Gabriel Félix R. Maire, French priest, assassinated in Vitoria, Brazil for his commitment to the poor.

**Herminia and A**

Titus 2.11-14 / Lk 2.1-14

Titus 2.11-14 / Lk 2.1-14

1873: Brazilian government takes repressive action against the quilombo's, African fugitive slave settlements, guerrillas in Sergipe, Brazil.

1553: Valdivia is defeated in Tucapel by the Mapuche.

Isa 52,7-10 / Ps 97

by the Mapuche.

1553: Valdivia is defeated in Tucapel by the Mapuche.

1951: Bomb blast kills Harry T. Moore, teacher and U.S. civil rights activist.



# 26 Monday

Acts 6,8-10;7,54-60 / Ps 30

Mt 10,17-22

Stephen

1864: Beginning of the War of the Triple Alliance; Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay against Paraguay which would suffer 60% mortality of its population.

2004: Tsunami claims more than 300,000 lives around rim of Indian Ocean.

# 27 Tuesday

John the Evangelist

1512: Promulgation of the New Laws providing norms for encomiendas in the Indies after the complaints of Pedro de Córdoba and Antonio Montesinos.

1979: Angelo Pereira Xavier, chief of the Pankararé nation in Brazil, is murdered in his people's struggle for their land.

2001: Petrona Sánchez, peasant and women's leader, assassinated by FARC rebels at Costa de Oro, Colombia.

1996: Strike of a million South Koreans against a labor law that makes firing easier.

2007: Benazir Butto is assassinated, in Pakistan.

2011: Jose María 'Pichi' Meisegeier sj. Miembro del MSTM (Mov. Sacerdotes para el Tercer Mundo). Inclaudicable en la Causa de los pobres del pueblo villero. Argentina.

# 28 Wednesday

1Jn 1,1-4 / Ps 96

Jn 20,2-8

Holy Innocents

1925: The Prestes Column attacks Teresina, PI, Brazil.

1977: Massacre of campesinos at Huacataz, Peru.

2001: Edwin Ortega, Chocano peasant and youth leader, is murdered by FARC rebels at a youth assembly on the Jigumiamdó River in Colombia.

1Jn 1,5-2,2 / Ps 123

Mt 2,13-18





# 29 Thursday

1Jn 2,3-11 / Ps 95  
Lk 2,22-35

Thomas Becket

1987: Over 70 miners from Serra Pelada, Marabá, Brazil are attacked and shot by military police at the Tocantins River.  
1996: Guatemalan peace accords are signed ending 36 years of hostilities that saw 44 villages destroyed and more than 100,000 deaths.

## International Day of Diversity

New Moon: 06h53m (UTC) in Capricorn



# 30 Friday

Holy Family

Sir 3,2-6.12-14 / Ps 127

Sabino

1502: The largest fleet of the time sails from Spain: 30 ships with 1,200 men, commanded by Nicolás de Obando.  
1896: Dr. José Rizal, a national hero of the Philippines and one of Asia's first modern proponents of non-violent political change is executed by the Spanish.  
1934: Anticlerical 'red shirts' open fire of church goers in Coyoacán, Mexico killing five and wounding many.

# 31 Saturday

1Jn 2,18-21 / Ps 95  
Jn 1,1-18

Silvester

1384: John Wycliffe dies in England

1972: Carlos Danieli, a member of the Communist Party of Brazil, dies during the fourth day of torture in São Paulo, Brazil

2004: Iginio Hernandez Vasquez, indigenous land advocate, murdered by paid assassins in Honduras.

## Year 2016, within the following UN Decades:

2006-2016: Decade of Recovery and Sustainable Development of Affected Regions

2008-2017: Second United Nations Decade for the Eradication of Poverty

2010-2020: United Nations Decade of Deserts and the Fight against Desertification

2011-2020: Decades of Action for Road Safety, on Biodiversity and for the Eradication of Colonialism

2014-2024: Decade of Sustainable Energy for All

[www.un.org/en/events](http://www.un.org/en/events)

[www.un.org/en/events/observances/decades.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/events/observances/decades.shtml)



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## July

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# THAT NOBODY HAS TOO MUCH, SO THAT NOBODY LACKS WHAT IS NECESSARY

MARIA LOPEZ VIGIL

Managua, Nicaragua

Today we have a plethora of projects, programs, both national and international organizations and even governments all dedicated to “eradicate extreme poverty”. That flag gets raised as an expression of great social sensitivity and a sign of commitment to transform unjust structures. I marvel that there is nothing similar or at least of similar commitment and passion to curb extreme wealth, since both goals are closely related.

Sometimes I think (do I sin by rash judgment?) that this happens because many of those behind the project to eliminate extreme poverty are precisely those living with the advantages and privileges of extreme wealth...

There is an annual report (*Wealth-X and UBS World Ultra Wealth Report*), which offers clues on the amount of extreme wealth and how it keeps on growing: it keep records of the “ultra-rich” world, calculating that each of these characters has at least 30 million dollars in personal wealth.

The 2014 report detected in Nicaragua, the country where I live and am writing, the presence of 210 ultra-rich over a population that is already reaching 7 billion people. In 2013 the ‘ultra rich’ were a bit fewer - only 200. In just one year their number grew. Are we to believe that this happened by lawful means? And if the means were lawful, who, living in the same country, would believe them legitimate?

These millionaires live in the poorest country in Latin America, surpassed in shortcomings only by Haiti. This ostentatious inequality occurs in a country where 37% of the population -- more than two million two hundred thousand people -- live in a state of “chronic poverty”, as reported in 2014 by ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America). This poverty means “living” on less than USA \$4 a day -when able to be gotten- in large families. And “chronic” means that they will never leave this state of poverty, just as there is no emerging from a chronic illness and the only thing left to do is to “live with it” while hoping for alleviation. This means the biblical “rich man” multiplied by 210 for the biblical 2,200,000 “poor Lazarus” (Lk 16:19-31).

210

Nicaragua is not only a largely Christian nation, but the very text of the Constitution of this Republic, recently renovated by the “Christian, socialist and solidary” government of Daniel Ortega and Rosario Murillo proclaims literally that “Nicaragua is a nation of Christian principles”. Nicaragua is thought or imagined to be a “leftist country” by many naive or uninformed people around the world. And although officially we don’t know the names of these “ultra-rich” Nicaraguans because their names do not appear in the report, we do know -- because here everything gets to be known -- that many “ultra-rich” are in the government-power-circle of the sons, daughters and relatives of the Ortega/Murillo’s, who live, dress and travel in a manner increasingly ostentatious.

The book by the French economist Thomas Piketty, *Capital in the 21st Century* -- in the opinion of Nobel Prize in Economics Paul Krugman -- will come to be the best-seller of the decade: -- it focuses upon the characteristics and picks apart the inequality that tarnishes our epoch in human history: income inequality, wealth inequality, opportunity inequality -- even guaranteed rights are now completely exercised under inequality. Very often rights get overridden by the reality of extreme poverty or chronic poverty or whatever “povertys” get classified in the studies.

Piketty documents the excessive concentration of wealth in the hands of a small elite, a phenomenon occurring in the past twenty years, which he considers unprecedented and he postulates as proof that the power lever giving rise to this phenomenon goes back to “patrimonial capitalism” in which “the commanding heights of the economy are dominated by inherited wealth -- “legacy” that is more important than effort and talent”.

Piketty offers no solution, no answer, no prescription but warns that this excessive inequality is a danger to democracy, security and the reality of human rights -- realities all highly valued today. He exposes the problem and places it in the center of current reality. It serves as a warning.

With different levels and proportions, this concentration is occurring today in all Latin American



countries. In our region it's the "historic-oligarchic-name-families" concentrating the wealth. They inherit it from colonial times and today they simply keep on accumulating. The focus of the new rich is almost always linked to the circles of political and economic power and permeated by both corruption and narco business.

According to the World Institute for Economic Development Research linked to the UN, in the year 2007 the total wealth of the human species reached to 133 quadrillion dollars and half of that colossal sum was in the hands of 1% of the world population.

Instead of improving, this situation is expanding wealth-concentration in the hands of fewer people. According to the excellent report by Oxfam, *Equals. Let's stop this extreme inequality. It's time to change the rules*, the income -- not the patrimony -- of the 100 richest people in the world totaled 200,000,480 euros in the year 2012. Oxfam calculates that by "terminating extreme wealth" we could "eradicate extreme poverty in the world four times over".

In Latin America we have a shameful record: we are the region of the world with the most abysmal inequality between the few who have very much and the many who have very little. The evidence is more lacerating since we are supposedly the most Christian part of the world, either in the Catholic or differing Protestant versions. This was the scandalous contradiction that awakened the conscience of many people at the birth of "Liberation Theology" illuminating the conscience and costing the life of so very many. Among that cloud of witnesses we find our Monsignor Romero, martyred for "hatred" of the faith when "having faith" was synonymous with the passionate struggle for justice and equality.

In Nicaragua, where we had a revolution, we have learned that revolutions do not always reduce inequalities -- or at least not permanently. There are other roads, perhaps less rough and less costly in lives. But in Nicaragua we not only do not walk "along those other roads", but rather we're continually walking farther away from them.

Good quality education is a first step to prevent disparities in the future by equalizing opportunities in order to feed "effort and talent". Where public education is not of good quality, we are incubating inequalities which will multiply in many lives and for generations to come.

A tax system that does not privilege exonerations and exemptions for the wealthy, but rather a system of higher taxes for those earning more; a system that does not focus on taxing consumers and employees, is a fundamental and permanent method to iron out inequalities in any society in order to achieve that "every ravine gets filled up and every hill gets smoothed down" as proclaimed by the Gospel.

Jesus of Nazareth lived in a world of profound inequality. His was a world of a few large estate-land-owners and many under-paid and under-fed un-skilled laborers. His was a world of powerless men in the streets and silenced and submissive women in their homes. It was a world of healthy people discriminating against ill people who were considered cursed by the very god they heard preached. It was a world of priests abusively grown wealthy by imposing a religion of ritual sacrifices on the people they fleeced with tithing.

Jesus of Nazareth was what today we would call "an indignant" -- a person "fed up" with a rotten system. He got to see and touch the great inequalities which he continually proclaimed in his parables, his proclamations, his sayings, and especially in the project closest to his heart -- that "God's kingdom is a kingdom of equality between all human beings". At the time and in the culture in which he lived, his teaching was confrontational and subversive. That's why they killed him: for defending the ideal of equality in a world of profound inequality.

When my brother and I were writing the script for *Un tal Jesús*, [That Fellow Jesus] nearly 40 years ago, we wanted to find a new expression which would focus on the denunciation of inequalities, so essential to the message of Jesus. So we put this slogan into the mouth of John the Baptist back in the early chapters: "Let nobody have more lest somebody has less". Jesus picked it up from John and began to spread it among the people, enkindling the hope that the poor would stop being poor in "The Kingdom of equality". Jesus used it as his "slogan" when he announced "the year of grace" in his village of Nazareth (Lk 4:16-19).

Today I recall that I have repeated this message many times and it always seems to "strike people" and makes them think... maybe because it sounds like a program, a project that would truly link real efforts to eradicate extreme poverty to the strong determination to eliminate extreme wealth.





# WE DECLARE POVERTY ILLEGAL

**LUIS INFANTI DE LA MORA**

*Apostolic Vicar of Aysén, Chile*

The year 2000 opened up big expectations for humanity. It seemed a magic number, favorable for a new millennium to change the tragic path of history. In 1948 a light of hope appeared over all the peoples when a minimum statute was agreed to respect human dignity, shaped in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of the UN.

The astonishing developments in science, technology, economy and communications reached in the second half of the past century giving confidence in the establishment of a better peace, justice and prosperity for all the countries in the world. However, the depredating zeal of the human being started an overwhelming machinery to exclude the most fragile peoples more and more daily and even endanger the survival of humanity.

The cries of alarm appeared from the original peoples, experts in thankfully sharing the resources of Mother Earth. While sharing a sober life, with dignity, fraternity, when they realized they were being preyed, they felt their dignity offended and their assets depleted.

Economic systems imposed by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and endorsed by the governments of the countries, to: dismantle the States, liberate markets, deregulate almost all areas of the economy, privatize the most strategic public sectors, and commercialize the most essential common goods for the life of all living beings (water, land, food).

1 % of the world population got hold of more wealth than the rest 99% (OXFAM report, 19 January 2015). The objectives the UN had set in 1974 to "eradicate absolute poverty" by the year 2000, disappeared in thin air. In view of this failure, the UN in 1995 set new objectives to "reduce poverty by half" in the world for the year 2015.

Although in many countries economic figures reveal some degrees of poverty reduction, in all of them the figures reveal an increase in inequity, and in inequality among social sectors and countries. Injustice reigns and the poorest are deprived of a life and a future, ostracizing them from food, running water, health, quality education... they are deprived of dig-

nity and happiness, and condemned to the permanent torture of poverty and the slavery of submission. In many parts of the world the voice of the OUTRAGED is appearing, a prophetic and demanding voice, that raises and suggests new paths for humanity, a voice that questions the exercise of power and the awareness of the power of the excluded.

In this context, from areas more sensible to the ecological problems and the problem of lack of water (vital element for all living beings), the Campaign "WE DECLARE POVERTY ILLEGAL" arises, which aims at the UN in 2018, when the Universal Declaration of Human Rights turns 70 years old, not only emphasizing poverty as immoral, but also declaring it ILLEGAL. This is an imperative, a demand, not a "good wish".

Poverty is indeed a product of social construction, coldly planned and embodied in laws, institutions and mental and cultural convictions which promote and boost poverty. The genocidal alliance between the economic and political powers has enshrined a model that seems to respond to the dramatic principle: "we are not able to eliminate poverty, let us eliminate the poor".

The dignity and the life of the poor deserve a brave and determined awareness from all humanity to create "another possible world", in which, as in past times slavery was declared illegal, representing a step towards greater humanity, today we declare poverty illegal (not the poor).

Economic systems try to make us believe poverty is just an economic problem (poor is that who "lives" with less than USD 2'5 per day, an immoral situation in which a third of humanity is presently crucified); however, an ethical and human vision makes us consider poverty, as all situations in which the person is degraded and wounded in his dignity, deprived of the natural goods with which God blesses all, marginalized from participation in the essential decisions for the construction of a common good and of his own life. We recognize their suffering and bleeding faces today in the displaced, immigrants, indigenous peoples, those lacking land and water, the roofless, the voiceless, the children to be born, the unemployed...

*Translation by Alice Méndez*



even in our preyed Mother Earth. Millions of faces in which we should recognize the suffering face of Christ today, and before whom Pope Francis calls us forcefully and prophetically to overcome our indifference and make our faith effective and believable.

The other face of the same coin of INEQUALITY is wealth and extreme wealth. It is not a chance that only 15 transnational companies control 50% of the world production. With the economic power of the 10 richest persons of the world, 1.000 million people could be fed who are now hungry, and for the next 250 years.

There are many figures and statistics that in each country show humanity and a planet that are seriously ill. We think we can and we must change history. Starting with each one of us, in our small actions, attitudes and decisions of every day, we can have more sober and caring styles of life of greater communion, tenderness and sensibility towards nature and our fellows, reflecting our relationship with God, and we can fight to move around a world ethic that questions and challenges us: "What have you done to your brother?" In a mercantile culture, we are not ready to sell our conscience, nor our dignity.

Promoter of this Campaign is Dr Riccardo Petrella, Dean of Universidad del Bien Común (Sezzano, Verona, Italy) who, together with many supporters, has produced some basic principles that underpin the Campaign.

**1. Nobody is born poor or chooses to be poor.**

We all receive life when we are born, before "living" under the conditions of poverty or wealth. The state of the society in which we were born, "determines" our "poverty" or "wealth", nobody wishes to be poor. We are afraid of poverty.

**2. To become poor. Poverty is a social construction.** Poverty is not a fact of nature, such as rain. It is a social phenomenon constructed by human societies.

**3. It is not a poor society that "produces" poverty.** The USA is the wealthiest country in terms of money; nevertheless, the impoverishment of millions of its citizens is part of its history.

**4. Exclusion produces impoverishment.** Exclusion implies both the economic and social access to the goods and services necessary and essential for a dignified and convenient form of life, as well as access to the conditions and forms of civil, political and

social citizenship of today. Exclusion corresponds to the whole of the human condition.

**5. Because it is structural, impoverishment is collective.** This does not imply only one person but all families, whole populations and certain social classes.

**6. Impoverishment is the fruit of a society that does not believe in Human Rights or in a citizenship for all, nor does it believe in a collective political responsibility to guarantee those rights to all inhabitants on Earth.** The dominant groups do not believe in the Human Rights of life and citizenship (universal, indivisible, inalienable). If they have to be respected by law, for example by the Constitution, they believe those rights are not apt for everybody.

**7. Processes of impoverishment are the effect of an unjust society.** Unjust societies deny universality, indivisibility and inalienability of the rights to life and citizenship, and the access has to be selective and conditioned according to rules and criteria established by the dominant groups.

**8. The fight against poverty (impoverishment) is necessarily a fight against unequal wealth, unjust and predatory (enrichment).**

**9. The "planet of the impoverished" has always been more affected by the commercial exploitation of common goods done since the 70's.** For the dominant groups the individual worth is more important. They have reduced all to "resources" (the "human resource" included). Everything has become commercialized so the "right to existence" depends on its contribution to the production of wealth by private capital. For this reason work, education, social protection, have been treated as "expenses" and hence the need to rationalize, cut and privatize. There are no human communities, but merchant communities, there are no collective rights but purchasing power, there is no solidarity but competitiveness and pity, there is no cooperation and mutuality but "war" for the resources, for their own energetic, hydro and food safety.

**10. Today poverty is one of the most advanced forms of slavery, based on the "theft of humanity and future".**

**11. To free society from impoverishment, laws, institutions and collective social practices that produce and boost impoverishment at a local, national and world level, have to be outlawed.**



# IN FAVOUR OF A BASIC INCOME, UNIVERSAL AND UNCONDITIONAL

**JORDI COROMINAS**

*Sant Julià de Lòria, Andorra*

The proposal of a Universal Basic Income was made by professors Philippe Van Parijs and Robert Van der Veen from the Catholic University of Lovaina in 1985 <sup>1</sup>. It is a monthly income that would guarantee a minimum for life, paid by the states and world institutions to each member of society by the mere fact of being a person, even if he does not want to work for a salary, not taking into account if he is rich or poor and independently of any other source of income.

With BI the capitalist system is not to be changed but rationalized and, consequently, its collapse will be avoided. Just think that an important part of what each person earns is due to arbitrary and random mechanisms that have nothing to do with merit, nor with individual contribution to social production. BI would alleviate the most disastrous and unjust effects of the world casino in which we live in a way that is pragmatic and respectful of diversity, because it is not founded on a previous concept of what a good life should be, on a privilege associated to being a capitalist or an anti-capitalist, or leading a religious or non-libertine life (or the contrary). In a plural world such as the one we live in it is very important to take measures of tolerance that can be backed by ideas and concepts of life different and even disparate.

BI would allow the adaptation of the economy to the technological progress that lessens the need for more jobs (it is difficult to think of a world in which all human beings work the conventional 40 hours); to the need of attaining a sustainable development (avoiding the creation of jobs in a desperate way that imply the deterioration of the environment); to the growing importance of awareness, knowledge, and cooperation (if production is ever more social, the pay for a job has to be social and go through income re-distribution) and to the need of a minimum balance in world income (presently the 85 richest persons in the world have the same wealth as half of

the poorest world population).

If all citizens received the BI many bureaucratic instances that deal with the allocation of help and grants could be eliminated. It would imply great simplification and administrative savings. There would be no need to “watch” if those unemployed are working illegally, as it is done now with unemployment help. The frauds and mischief associated with the reception of grants would end. And of course the psychological and moral damage linked to social stigmatization of the person receiving a conditioned grant would be avoided.

As there would be no people with an extreme need to work, salaries would tend to increase. Unpleasant jobs would be better paid. No one would have to accept terrible conditions because he would not be forced by necessity. It would favour a change towards more participative business dynamics since the threat of dismissal would not serve as a disciplinary measure on the workforce. It would make it possible that more people would be willing to take jobs that have a demand and are attractive but today are badly paid. Self-employment would be less risky and tend to grow. Dismissal, reductions in employees and work flexibility would be less traumatic and there would be no discrimination between those who have a paid job and those who do domestic or voluntary work. Diseases caused by poverty, malnutrition, stress due to dismissal or lack of a job, would disappear, resulting in great savings of resources. Social classes would continue to exist as well as many inequalities, but extreme poverty and the most lacerating humanity would end.

To introduce the Universal Basic Income it would suffice to apply taxes that already exist with justice (a tax on consumption, a tax on benefits through which those who have more will definitely pay more and a tax on inheritance) and introduce world taxes as a tax on financial transactions to disuade speculative investments and a world tax on patrimony

*Translation by Alice Méndez*



to correct the greatest inequalities. Other taxes on work, to pay subsidies, retirements, etc. would stop making sense because those grants would be taken over by the Basic Income. Think that this would radically transform the traditional concepts of "employment", "unemployment", "contract", "retirement" and "working day", and that being introduced globally, wars would lose their fundamental motivations and migrating fluxes would stop being a survival need.

Due to present mechanization and "volatilization" of work, to go from a working society to a leisure society, to a society that works less so everybody works, is the only possibility to decently accommodate 7000 million people in the world. BI would imply also a change from an education aimed at the possibility of getting a job to an education that develops all human abilities without salary discrimination: the humanities, personal relationships, sports abilities, artistic abilities, etc. Activities which in general demand few energetic inputs and monetary values.

The main criticism to BI is that its implementation would foster parasitism, "doing nothing". This criticism usually derives from a confusion: work and monetarily paid work are equated, and in the same way not receiving a salary with "doing nothing". At least we can distinguish between paid work (a salary), voluntary work (not paid), domestic work (cooking, cleaning, taking children to school, assisting family in need...), formative and creative work (playing an instrument, studying for a masters degree...) and "doing nothing". And even in this derogatory "doing nothing" we should distinguish between recreation activities or very positive activities such as meditation, practice of sports, reading, chatting, resting, listening to music, affective interactions, relaxation, boredom and tediousness that sometimes come from a lack of education for leisure time, from the cult of a full agenda and neglect of our life and our self.

Being a workaholic is well regarded and promoted by our societies, but as all addictions, has disastrous consequences. This cult of work, causes not only sickness but also the blame on those that do not work for a salary and even employees when, such

as on Sundays, they do not have any other thing to do than to be themselves. The BI would really allow "doing nothing" in certain periods of our lives, but if all of us had the same opportunity of unpaid work, of walking on the beach or visit patients in hospitals, the moral basis to complain about "parasitism" would collapse from its own weight. Only those involuntarily employed could have reason to complain about people voluntarily unemployed and receiving the BI; but with a Universal Basic Income there would be no involuntary employees.

Only in modern times has work occupied a central place in political, social and cultural life, and started to have such an important role in the lives of human beings. "Work will make you free" can be read on the gates of Auschwitz concentration camp, paradigm of slavery and inhumanity. "Work dignifies" is repeated once and again forgetting that dignity is an exclusive attribute of people, and hence it is man who can dignify work making of his productive activity an extension of his creativity and mainly doing his work in all its forms (domestic, voluntary, paid) as a means, together with leisure and free time, of personal development, satisfaction and realization. In Greece only slaves and women worked. A small proportion of free citizens had leisure, *skolê*, the possibility of not doing those activities linked to subsistence and could dedicate time to contemplation and culture. BI would extend this condition of free citizens to all humanity.

In the same way as merely 50 years ago the work day was 12 hours daily or more and nobody thought it could be reduced, today BI is considered a utopia. What is really an impossible utopia is the permanent growth of production and paid work. The Universal Basic Income is a possible way towards a human alternative to the suicidal society we live in whose dynamic of depredating civilization not only is a menace to nature, but also to the humanity of people.

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<sup>1</sup> Very complete information can be found in [www.redrentabasica.org](http://www.redrentabasica.org) translated into 14 languages, this portal offers reasons and academic, social or political defenses of the Basic Income.



# WHY THERE IS SO MUCH INEQUALITY IN LATIN AMERICA

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The sign of our time is inequality on a worldwide scale. The more advanced the century 21st becomes, the more it seems like the beginning of the 19th century, a plutocracy sustained by an impoverished majority. But in Latin America, we are the champions of inequality. In our region the distance of income between the richest and the poorest is 14'5 times; in sub-Saharan Africa it is 9'1; in East Asia and Pacific 7'7; Middle East and North Africa 6'4 and South Asia 6'1.

Inequality restricts the options people have to pursue a dignified life and it erodes our social fabric. Increased neoliberal globalization is pushing more and more people to enter a zone of vulnerability and precariousness when facing financial crises, natural disasters, sanitary risks, and increased violence. Inequality is the result of a state that is absent, weak, or failed, a state that has lost the horizon of its being, that is, to care and replenish public goods. A state that has become hostage to the groups that concentrate wealth and further impoverish those who had little to begin with.

In Latin America the club of millionaires who can be counted and represented on the fingers of two hands, earn 28 times more than the social sector that consists of the poor, which represents a 150% greater inequality than what occurs in Africa, making our region the place where the rich are richer and the poor are poorer.

That is, 10% of the richest households concentrated on average 34.1% of total revenues. To see this inequality we must appreciate the concentration of wealth at the top of the social classes. Data for our region in 2010 was as follows: Uruguay and Venezuela were the countries with the least concentration of wealth while Brazil, Chile, Honduras and Dominican Republic had the largest.

According to the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) for the 2008-2012 period, the countries that saw increased inequality were Costa Rica, Paraguay and Panama, while countries that had managed to significantly decrease

inequality within, were: Uruguay, Bolivia and El Salvador. This means that Latin America is presenting many heterogeneities: some countries make progress in reducing poverty and inequality (Uruguay), while some reduce their poverty but increase their inequality (Brazil), but there are those who have not diminished their poverty or their inequality (Mexico).

However, if we consider the 2014 human development index published by the United Nations regarding the different variables of inequality (income, health, education, life expectancy), the following countries in Latin American can be listed by order of most to least inequality: Haiti, Nicaragua, Honduras, Guatemala, El Salvador, Bolivia, Paraguay, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Colombia, Belize, Peru, Brazil, Mexico, Costa Rica, Panama, Uruguay, Argentina, Cuba and Chile.

As can be seen, some countries have made public policy become an engine for the distribution of wealth, while others have invested in infrastructure, and still some have invested in better fiscal or educational policies. However, after reviewing various analyses with different variables, our region despite all their efforts, is still the most unjust place to live.

Why do we have so much inequality? French economist, Thomas Piketty, after an investigation into the concentration of wealth in the United States and Europe in the last two hundred years, has proposed that the inequality is explained by two reasons: inheritances of the rich from their estates and the benefits of the capital (interest, dividends) above the growth rates of the countries. In short, as Isocrates said in his speech on Peace (356 BC): "it is precisely the state that becomes the holder of the oligarchy."

The way that this translates to Latin America is that the principal reasons for inequality are the ownership of the land in the hands of legacy landowners and immovable chieftains, tax laws that favor the rich with burdensome taxes on the rest of society, especially notable are consumption related taxes.

Another key reason for inequality is the pay gap between top executives of the companies and average workers, between the salaries of politicians and high

*Translation by Maricela Cuevas and Yolanda Chavez*



government bureaucracies and the workers within the most basic levels of the workforce. The trend in our countries is to punish wages in order to produce the cheapest products for the market.

Another range of factors have to do with educational inequalities, the role of multinational corporations and their extractive projects within our countries, political parties in the hands of mafias of all kinds and our kidnapped political representation.

Inequality in Latin America is also causing us to be the most violent region of the world (27'5 homicides per 100,000 inhabitants). The concentration of wealth in a few Latin American families empowers the media to easily manipulate reality and stimulate a society with citizen apathy and little concern for public life.

If a pedagogical image can be offered to synthesize the phenomenon of inequality in our beloved Latin America, it would be of a rich individual rather than to share his robes (of which, he has many) choosing to take the robes of the poor (who only have a single robe for themselves), thanks to unfair game rules for political, fiscal, and income matters. This is why policy plays such an important part in increasing or decreasing inequality.

But our region has also shown dynamical economic growth in the last 20 years: several countries managed to reduce their inequality and others were increasingly successful in reducing its percentage of population faced with poverty or vulnerability. These mixed results allow us to target five struggles to confront inequality with enthusiasm, creativity, knowledge and public policy:

**1. Reduce the wage gap.** We can measure the gap amongst those with the highest wage with those with the lowest wage, in both the private and public social sectors, and establish the following: the gap is 30, 40 or 50 times the salary? We can pressure the legislative, labor, and media fields to create policies and incentives to reduce this gap. Let us wage a social and political struggle that has to be on our national agendas. Of the issue of salary, let us make it into a social and political fight that must also be on our national agendas. Let us support other actors to bring to the forefront the importance of the existence and making of the International Organized Labor a reality [a dignified salary]. We must understand the importance


of increasing minimum wages and to close these wage gaps, this is synonymous with social ignominy.

## **2. Distribute the resources from consumption.**

We all consume; even the poorest consume. Furthermore, if you look at the patterns of consumption of the poor we will observe that they buy goods and products of both domestic and global corporations to the detriment of small and medium-sized enterprises, which truly create jobs. It is proven that encouraging and strengthening domestic markets, either by fair use or solidarity within the economy, supports the creation of not just more jobs, but better jobs. Consumption, even without falling into the contemporary compulsion to buy things that are actually unnecessary, has become a good tool to redistribute wealth, either reducing it, modifying it or recreating it with citizenry driven criteria, consuming responsibly, ethically and sustainably.

**3. Expand the educational spaces.** All of the studies affirm that education which generates skills and values others, is key in reducing inequality. We do everything so that children, youth, women and adults of our region have some sort of education, albeit formal or informal, that allows them to understand our world; to name it, explain it and transform it. Enlarge the pedagogies of situated learning, allowing people to learn for and with life.

**4. Exercise citizenship.** Inequality is the result of the power of the few over the weakness of the many. The strength of the citizenry and of society exists within our conscience; whether we decide to change our surroundings or not. To exercise citizenship is to resist, organize and fight against the abuse of power, the aristocracy (Government of the worst), bad wages and the kidnapping of political representation. Inequality is fought with citizenry and articulated by the people.

**5. A spirituality of contemplation in action.** Latin America unequal, violent...Christian? Christian but uneven. A lot of religion but with little compromise to the former. We have the challenge of making the following of Jesus to imply the imperative of others, especially the most vulnerable, excluded and impoverished. This means building parishes and catechesis, situated to respond to their realities. It means a faith that is expressed in works, a spirituality that is embodied in the history. A Christianity of praxis. 



# CHANGES IN LIFE STYLES WITH THE NEW LIBERALISM

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Translation by Rosa Reyes

Here in Germany growing circles of people are discussing a great deal the problem of "extractive Modernity" and the "extensive modernity" with its expanding 'gulags' (labor camps). So much is bought (clothing, food, cellular phones always more sophisticated, all types of goods.) Sometimes there is not even time to use them before they are thrown away without taking into account all the resources that are being wasted. There is an emerging feeling that more than consumers, we are becoming shopping agents of merchandise produced to be thrown out as garbage.

There is growing consciousness that we need to renounce the myth of economic growth and go to economic **decrease**. There is a fashionable slogan that states: "less is more." In architecture, there is an expansion of the idea that, in order to be sustainable, in order to design something new, we need to reutilize, to reduce and to recycle, and this idea has been contagious in many environments. This implies consuming less, and this will imply to sell less, therefore, there will be less production, and fewer resources will be expended.

This will also imply that people will lose their jobs. There will be a reduction of remunerated employment. People will need to learn how to live with less income, creating new models of subsistence and solidarity; making thing for oneself instead of buying everything, repairing instead of throwing things away. The 'Do it yourself' slogan that has always existed and that has been the origin of great technical inventions is becoming fashion again. A profound desire is revealed to overcome the condition of consumer who acts without thinking to return to being creators in the image and likeness of the Other.

**Local currencies** are being issued that allow the exchange of products and services at the local level without going through the global "market". It is part of the movement toward transition towns (cities in transition) that begin to explore how to live without petroleum or fossil fuels, avoiding the use of motor vehicles and giving priority to bicycles. It is a movement toward local and regional currencies which not only do not generate interests, but also become devalued as the time passes, therefore, it is not good

for savings, but has worth as a means of exchange. In order to avoid monetary devaluation, the money is spent very fast, which increases circulation and fosters mutual remuneration for services or produced goods and intensifies interpersonal relationships. Once in a while a bond has to be bought, because of the loss of monetary value of local currency and with the payment of "the shield" communal projects can be financed... it is a kind of local tax for local communities' affairs. In the movement of the shared economy motor vehicles, tools, etc. are shared. People live in community and therefore washing machines can be shared so every family does not have to own a machine which will only be used for a few hours a week.

In Frankfurt we have **public closets in the streets** of our neighborhoods, placed there by the municipality that are open and in which people leave books that they do not need any more so another person can take and read them bringing them back later or sharing other books in order to avoid that they become full of dust in individual libraries with no one enjoying them. There are also bags of clothes which has met with great acceptance by the youth because it allows them to change their wardrobe, while spending almost nothing. There are also bags in which people, "liberate themselves of things they do not need anymore", giving it away to those who will need it the most or would want them.

**Urban vegetable gardens** emerge in these cities in which people grow vegetables in the empty lots. In certain counties, instead of flowers people plant vegetables and edible plants in public parks allowing any citizen to take tomatoes or strawberries or whatever is produced. (The expenses are the same as for planting decorative plants). People form cooperatives of agricultural solidarity in which a group of consumers make a commitment to monthly provide a certain amount of money to the small scale farmer (garden farmer) facilitating the necessary means to finance the cost of production. The small scale farmer contributes with the land and his /her work, and the market of what is being produced is already secured, so the money payed by the cooperative members, and the hard work of the small scale farmer ("sweat of the brow"), will produce



benefits for both. The investors, who are committed to each other, share the risks if the production is not successful for climatic reasons. The cost of marketing disappears and the anguish of the small scale farmer taking the whole risk on himself/herself also disappears. The cost of transportation is also reduced because the product is locally consumed according to what has been produced.

The movement of the **“Revolution of Care”** emerges which places the person at the center of the economy. The foundation is that we depend on one another and economic sustainability lies not only in the ecology, but also in recognizing the worth of the work of social production. This means all the work of rearing children, the care for the sick, people with disabilities, elderly, the work of creation and innovation, arts, communal work, and solidarity among neighbors. All of these activities are done with no remuneration and are not taken into account by the Gross National Product (GNP).

The idea of a Basic Income or RBI (Renta Básica Incondicional) is being strengthened, which demands a distinction between work and income, redefining the work concept, and understanding that it is a grave error to limit it to remunerated activities. When the indispensable work of social production becomes invisible, the neoliberals could appropriate that work, privatizing the costs of those activities (the time that is spent developing those activities and the physical and psychological wear on the people who do those activities) and capitalizing privately the results of those activities (the productive labor force).

This movement reclaims the RBI for all, which allows people to live modestly but with dignity, being able to dedicate time needed to give to the indispensable activities of the good life. This RBI will allow renouncing the type of work that does not offer dignifying working conditions. It will provide women with sufficient financial independence to be able to be able to leave abusive or violent partners; it could be a solution for leaving prostitution.

One of the biggest German **electrical companies**, EON, decided to abandon nuclear plants and the fossil fuel business to fully engage in renewable energy business. There are those who believe that it is too late for them, because in Germany 26% of the energy that is consumed, is renewable and produced by independent sources such as: farmers and growers; solidarity-based groups of citizens (SoLawi group); citizens who take

advantage of the roof of their homes...There are lots of people who prefer to buy energy from them and not from the giants or big companies. The same is happening with the **car industry**. Volkswagen is thinking that they need to be transformed from a company that produces cars to a transportation service provider. The reason for this shift is that people (especially young people) do not have interest anymore, in buying a car. They prefer to share a car: they pay a reasonable amount (3 euros monthly, for example), to be able to use the car and when a person needs it, it is reserved and 3,5 Euros are paid for the hour, plus 30 cents of Euros for kilometers which include gas, insurance and taxes, maintenance, and garage.... Because public transportation functions very well, cars are only needed once in a while. In Paris, for example, 60% of the population does not need to have a personal car.

The number of **vegetarian** and **vegans** (They do not consume animal products honey, milk, eggs, or meat) are growing. The number of vegetarian and vegan restaurants and those which never lack a vegetarian menu are growing too. The use of meat is reduced and a culture of ‘slow-food’ (cooking/slow food) is growing. The selling of “bio” products is growing greatly because people prefer to eat little but of quality... exclusively vegan supermarkets are emerging. Minimalism is in fashion: people are getting rid of everything that is not absolutely necessary. They only have three to four sets of clothes, little furniture, and few books, or personal discs...everything is borrowed when needed and it is returned as soon as it is not needed anymore.

These movements are taking place **all over Europe**, and we are receiving other similar and hopeful experiences that are taking place in **other parts of the globe**. They are not yet main line but there are increasingly more and more people interested in those experiences. The public television, especially ARTE (France-Germany Network) has already broadcasted very interesting programs about these cultural changes. These changes are being discussed by the media in conferences, colloquiums and seminars. Capitalism is already trying to convert this cultural tendency into business and sometimes that is accomplished. Nevertheless, it is not that easy because there is a consciousness rising.

We expect that the Papal encyclical about the ecology will be an input in that direction. This is a great moment for change to come, if not, this planet will be finished...



# THROUGH A STRUGGLE WITHOUT BORDERS

CLAUDIA FANTI

Rome, Italy

If 1% of humanity has almost half the world's wealth, a question arises: what do all the others do? Of course, the enemy is the same for all the world's peoples: the financial system and transnational corporations that bend international organizations and governments to their interests. The strategies that they employ are the same everywhere, the same processes of making employment precarious and of the expropriation of the common wealth to private interests.

But if the offensive by capital has no borders, shouldn't the people's struggle be the same? This is the challenge that we and the popular movements around the world are called to respond to: to unite our forces at the international level in order to increase the capacity of this 99% of humanity to fight back.

## **Beyond the World Social Forum**

A meeting place of popular forces emerged for the first time in the World Social Forum (WSF) - particularly through the assemblies of social movements. This was anticipated by events such as the 500 years of Indigenous Resistance campaign, Black and Popular 1992, the 1994 Zapatista uprising, the emergence of the Hemispheric Social Alliance against the FTAA in 1997, the 1999 demonstrations against the World Trade Organization in Seattle: a journey that has gathered much fruit, beginning with the creation of a global opposition to the dominant neoliberal thought, these allowed movements to establish alliances, share analyses, and promote coordinated actions at the global level.

But despite the fact that it had - and continues to play a valuable role in the fight against capital, the WSF seems to have partly exhausted its historic role, remaining entangled in the question without resolving it from its limited framework. And it finally revealed itself as incapable of opposing capital's project to bend the State to its interests, and of being able to undermine the symbolic system of the dominant culture.

## **Convergence, not unification**

Since the first edition of the WSF the global landscape has changed profoundly, posing new and com-

plex challenges for the global justice movement. New players have emerged, which presented their own dynamics outside the range of the WSF: from the popular mobilizations linked to the Arab Spring, that afterwards imploded, to the movement of the 'indignados' in the US, Europe and throughout the world, with their own specific ways to struggle, less institutional and more horizontal, spontaneous and decentralized. Movements with very different characteristics, but with the common characteristic of mistrust in traditional political parties and opting for forms of direct democracy, as well as the use of social networking as a means of amplification of protest, coordination and communication. Neither has the WSF been capable of offering forms of organization for the insecure of the world, the informal economy, lower class youth in the suburbs of large cities, those not unionized, those who do not constitute a legal or political entity.

It is necessary to begin with the recognition of the plurality and diversity of contexts in which these movements operate, renouncing the illusion of considering the multiplicity of initiatives in one sole process: convergence, not unification, it can be an objective (yet to be determined), while respecting diversity, but favoring what unites.

## **The problematic relationship with governments**

It makes no sense to seek a single answer to the possibility of connecting the multiple expressions of the popular struggle with institutional politics, that was one of the main issues left unresolved in the framework of the WSF, between the desire of some for a greater articulation between social movements, political forces and progressive governments, and the fear of others of undue confusion between the realities of the base and institutional realities. Something else difficult to resolve, for example, is the presence of progressive governments that continue betraying the expectations for change of the popular movements, but at the same time are exposed to a strong offensive from an anti-democratic right, even when not clearly a pro-coup right. What do you do in those cases? Choose the lesser evil? Or turn our

*Translation by Michael Dougherty*



backs on institutional policy, to concentrate energies in a self-managed community space, a space “down and outside” of the dominant system, with the goal of changing the balance of the world by multiplying the cracks, large and small, in the fabric of capitalist domination?

While an unequivocal answer is impossible, you can at least try the path of a dialog with governments that are more open to the demands of the movements without giving into them, done without losing autonomy and their utopian horizon, and above all, without ceasing to put the emphasis on the strengthening of the struggle of the organized. Because, even without underestimating the importance of the institutional framework for facilitating change, there can be no doubt as to who the real subjects of change are: it is not from governments, without force - starting from the numerical reality- that the people are able to accumulate, it is from this that the building of the alternative depends.

### **A space for worldwide articulation**

What is needed, with urgency, is to create another space, or spaces, in which the different experiences establish common goals, topics that converge, building a platform for struggle and creating synergies between the many battles that they are putting up and, therefore, an accumulation of sufficient force to create an alternative hegemony. A push in this direction came from the global meeting of the popular movements at the Vatican, which took place in October 2014 around three major themes: earth, work, home. On the basis of the appeal from the Pope: “No family homeless: No peasant without land. No worker without rights.” This is an experience to be repeated, broadening the dialog to all of humanity’s religious traditions, which could promote a grand assembly for the defense of life on Earth.

### **The main point**

This is indeed the question which all the popular movements are called to give absolute priority to: that of environmental and climatic justice, the adaptation of the production model to the limits of the planet, as a condition for the same continuity of our life on Earth. There are so many threats to the survival of the human species on the planet, and we have such a short time to change course, it is

not possible to postpone it. Hence the necessity for people’s movements – among whom the awareness of the centrality of this issue is still limited--to oppose any policy that will have a negative impact on ecosystems and peoples who inhabit them, although such a policy - as in the multiple forms of extractivism – may be executed by ‘friend’ governments in the hands of state-owned enterprises rather than transnationals and on behalf of the creation of employment or funding of programmes to fight against poverty... And while overnight change is impossible, the criterion should be to support anything that favors a transition to a post-extractive and post-capitalist society.

### **Two causes, one struggle**

Even though it is the totality of the ecosystems of the planet that are in danger, the impact of the environmental and climate crisis is extremely uneven. And the regions and populations most affected are those that have less responsibility in this predatory dynamic. Environmental protection and overcoming inequality must necessarily go hand in hand: only through a radical redistribution of wealth and the recovery of popular sovereignty over natural resources is it possible to reduce the human pressure on the ecosystems and at the same time ensure decent living conditions for all.

### **Return to the work of the base**

But if our only chance of defeating the current model resides in the ability to mobilize society at national and global level, this can only occur through the old basic work which requires time, patience and humility from activists, lamentably neglected by too many movements seduced by a purely institutional struggle. Through a permanent process of alternative-information, training and political organization, of reflection on the necessary steps for a transition towards a new model of civilization, is what we call the good life, eco-socialism or degrowth possible: another paradigm of human life on Mother Earth, focused on the right to existence of all forms of life, intergenerational and intra-generational equity among humanity for the sustainable use of natural resources , the maintenance of cycles of regeneration of nature and the recovery of the vision of the ancient inhabitants of Abya Yala which is not that the land belongs to us, but we are the ones who belong to it.



# INEQUALITY AND LIBERATION

## CRITICAL FUNCTION OF PHILOSOPHY IN SUCH AN UNEQUAL LATIN AMERICA

**GUSTAVO YELA**

*Philosophy Professor at San Carlos Guatemala University*

I am writing from Guatemala and I feel the skin of all Latin America in my reflection. I am a Philosophy Professor and wish to take charge of the critical role that philosophy, and all the teachers and professors who teach it, have in our Latin America, sadly infamous as the most unequal continent.

Guatemala is among the 15 most unequal countries in the world. It bears the first place in Latin America as the country with the worst levels of chronic malnutrition in children under 5 years of age (50%), with the greatest number of chronic paupers in Latin America (50%). 77.9% of workers is not covered by Social Security nor do they have the opportunity of the corresponding labor provisions. Progress does not belong to all: development of some is based on the underdevelopment of the rest.

Market and advertising present a dream world of happiness, while in the streets there are more and more paupers. Speeches of politicians and business people show one reality, but the facts disprove those words. Brilliant academic proposals are exposed in the world of intellectuals, which are not translated into a liberating praxis.

There are many religious manifestations but little attention to the human being. Many words and a few deeds. Great projects and few achievements. A lot of wealth and a lot of poverty. A few with everything and a lot without anything. So many interesting and modern educational theories and, however, so much illiteracy and educational practices based on memory and uncritical.

Education in our Guatemalan context, more than an engine of development and agent of social change is the keeper of an unequal society, because it separates the qualified professionals from those who will be their "work force".

The State, while neglecting public education, favors a privatized and elite education; hence it contributes to the result of a dominant class and a dominated class; this is when education becomes an

instrument of domination of some over others. We need to learn to critically read our reality, because we are used to living as if we suffered from the consequences of a natural disaster. Poverty of the majority is due, yes, to a disaster, but caused by a scandalous economic and social inequality.

### **Ignacio Ellacuría's liberating philosophy**

Ignacio Ellacuría helps us to understand that philosophy is not only an intellectual and academic task, but also involves the need to collaborate in the liberation of the oppressed peoples. Ellacuría shows that there is a strong connection between the search of a philosophical truth and the search of a social reality which is more authentic. He encourages us to discover all the liberating capacity philosophy has, gives us elements to unmask the social reality in which we live, and also, proposes a project of liberation to impact the change of social structures. All sciences and fields of knowledge can adjust their wisdom in favor of a liberating perspective.

Ellacuría says it is necessary to opt from where we want to do philosophy. It may be from the scientific perspective, or from the interior perspective, or from the total historical praxis. The philosopher who has chosen originally to work from the historical praxis does so in a more situated and contextualized way, hence, his reflections and criteria are a valuable contribution to the real and concrete life of the peoples.

Philosophy has a function of removing ideologies, which is important in present society because, according to Ellacuría "...dominant classes try to substitute the truth of reality for an ideological superstructure that prevents the dominant classes to be aware of real relationships. This ideology is a substitute of reality, and its aim is to mask reality".

The social, political, economic truth is also a vital part of the total truth. How can the philosopher omit or ignore that part of social truth, which is



crucial to get to more authentic conclusions? Similarly, what is the benefit of a speculative, abstract and conceptualist truth for a human being that has been imposed of miserable life conditions, with no access to health, education, food...?

Before such dramatic inhuman realities, philosophy cannot stay locked in scholastic and contemplative discussions. Enrique Dussel says to this effect: "...before the ecologic destruction of life... before hunger and misery of the majority of humanity... it would seem ingenuity and even ridiculous, irresponsible and accomplice, irrelevant and cynical, the project of so many philosophical schools... locked in an "ivory tower" of sterile Euro-centered academicism".

The critical function of philosophy helps us unmask the dominant ideology and gives us analytical instruments to unmask the trickery in the economic, political, social, etc. order. The ideology of the dominant system is hiding the true social reality. The false arguments of the dominant classes appear to be true and appeal to great abstract principles below which the real miserly and Machiavellian interests lie.

Ellacuría suggests a critical analysis of the social situations. He says that an ideological approach implies an interpretation of reality, which presents itself as the one and absolute truth, because it complies with certain interests of the powerful elites and is imposed as a unique view of reality, comprehensive, interpretative and justifying, under which false elements are masked, there appear situations of injustice, things are silenced, observations are diverted, facts are distorted... but as only one view of reality is taken, it is not questioned and it continues to be the true theory.

Philosophy will liberate if it encounters a liberating social praxis. The philosopher on his own cannot, from his theory or philosophic contribution, valuable though it may be, obtain social liberation; it is necessary to take into account the social forces and the liberating process. According to Ellacuría "ideas on their own do not change social structures; social forces must counteract in a liberating process what other social forces have established in the process of oppression".

We do not need a philosophy in which the contemplative cognitive dimension prevails, but the operational dimension, because it is things, life, social struggles, efforts to build a more mindful society, etc., what the needy majorities of our peoples demand, and that is the aim of the "liberating philosophy", to present alternative criteria and paths. The Latin American peoples, especially the poorest, need a philosophy embodied in our reality, because here is where we need to build a more egalitarian society. A philosophy that is not lowered to our reality and stays away from the concrete human problems, does say nothing to us.

It is up to us, hence, the submerged peoples in extreme poverty, like in Guatemala, to philosophize in the situation of destitution. Even that situation of poverty is the engine that may generate analyses that remove ideologies, generate changes in conservative mental views and in certain resistance of heart, to fight for a socially oriented development. It is up to the oppressed peoples to resist the established dogma and "take charge" of reality.

We must admit there are many very interesting topics that can be dealt with in the field of philosophy, but our conditions of hunger and misery demand tools and criteria adequate to work for a more dignified world, better to inhabit, more equitable. This is the reason why before the scandalous inequality and the experience of the "common evil" it is necessary to know and practice the "liberating function of philosophy", and go from the traditional ethics to the ethics of compromise and solidarity, which will lead us to live the common good.

A hypothesis could be expressed that social actors who keep the system kidnapped with their particular interests act so because, among other things lacking, they have not received from philosophy contributions that stir them to collaborate with humanization; on the contrary they have confirmed their Euro-centered and conceptualist view of reality.

That is to say, intelligentsia in charge of educating the population, especially social leaders, have failed to plant the seeds of social justice, have failed to change the yeast; hence the urgency of a critical and liberating proposal of philosophy and the rest of the sciences to fight for a new social order.



# INEQUALITY AND WORLD POLITICS

FRANÇOIS HOUTART

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Inequalities in the world have increased. The rich became richer in 2014 and added \$ 92,000 billion USD to their combined fortune. The net worth of the 400 of the world's richest billionaires on December 29 was \$ 4.1 trillion, according to Bloomberg's index of billionaires, a daily ranking of the richest. And according to Oxfam, the super-rich will grow even more in the coming years...

"Information recently released by the World Ultra Wealth Report of the Swiss Bank UBS-AG - writes the economist Juan Paz y Miño, of the Catholic University of Quito - verifies the scandalous concentration of wealth in Latin America: in Brazil there are 4,015 multi-millionaires, with a \$ 777 billion; in Argentina, 1,100, with \$150 billions; in Colombia 635, with \$80 billion; in Chile 515, with \$ 65 billion; in Peru 470, with \$60 billion; in Venezuela 435, with \$ 55 billion; in Ecuador 265, with \$ 30 billion; in Bolivia 205, with \$25 billion; in Paraguay 175, with \$ 25 billion; Uruguay 120, with \$ 17 billion"(Juan J. Paz and Miño, *Piketty and Latin America*, in "El Telégrafo", Quito, 09.02.2015).

On the continent of Latin American there was progress in the eradication of poverty and, to a lesser extent, of inequalities. In the last decade Latin America (L.A.) has benefited from the increase in the price from petroleum products, from the mines and from some sectors of agricultural exports, and all the countries, both progressive and neoliberal, programs have been carried out to combat poverty.

Inequality is not only evident in income, but has many other aspects, such as access to education, health and other public services. Also it manifests itself in the concentration of economic, political, and military power, the fruit of the development of imperial policies and the establishment of blocks. These are not resolved only through a fight against poverty. If the rich are richer, at the same time that the poor rise out of poverty, the inequality may remain the same; that is the case in a country like Brazil.

At the base of the social inequities in the present world is the logic of capitalism. On the one hand, it

favors profit (exchange value) and the accumulation of capital as the engine of the economy; the measure of human development is the growth and concentration of capital and wealth. On the other hand, it ignores the externalities, that is to say the damage to the environment and human being, that are not paid for by capital and that strongly influence inequality.

An author like the French economist Thomas Piketty, has shown that contrary to what the classical theory says, the concentration of wealth does not foster economic development, and the reduction of inequalities, even without putting into question the logic of the capitalist system, that it is favorable to growth. This is why "modern" capitalism is not opposed to the steps taken by the state which fight poverty.

In Latin America, it is fairly obvious. Neoliberal countries have not done less that the progressives ones, because to decrease poverty means broadening the base of the market. They are also in favor of a certain level of formality of the workplace, social security, and a stable state, all of which are elements that create conditions favorable to the profit and accumulation...

This system of concentration of economic power has its institutions, both legal... as well as illegal. On the official side, are the large institutions such as the World Bank, the IMF and the World Trade Organization (WTO), they are responsible for regulating the system according to the principles of the market. In the illegal sphere, are tax havens, which allow the recycling of criminal money (drug trafficking, prostitution, arms market... ) and evasion of national taxation on the part of big fortunes and multinational enterprises.

There are several proposed solutions at the international level. In 2000, the UN decided to reduce extreme poverty by half by the year 2015. There was unanimity on this objective, but there is still the other half of the poor left without solution, because this corresponded to shared interests: the expansion of the market for a few and social and humanitarian worries for others.

*Translation by Michael Dougherty*



Individual countries initiated programs to combat poverty, such as family grants in Brazil, the humanitarian vouchers in Ecuador... that truthfully have had positive results for millions of people, but generally from a paternalist perspective, creating clients more than actors. Post-neoliberal states of L.A. strengthened public services and access to health and education. In China and Vietnam, market mechanisms, acting out of a situation of generalization of dignified austerity (access of all to basic goods), allowed access by millions of people to much higher consumption, but also introduced a very intense level of inequality.

In the countries at the center of the capitalist system, the crisis in the years 2008-2009, with their policy of austerity, amplified poverty and inequalities. The capital classes used these tools as new means of accumulation, and rollback the achievements of several decades of social struggles.

As you can see, there is a need for in-depth solutions that go well beyond welfare policies, that characterize the current situation, as much in capitalist as social democratic or "progressive" countries. Would it be sufficient, as Piketty says, to raise the tax rate of the richest? Not to exclude such a measure, but that does not touch the core of the problem. It is about creating the conditions that allow all to be social actors.

Inequality is a complex problem that impacts all aspects of the collective life of the people. The condition to get out of inequality, affects the four axis of all social life: the relationship with nature, for a harmonious and widespread balance; the predominance of use value over exchange value in the organization of the economy; the generalization of democratic processes to allow for participation and interculturality.

The institutionalization of a society without poverty and without social inequalities has three levels: local, national and international. At the local level, the aim is to promote a solidarity economy, a peasant agriculture, political participation, a culture of the common people, and the actors are very numerous. At the national dimension, the existence of autonomous social movements and the establishment by the State of institutions to support the economy

and the popular culture are real solutions along with the establishment of a taxation regime affecting the highest incomes. Each of these levels deals with social struggles against a system structured in the interests of classes which promote the inequalities.

Regional and international institutions also have a great importance in order to ensure the construction of a post-capitalist paradigm. At the international level, the institutions that can achieve this are at the regional and global levels. It is in L.A. where regional bodies are more developed. In Asia, ASEAN could exercise more extended functions, but those countries lack political will, and do not have duties beyond the economic and the political in their classic expressions. The same is true in the African Union.

In L.A. there are three institutions that can act on inequalities. The first is the ALBA (Alliance Bolivarian of the Peoples of our America) that brings together a dozen of countries. Based on the principles of complementarity and solidarity, opposed to the principle of capitalist competition, is the only experience "post-capitalist". There is work in the economic field for solidarity in the provision of oil (Petrocaribe), for support to rural development (Nicaragua), in the social field by the "operation miracle", who healed millions of people with eye problems, thanks to the Cuban medical technology and to Venezuelan economic aid, and finally in the cultural field, with TeleSur.

UNASUR (Union of the Nations of South America) can take on social and environmental problems, but it does not yet have specific programs in these areas. It could put in place, for example, a common action to save the Amazon rainforest.

Finally, the CELAC (Community of States of Latin America and the Caribbean) is a body capable of promoting continent-wide common actions.

The UN specialized agencies such as FAO, UNESCO, WHO, have programmes that in generally indirect manner, can be favorable in reducing inequality in the areas of agriculture, culture and health. Only a profound reform of the financial institutions could reverse the negative role that they play currently in support of the reproduction of the capitalist system, essentially the generator of inequalities.



# PATHS OF COMMUNION IN THE WORLD OF INEQUALITY

MARCELO BARROS

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The spiritual traditions propose a world of love and justice. They do this with poetic stories, inviting people to dream, or showing symbols of that life in communion. On the other hand, capitalism and its advertising also resort to fantasy and interpret consumer goods as symbols of well-being or of social status.

## At the root of spiritual traditions

In the ancient world and traditional cultures, property was mainly collective, despite the fact that each one could have the tools for his work and objects of personal use. In the indigenous cultures, when someone brings home a deer or a catch, all those in the village participate in the banquet. When I visited for the first time a xavante village, I remember having asked for one of the chiefs who I knew and was not living in the village. After some hesitancy, a young answered to me, as if revealing a secret: "He cannot live with us because he opted to have his own things". Private property had separated him from his brothers.

We are normally born and grow up in this system. It seems natural that, when children, we lived together in the house of our parents. As we grew and became adults, we have become apart, and each one lives his life. That social independence is determined by private property and by the capacity to possess. In most of the families, even in those that remain united, some siblings have properties, others are poorer. The dominant culture teaches that the honor of each person is linked to his capacity to possess goods. The value of the person is measured against what he possesses. Who does not possess, wishes to possess. Who possesses, wishes to possess even more, and who owns more says: it is never enough. For the great majority, competitiveness –and not solidarity– and the supremacy of the strongest prevail over any other value, in social relations, mainly, in business.

That culture of property is expressed and fed in the permanent and limitless consumption. Since childhood we are educated to see first our own needs and wishes, and not to worry about the others and the

common good.

This is the cultural and ideological virus that presently mostly threatens the indigenous and afro-descendant communities. In the past, their way of living was persecuted militarily; today the weapon to destroy them is consumption ideology and individual gain, which generate divisions and inequality in families, in communities and villages, as well as in the world where a small elite of human beings feel the right to possess the same as dozens of entire peoples of Africa and nations from the South of the planet.

## Alternatives emerge

Thank God, all over the place we see the appearance of critical proposals and practical alternatives to that system. In South America, the paradigm of Good Living of the Andean peoples –which is paralleled in various other indigenous cultures–, looks for a balance in living and co-existing, the search for communal property and communion with the Pachamama (Mother Earth) and all nature. The economy is not oriented there by accumulation, but by the production of what is sufficient for all. In Europe and other places, Eco-socialism is gaining strength, which considers the economy subdued to the social needs and the protection of the life-system and of the planet as a whole.

We also have, in many countries, the proposal of a decrease, which does not mean stopping the technical progress, or going back in time, but assuming the responsibility for an ethical responsible, eco-social and communal consumption.

The economy that dogmatizes the market as an absolute principle received theological and spiritual justifications. Theologians associated with the Empire went as far as using biblical texts to enhance the market economy and the ethics of concurrence such as the principles of freedom inspired by God... (Michael NOVAK, *The Spirit of Democratic Capitalism*, Madison Books, Lanhan, New York, 1991). Of course that way of thinking and that spirituality are not accepted by the majority of spiritual traditions. These know that a

Translation by Alice Mendez



way of organizing the world that creates inequalities and dependence of the people on their properties is an idolatry which alienates and kills.

The ancient oriental traditions (Hindi and Japanese) teach detachment, renunciation of property and voluntary poverty as a more spiritual life and a life of solidarity. For Islam, charity is a fundamental command of faith, because it reestablishes certain equality among people and proposes sharing as a way of life. The Judeo-Christian tradition, originating in the Bible, teaches that the economy must guarantee rights to the poor, a salary to workers and common safety (cf Dt 15 and 24). Biblical prophets insisted on the trust in God, foundation of the sharing with all and equality among all. In the desert, the people should receive the *maná* and share it without leaving any leftovers for the following day (Ex 16). In a time of scarcity and hunger, the prophet *Elías* taught the widow of *Sarepta* to give as much as the last drop of oil she had in her house so that food would never be lacking (1R 17,1-16). The basis for a true adoration of God is justice and sharing (see Is 58). It is only from here that God accepts our offers and adoration. (cf Psalm 50; Jer 7; Eclo 34, 18ss).

In the Gospels, Jesus concludes: Do not accumulate treasures on earth, where a thief can steal them and the moth eats it away... You cannot serve two lords. Either you serve God or Manmon, money turned into an idol (Mt. 6,19.24). Make friends with the riches of injustice so that, when this is lacking, you would have someone to hold you in eternity (Lc 16,9). Leaving his disciples a sign (sacrament) of the divine project in the world, Christian traditions state that Jesus left the supper of love and sharing, in which bread and wine are shared, as a memorial to Jesus's surrendering of his life for all of us.

It is urgent that our communities join the indigenous and Afro communities, and all those who resist this predatory system of human life and nature in a new civilizing trial, finally more just, spiritual and human. A new world is possible!

### **A spirituality that deters inequalities**

The relation that some African peoples like the Zulus call "*Ubuntu*" is a balance in the social and economic relations of peace, and is based on social equality in which all share what they all have. The peoples of the "*Yoruba*" tradition translated as *Axe* the energy

of love that runs across human relations and dealing with the goods of nature and of life. Bartolomeu Meliá says that for the Guaranies and many other indigenous peoples of the Amazon basin that is called "*economy of reciprocity*", one way of communion expressed in the cults of food, in celebrations and in the sharing of the game and the fruits of work.

Religious traditions in the West have had difficulties in understanding that vision of spirituality because, in their history, they have mixed spirituality with spiritualism. For the ancient churches, economy was a theological term. Fathers of the Greek church, such as Gregorio Nazianceno and Basilio of Cesarea (IV Century), used it to name the divine project of salvation for the world. Communion -and hence social equality-, should be the characteristic of Christian life, because the word community means communion. Ancient Christian documents expressed: "If we have the goods in heaven in common (the Eucharist), why could we not have in common the goods of the earth?" In the IV century, Juan Crisostomo, bishop of Constantinople, taught: "Mine and yours are just words. Not helping the poor is theft. All that we possess is not ours, it belongs to everybody." True idolatry is not only religious, it is also cultural and is expressed, presently, in this terrible system that prevents social equality.

In many sectors of society a more ethical and human way of managing the common house, which are the earth and life, is being looked for. Popular movements are developing forms of the "*economy of solidarity*". Spiritual groups are talking of an "*economy of communion*". The American indigenous peoples already mentioned, deepen their philosophy of the good living to reach a quality of life for all and to offer it to the present society. In all these new relations, cooperation takes the place of competition, and caring for the life of all is above gain and accumulation.

In various places in the world, groups and persons have developed what they call "*balance of justice*", a way of organizing the house and personal economy that allows by the end of each month to evaluate if how we spend is in agreement with what we believe and how we wish to live. This new ethics will help us discern the things we use and buy, so as not to encourage products made by children in a system almost of slavery or by industries and brands that exploit and destroy nature.



# TO DECREASE WITH EQUITY

ELÍAS RUIZ VIRTUS

San Pedro Sula, Honduras

"Unless things change, in 2016 the richest 1% of the world population will have more wealth than the rest 99%...", states an Oxfam report, *The WEALTH: to have everything and desire more*, published before the Davos Summit, where 2500 of the political and financial elites in the world gathered, between 21 and 24 January 2015.

85 persons amass the same wealth as half the population of our planet. In October 2014, in its annual report, titled *Even it up. Time to end extreme inequality*, the PNUD extended that data to its causes and its consequences. In the report, Latin America appeared as the most unequal Continent, what stops human development of majorities. The increase in wealth that the economic and political elites achieve is used to move institutions in favor of their interests and to lull the people with bad educational, religious and sanitary services, perversely fostered by them. Fruits of that inequality are unemployment, violence, assassinations and militarization of the countries.

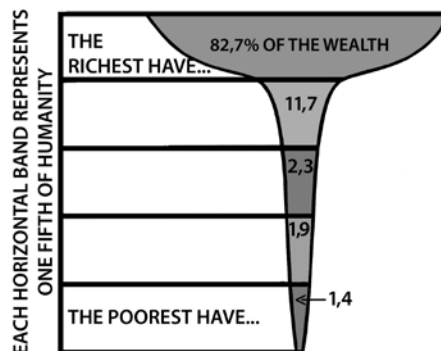
Where does a world like this head to? To social disaster, and to ecological disaster. World peace is in danger, and survival of the human species as well. Actually it is already heading to disaster: great majorities living under inhuman conditions, without access to health, education... majorities to whom reality is distorted so that they cannot see it.

But this wrong path is not a sentence imposed on us by some evil power. We can abandon this situation, and we must do it now.

The path to DEVELOPMENT has placed in the hands of humanity so many goods, that they are a difficult burden to support. It is too heavy. The earth produces much more food than what we need. Of that food produced by the earth half is consumed, the other half goes to the garbage. And is converted into ethanol to feed vehicles: maize, soy, wheat, African palm... which would feed another population like the one we have today. If we go from food to clothing and shoes, we find full wardrobes, for nothing. With half of all this, humanity would live better, would walk loosely. With light luggage we would walk more and better.

And we could continue with the educative centers, recreation spaces, means of transport...

The word that encompasses the need to live better having less is decrease, together with: decrease WITH EQUITY. I will illustrate this with a classical chart: the champagne cup that needs to be broken, and the water glass that must be constructed.



The translation of the data in these charts to at least theoretical decisions is spontaneous. The wealthy countries, which amass more than their due, by an elementary ethic should decrease. The USA and Europe are the 11% of the population and have in their hands for their exclusive use 64% of the goods. The 20% at the top of the cup keeps 82.7% of the goods: that is not fair. Either they are reasonable and voluntarily descend –an improbable hypothesis-, or citizenship conscience will have to morally lower them.

And the horizon we envision with this descent is like a dream: we would have two glasses of water: one so the 7 thousand million people who share this planet can drink their fill, and the second glass of water we can reserve it for our children, who, maybe, will be more numerous than we are. Those at the top are lowered, but the rest of us all go up until we reach the last three quintiles, that 60% who live in misery, with just the 4% of the goods, when a 60% is what they should have; we would all have a more dignified life.

This function of sharing the goods the world or



the different countries have, is called distributive justice and is the first task that the classical moral assigned the Prince, the one who presides the society: distribute, and cut the nails to the brother who because he is stronger or more able tries to keep everything for himself. What the mother does at the family table, the authority should do as his main duty. Neoliberalism has transformed authority into a doll at the service of the economic elites. It is like the mother who shuts up or sides the strong and abusive brother.

I write from Honduras, one of the countries in which in 7 out of 10 persons inequality increases quickly, and where the 3 privileged of society are excluding the rest and themselves, with an exclusion equal or worse than the one they apply those below them. Gandhi said: "To be rich and the fact that this is valued in an unjust society, is a shame". I live among the excluded, and have not been able to understand this, and still continue not understanding it.

These ethical principles should be remembered without fear of being misunderstood. Thomas Aquinas wrote: in casu necessitatis omnia sunt comunia, in case of need all things are common. True, it may be misinterpreted by those below, but how is it interpreted by those above? The following phrase is eloquent: "Do not steal bread from HUNGER". Nor is it incorrect the following: "Who steals from the thief, 100 years of forgiveness".

Those above say the problem is that we are too many on the planet and those below abound, who are dirty and unsightly. What nonsense! The problem is them, with their consumerist and spendthrift style, who need to spend to produce unnecessary objects for their lavishness. All those expenses and products of uselessness bring with them a big environmental cost.

The primary means to reach this dream is social mobilization. Not remaining silent, going out into the streets.

Greed is the main culprit of this dirty structure of the Champagne Cup. But it can be accompanied by this statement by Carl Marx: The unjust structures do not fall due to the unawareness of those below and to the support of ideological forces: schools and churches, and of the repressive forces: army and police. The worse situation we are in, the worse schools and social services we have, more churches and more alienating, and more military presence.

We must be aware that criminality, unemployment and many other wrongs we suffer are 'tamales' not cooked in our kitchens; their roots are above.

Two verbs we must use in this task of "Decreasing with Equity" are distribute and amass. When we amass we build the Cup, and when we distribute we build the Glass. This decrease with equity would benefit us all. The moment to build it has come. As individuals or as groups consumption is in our hands: what we eat and what we drink. The fish dies by its mouth. Let us protect our freedom, let us not take the bite. What do we buy, where? And to whom? With our consumption we guide the world. Let us protect ourselves from marketing. It is not the same to buy from a neighbor than to buy in a mall. It is best to consume what our environment produces; maybe it is not so well presented but it is ours, and the money stays with us, and we have self-employment with no need to "look for a job", which is to look for who wants to enslave us.

And at a collective level, let us reclaim the awareness that we all are worth the same. Let us demand quality public services. Even knowing that what is public works less, produces less and is slower, but it belongs to all and it is for all. What is private works better, is more effective, produces more, but only a few get the benefits of it.

Education must be public so it does not divide the population between those who pay and those who do not pay. Health must be public. Transport must be public. These guidelines return power to the people.

It is time to demand that:

1. Governments govern, instead of being puppets.
2. Companies remember they are not only money and machinery of production; they must take into account the workers. Their economic operations are not so complicated that need specialists from NASA... it costs them nothing to be transparent and allow participation.
3. Pay equity between directors and workers, government and the people, educated (because we all paid for their studies) and those who went to primary school.

4. Gender equity.

Our history needs another end and it is time to give it.



# ABOUT MARX, PIKETTY AND THE LILIES OF THE FIELD

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*Translation by Pedro Curran*

The French economist, Thomas Piketty, published, in 2013, his suprising book *Capital in the XXI Century*. It became, as The Guardian said, “the rock star of economy”, with effusive admirers, as much among those who are partial to a liberal economy as those among a socialist economy. No militant Christian should neglect to read the book. (Belknap Press, 2014). The big news of the book (605 pages!) consists in an “extraordinary historical study” (cf. Antonio Delfim Netto), describing –with very consistent graphics and charts– the evolution of capitalism in the last three hundred years. Diverse teams, highly specialized, studied, during fifteen years, the most reliable sources in the world to confirm the theses of Piketty.

## 1. About the bulging barns

What is the basic thesis that the author defends? Piketty affirms that Karl Marx, when he prophesized that capitalism –because of the insane mechanism of the infinite accumulation of capital– would prepare their own gravediggers –was right and at the same time not right. Marx was in error because history itself (until now) has proved that capitalism has not entered into collapse, much to the contrary. With uncontestable graphics, Piketty demonstrates that, in the time of Marx (XIX Century), the income from capital –compared to the national income– was, de facto, very high, suffering, however, a sharp decline in the period between the wars of the first half of the twentieth century. In the national income, what is not income from capital is income from labor. Piketty claims that education and generalized professionalization increased production in a permanent way, thus allowing for better salaries for a greater section of the population, thus avoiding a collapse of Capitalism. The worker revolution, foreseen by Marx, with very rare exceptions, did not happen. De facto, in the post-war decades, the vigor of industrial capitalism in Europe, together with a strong fiscal policy of distribution of income, previously almost non-existent, permitted Europe to create a Social State that gave to many the impression of a natural surpassing of capitalism. The very detailed graphics of Piketty show, however, that what was created in truth was a “middle class of patrimony”. In 1910, the richest 10% detained almost all

the national wealth (up to 90%). There was no middle class, in as much as the 40% in the middle were almost as poor as the 50% of the poorest. In 2010, the 10% of the richest in Europe possessed 60% of the total wealth (the 1% of the most wealthy possessed 25%!), the middle group almost 35% and the 50% of the poorest just a little more than 5%. In the USA the disparity is even greater, the 50% of the poorest remain with a miserable 2%. Marx saw only the stagnant salaries and the capital growing strongly. He did not have the privilege of this greater historic outlook.

But, where did Marx get it right? Marx was right when he perceived that the logic of capitalism, de facto, tends to an infinite accumulation when left on its own. Only external forces (wars, etc) can put the brakes on it or impose control, especially fiscal policies. Once again with the aid of graphics, Piketty shows that, after the economic stagnant inflation (stagnation + inflation) of the 1970’s, and the introduction of neoliberal politics starting in the decade of the 80’s –strongly diminishing fiscal control and granting ample liberty to financial capital, now on a global scale– the income of financial capital, always in proportion to the national income, once again had a strong growth, with a real tendency to surpass historical highs in a short time. If in the time of Marx the income from capital (in France for example) represented 43% of the national income, in the decade of the 1940s it diminished to 15%, increasing again to nearly 30% in 2010. Piketty expresses the market value of the capital stock (in the hands of private capitalists) in three, four, six, eight or up to ten years of national income

Taking the wealthy countries for example (the USA, Germany, United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, France, Italy and Australia), he shows that the private capital of these countries was worth, on an average, between two and three and one half years of national income in 1970 and between four and seven years of national income in 2010. In historical perspective, a stunning gain in a very short time.

A less attentive observer could think: if the capitalists (in general) take 30% of the national income, there is still 70% left over for the labor market. Not



bad! Truthfully, nothing could be further from the truth. It is always a small group that gains the most in opposition to the immense majority who only see the ship passing by. Piketty has the great merit of showing, with convincing data, the great and ever growing disparity between the owners of capital and salaried workers. In general one can distinguish between the 50% of lower earnings, 40% of middle class earnings and 10% of wealthy earnings. But he insists in dividing also the 10% of wealthiest in 9% with lesser than the 1% of the super wealthy ( the one hundredth wealthiest or even the one thousandth wealthiest). One of the characteristics of modern financial capitalism (international) is exactly the “madness” of the disparity between the earning of the most wealthy, of capital and labor. In 1987, there were five billionaires per hundred million adults; in 2013 there were thirty. They are sitting on piles and piles of money, invested frequently in financial speculation and no relation whatsoever with significant production. In the USA, a large group made a public appeal to President Obama to increase their income tax, an evident sign of the abnormal situation. In the working world, the hundredth or thousandth at the top, of general executives of the major corporations or “experts” of major investment funds, easily earn more than a hundred times more than the average salary of the country. This, without any relation to a supposed (or alleged) increase in useful production. The system “has gone crazy”, says Piketty. The only logic is: when the barns are full it is necessary to make them bigger.

## 2. About the Lilies of the field

Jesus knew this world well. Capitalism is as old as humanity. The biological evolution, Richard Dawkins, in *The Egoist Gene* (1976), attributed to all living beings egoist genes and altruist genes. “Life” needs both to flourish, but the egoist genes easily upset the altruist gene. The Jewish-Christian Tradition begins with a warning from Moses: It is necessary to choose between a blessing and a curse (Dt 11,26-28). Jesus complements this: on this earth there are goats and sheep. Only to the sheep –the “blessed of the Father– is it offered to inherit the Kingdom (Mt 25,31-46). The lilies of the field are there, small and insignificant, but, if God clothes so well what is insignificant, why worry so much? Only “the pagans of this world” are mad enough to destroy the barns to build bigger ones.

Piketty is a generous economist, with a lot of

altruist genes. He proposes a strong progressive tax on capital and wealth, having in mind the strengthening of a Social State and a “Democratic Meritocracy” where social inequality is tolerated only when considered “just” (that is, when useful to the collectivity and to the system). It does not, however, interfere in the logic of the system: Capitalism is good because it allows us to enlarge the barns, thus having more wheat to distribute.

Many members of the Church can find in Piketty a proposal for social justice more in accord with the traditional Catholic Social Doctrine. The author, however, is a great distance from many of the Latin American concerns: how to overcome the “dependence” of the peripheral economies on the central commands?; how to overcome the overbearing political control of the 1% over the impotent popular mass of people ( the 99% of the popular movement *Occupy*, or the Spanish *Indignados*...or Brazilian)? Is “another world” possible? If it is necessary to bet on democracy, in which of them should we invest? In a meritocracy, where do the excluded fit in? And how do we do this with full employment and respect for ecology? Marx was more incisive, putting power at the center of the question. Piketty, truthfully, just proposes a more decent Capitalism. However, handing over the control of society to Capital is always to place the fox in charge of the chicken coop.

Our opinion is that Piketty opens important perspectives that can reverse the irrationality of the actual neoliberal system, but he does not understand the narrative-symbolic language of the Gospel. He doesn’t understand why the lilies of the field are so well clothed. The western world, be it at the center or on the periphery, left religions and spirituality, by the wayside. Who creates the world, every day, is God, and God did this through his Spirit, present in human religiosity (of all the religions). Jesus intuited this very well: the frail lilies of the field will continue to flourish only when the world opens space for the Reign of God. *Capital in the twenty first century* brings me back to the decade of 1970, when I made my pre-specialization in economy, writing a thesis about “ the “GNP” and the “HNP” : the gross national product is the means; the happiness national product is the end. An end that should be respected also in the process so that the deepest human utopias (always religious), one day, might become reality.



# HISPANICS AND INEQUALITY, HISTORY OF SLAVERY AND SERVITUDE

**YOLANDA CHÁVEZ**

*Los Ángeles, CA, USA*

«We did not cross the border; the border crossed us”. An expression common among Hispanics and chicanos in California, referring to the Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo 1848. In this Treaty United States took ownership of 500,000 square miles of Mexican territory, moving the imaginary border line to the South, beyond half of the country. The settlers of Alta California (the *californios*) now were foreigners.

## **It was only the beginning of an incisive inequality**

They began using lynchings for terrorizing Mexicans in the Southwest and force them towards the South. The *californio* ranches and successful business owners were stripped of their economic, social and political power. Santa Barbara, Center of economic power, was occupied by the U.S. Army. Claims for land, in the now American civilian courts, by the *californios* were long, expensive and in English; white lawyers ended up being owners of these assets in payment for their services. Many ranchers chose to sell their land at low prices. Without economic power, they were relegated from the political power; in 1874 white people changed the voting system so that the *californios* could win only one seat on the City Council. There was not a mayor of Mexican origin again until 2005.

Led to poverty and hunger, the *californios* now had to be used in the cultivation of land and the construction of railway tracks. Women, for the first time, had to leave their homes to work, and the children did not regularly attend school, because you were forbidden to speak Spanish. The anti-mexican sentiment made deep divisions; appointed exclusively Anglo-Saxon areas that Mexicans could access only as employees: nannies, cooks, gardeners, bricklayers...

In the great depression, the crisis of 29, many of them moved to Mexico in a hasty way and on a large scale. In the popular and official media, this massive migration became known as “repatriation”; unemploy-

ment, hunger, the xeno-phobia, and deportations that the U.S. Government triggered, totaled about 400,000 returnees, the largest in the history of both countries movement. The impact of a strange and unknown environment primarily for the children of Mexicans born in the United States, who, according to a specialist, came to be 40% of the total of the individuals who entered Mexican territory between 1929 and 1934, and the constraints faced in Mexico (insecurity, violence, lack of work, limited resources, and language) led several of them to return to the United States.

## **The constant waves of immigration began**

To counter them, raids were carried out in squares and public parks. Immigration agents, increased their activities in the southeast of California and in the major urban centers of the country. Efforts have been made in several States, including Texas, Illinois, Michigan and Arizona, efforts were made and there was a lot of pressure to get Mexicans out. Pressure from local and federal authorities was continuing to segregate, marginalize and expel them.

## **Mexicans in return: *braceros*, cheap labor**

The program was initially promoted by the demand for labor during the Second World War. The US proposed a program for temporary Mexican workers under contract. At the expense of Mexican workers the *Bracero* program strengthened the agricultural prosperity until 1964. The US quickly acquired a surplus based on the extremely economic work of these laborers. On the other hand, immigration to the U.S. was strictly under the employment contract, however, the possibility of employment, among other numerous factors, contributed to the displacement mass of immigrants without documents to the US. The few who benefited from the program were unfairly, eight Mexican officials, and the Anglo-Saxon owners of plantations (of agriculture). While the program was presented explic-



itly as 'a great opportunity' for Mexicans, but once they obtained employment in the United States, the program instead was characterized by labor exploitation, violation of human rights, low wages, inadequate housing and discriminatory practices.

### **Not to Hispanics: the construction of the wall**

The construction of the border wall began in 1994, under the non-legal immigration fighting program known as operation gatekeeper. Currently it consists of several kilometers of extension in the Tijuana-San Diego (California) border. The wall includes three barriers of containment, high intensity illumination, motion detectors, electronic sensors and night vision equipment connected to U.S. border police, as well as permanent surveillance with trucks off-road, helicopter gunships, drones, and the army. Other sections of the wall are in the States of Arizona, Sonora, New Mexico, Baja California, Texas and Chihuahua. . Since its construction, Latin American immigrants without documents have tried to cross by more dangerous areas such as the Arizona desert, which has resulted in the symbolic amount of 10,000 deaths since the beginning of its operation.

### **Hispanic's hunt**

Proposition 187 in California, a legislative proposal for the 1994 California elections, intended to deny undocumented immigrants social services, health care and public education. Many people and organizations were involved in promoting it. It was presented as the Save Our State initiative. It was approved by a vote of 59%. Its constitutionality was immediately disputed in many cases, but the anti-immigrant sentiment worsened. Many small Hispanic merchants shut down their businesses, parents stopped taking their children to school for fear of being arrested in any raid. They decided to return to their countries.

The 2006 Escondido became the first city in California and the seventh in the U.S. to prohibit owners of residences to rent their properties to undocumented immigrants.

In 2012 the U.S. Supreme Court gave its authorization and approval for a law against migrant workers to be applied. Since any agent may detain any person by mere suspicion in the eyes of the agent (without having any evidence or unless the person in question

has committed a crime), all these arrests and abusive detentions are to check if the person is an immigrant worker without documents and refer you to the ICE (successor of the immigration and naturalization (INS)) service organization.

2015 began with what looked like good news, law AB 60. For 35 dollars, 1.4 million people without papers in California, could obtain a license on January 1. In the third week of December 2014 the Department of motor vehicles had filled their appointments until the middle of March 2015. People who processed their driver's license in the first quarter of this year, must wait up to 7 years to get their hands on the document

### **Slavery and servitude**

The Pew Research Center recently estimated that more than 10 million undocumented immigrants live in the United States. Independent sources indicate that the Census leaves out many Hispanics who live and work in the shadows in each State; they officially do not exist. The abuses of those who employ them are the order of the day. There is no other way to name all this: except slavery.

Reflecting on the relationship between slavery and capitalism, the liberal Economist Lester Thurow argues that democracy and capitalism are based on very different beliefs about the proper distribution of power. The first is based on the equitable distribution of political power, "one person, one vote", while capitalism believes it is the duty of the economically fit to drive the unfit out of business and eliminate them. The "survival of the fittest" and inequalities in purchasing power are the basis of capitalist efficiency. The first thing is the personal gain, and therefore companies become efficient to enrich themselves. To put it in its starkest form, capitalism is perfectly compatible with slavery, democracy does not.

### **Servility: can you uproot it?**

The most victimized are the hope, because they are the resistance... They have nothing to lose. They have already lost everything. They only need to stand up and lift up their heads. Seek justice, equality, and respect for their dignity.

Overcoming inequality is a great project to do, we just have to start it.



# POPE FRANCIS' PROPOSALS ABOUT INEQUALITY

## SPEECH OF FRANCIS TO THE WORLD MEETING OF POPULAR MOVEMENTS

Summary by the Latin American Agenda

This meeting of Popular Movements is a great sign: you have come to place before God, the Church, the peoples, a reality many times silenced. The poor not only suffer injustice but *they also fight against it!* They are not satisfied with illusory promises, excuses or alibis. Neither do they remain waiting, arms crossed, for the help of ONGs, assistance plans or solutions that never arrive, nor if they do arrive, do they do so in such a way that they either anesthetize or domesticate. This is a bit dangerous. You feel that *the poor now do not want to wait and wish to be protagonists, they organize themselves, study, work, claim and, above all, practice that special solidarity which exists among the suffering, among the poor*, and that our civilization seems to have forgotten, or at least is really willing to forget.

Our meeting does not respond to an ideology. You do not work with ideas, you work with realities, and you have your feet in the mud and the hands in the flesh. *Your smell is of neighborhood, of people, of struggle! We wish your voice to be heard* which, in general, is seldom heard. Maybe because it disturbs, maybe because your cry unrests, maybe because there is fear of the change you propose; but without your presence, not really going to the outskirts, the good proposals we frequently hear in international conferences remain in the realm of ideas.

The scandal of poverty cannot be addressed by promoting strategies of contention that only appease and turn the poor into domesticated and harmless beings. How sad it is to see when behind such supposedly altruistic work, the other is reduced to passivity and the real personal business and ambitions are denied or worse hidden. Jesus would tell them: hypocrites! On the contrary, *how nice it is to see the people on the move* and above all to see their poorest members and their young. Then we can feel the wind of the promise that fuels the hope for a better world. It is hoped this wind will turn into gale... That is my wish.

Our meeting responds to a very concrete yearning, something that any father, any mother wish for their

children; a yearning that should be at hand for all, but today we sadly see it ever farther from the majority: *land, roof and work*. It is strange how *when I talk about this, for some people the Pope is communist...* That the love for the poor is center stage in the Gospels is not understood. *Land, roof and work, that for which you struggle, are sacred rights.*

To reclaim this is nothing rare: it is the Social Doctrine of the Church.

First, **Land**. I am worried about the displacement of so many peasant brothers who suffer uprooting, and not due to wars or natural disasters. Land grabbing, deforestation, water appropriation, inadequate toxics for agriculture... are some of the evils that wrench man from his homeland.

The other dimension of this process is hunger. When financial speculation conditions the price of food dealing with them as with any other merchandise, millions of people suffer and die of hunger. On the other hand, tones of food are thrown away. This is a great scandal. Hunger is criminal, feeding is an inalienable right. Some of you claim a land reform to solve some of these problems; let me tell you that in certain countries, and here I quote the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, "the land reform is also a political necessity, a *moral obligation*" (CDSI, 300).

Please, continue with your fight for the dignity of the rural family, for water, for life and so that everyone can benefit from the fruits of the earth.

Second, **Roof**. I said and repeat it: *a house for each family*. Today there are so many families without housing, be it because they never had one or because they have lost it for different reasons. Family and housing go hand in hand.

Third, **Work**. There is no worse material poverty -and I must emphasize it- than not being able to earn one's bread and being deprived of the dignity of work. Juvenile unemployment, informality and the

Translation by Alice Mendez



lack of employment rights are not inevitable: they are the result of a previous social option, of an economic system that places gains above man, if the gain is economic, above humanity or above man, they are the result of a disposal culture («*cultura del descarte*») «which considers the human being as a common good, that can be used and then disposed of. Today, to the situation of exploitation and oppression a new dimension is added, a hard situation of social injustice; those who cannot be integrated are excluded and considered waste, “excess”.

As from now, every worker, in or out of the formal paid working system, has the right to a dignified pay, to social security and to a pension. *Here there are cartoneros, recyclers, peddlers, stitchers, craftsmen, fishermen, peasants, builders, miners, workers of recuperated companies, all types of cooperative members and workers in popular trades* that are excluded from employment rights, who are deprived of the right to unionize, who have inadequate and unstable income. *Today I want to join my voice to yours and go with you in your struggle.*

In this meeting you have also talked about **Peace and Ecology**: there cannot be land, there cannot be roof, and there cannot be work if we do not have peace and if we destroy the planet. These are such important topics that the peoples and their organizations cannot avoid discussing them. These topics cannot remain solely in the hands of politicians. All the peoples of the earth, all the men and women of good will, have to speak up in defense of these two precious gifts: peace and nature.

An economic system centered on the god money needs to pillage nature, to maintain the frantic rhythm of consumption inherent to it. Climate change, loss of bio-diversity, deforestation, are already showing their devastating effects in the great cataclysms we see today, and those who suffer most are you, the poor, those living near the coasts in shanty dwellings or who are so economically vulnerable that faced with a natural disaster you lose everything.

We talk about land, work, roof... we talk of working for peace and caring for nature... But, why do we get used to seeing how decent work is destroyed, so

many families are evicted, peasants expelled, there are wars and nature is abused? Because in this system the human being has been taken from center stage and has been replaced by something else. Because idolatrous cult is rendered to money. Because indifference has gone global: why would I care for what happens to the other members of society while I defend what is mine? Because the world has forgotten God, who is Father; it has gone orphan because it has left God aside.

Some of you expressed: This system can no longer be borne. *We must change it; we must bring back to center stage the dignity of the human being and on that pillar build the alternative social structure that we need.* We must do this with courage, but also with intelligence. With tenacity, but without fanaticism. With passion, but without violence. And among all, facing conflicts without being trapped in them, trying to solve tensions to reach a superior level of unity, peace and justice.

That is why I consider important this proposal that some of you have shared with me, that these movements, these solidarity experiences that grow from below, from underground the planet, *combine, become more coordinated, start meeting, as you have done these days. Yes, we must try to walk together.*

*Popular movements express the urgent need to revitalize our democracies, so many times kidnapped.* A future for society is impossible without the leading role of the great majorities and that presence exceeds the logical procedures of formal democracy. The objective of a world of peace and lasting justice demands from us to overcome paternalistic assistance, requires that we create *new ways of participation that include the popular movements* and encourage the structures of local, national and international governments with this current of moral energy that arises from *the incorporation of the excluded in the construction of the common destiny.* And all this with a constructive attitude, without resentment, with love.

I am with you from my heart in this path. Let us say together from the heart: **No family without a roof, no peasant without land, no worker without rights, and no person without the dignity of work.**

Dear sisters and brothers: go ahead with your struggle; it is good for all of us. It is like a blessing of humanity.



# THE THREADS THAT RUIN US

ANALYSIS WORKED ON BY STUDENTS, ABOUT THE SOCIAL CONDITIONS OF ECONOMIC INEQUALITY

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The professor of social sciences came the first day of class with few papers in his folder. He came to the Board and wrote: PROGRESS, CAPITAL, EQUALITY.

He turned and asked the students: *How do you see it? This is what we have to work on these three months. Well- said one of the most advanced students - I see it as crude. If there is progress and capital needed to do this, I don't see much equality. If there is equality, I don't see how you can distribute capital and if there is capital, for whom is the progress?*

Rather than skip the discussion, the educator made a short introduction raising the starting point: *You live in a country where it is assumed that all its inhabitants try to progress in the economy, personally and collectively. And not only in the economy. They live in a world where, as they seem to provide statistics, the percentage of wealth accumulation by the richest of humanity's 1% in 2016 will reach 50% of global wealth... The question to work is: what are the social factors in the population condition and facilitate the accumulation of wealth for a few? We would have to start making the list of these factors.*

The teacher had to clarify the question a bit. Then organized the students into groups and began to work. Through their discussions, by referring to the contents of the book of social sciences, and talking about their experiences, they reviewed the attitudes of resignation, indignation... in society that they know, and the techniques of power that pulls the strings of the citizens, often become puppets of the political and economic powers that monopolize the property.

Half an hour later, 6 words appeared on the flip-chart which were products of the lively discussions. Personal and social attitudes, breeding ground of that economic inequality: RESIGNATION + RELIGION + FEAR+ EDUCATION + CONSUMERISM + COMPETITION. The professor allowed himself to add one more factor with ironic gesture: Why should I care?

That was these students job for the three next months. Here we reflect some characteristics of their

research team. It was about analyzing the mental attitudes that cause and/or allow the economic inequalities in society, the huge difference between a few very rich, and the masses of poor in the world. This is the overview of the work:

**RESIGNATION:** (it refers to the attitude of peoples or societies which, due to lack of culture and consciousness, are unable to react to an economy caused by unfair differences).

Students began putting in common situations in the country that keep people in poverty, and the lack of public reaction to that situation. They were doing interviews with relatives and acquaintances in poverty and composed a small dictionary of phrases that they heard in their environments: "we were born poor, we will die poor"... «This is life...» «Whoever can, can...» "Each person has their destiny."

Then they worked on the analysis of the causes of these attitudes. Some visited slums where there were people in situations of underdevelopment. They asked themselves: How do economic disparities face people in our neighborhoods? What attitudes manifest: disappointed, fighters, indifference, optimists, violence...?

They deduced that the attitude of resignation is a consequence of years in the historical process of inequality. Freire called it «naïve consciousness»: we are poor by fate, and facing that cannot do anything.

**RELIGION:** (it refers to a disembodied religious vision that dominates in some societies and paralyzes them from all demanding attitude). The work on religion as an element of impoverishment created a sharp debate among young people. 3 trends appeared: those who remained as dogma the Marxist expression: "the religion opium of the people", those who advocate a serious religion encourages the work to progress, and those who distinguished between religion and faith, claiming that it had a liberating power, while religion often inhibits what happens outside of the temple,



as a product of a fatalism inspired by religious motivations: “we are poor because God so wills it”. What Freire calls «mythic consciousness».

**FEAR:** (refers as much to Governments being imposed on workers by a police surveillance, as to the environments of robberies and extortion that mostly fall on the poor). This section highlighted a student son of political refugees and two young students that come from rural areas, whose families had lost their lands, under pressure from agents (private guards) of mining companies.

The groups were analyzing how the armed forces in the neoliberal countries depended on the economic powers that hold them, and who they serve. Children of working-class leaders, students of the Institute, supported that analysis explaining how they maintain the differences poverty – wealth.

**EDUCATION:** (referring to school education and the media in the hands of economic powers). At this point in the analysis there was a division of the education concept: formal education (the school) and the informal (the media). In the first half, young students, to make their criticisms, had the ‘disadvantage’ that the school where they were in manifested in general a line of dialogue analysis; the same study that was being demonstrated. The work was more active in dealing with the media: collection of media, recordings of radio materials, selection of films. All students were analyzing the factors that played for the enrichment of the privileged, because they were created in listener’s conformist mentality.

**CONSUMERISM:** (refers both to a surface mentality oriented unnecessary expenses as to advertising and environmental forces that cultivate the desires). Related to the above, young people were devoted to analyzing objects, travel, construction, luxury expenses... that they found were dominating the social environment. The wasteful spending that advertising drives us towards. They could make a list of everything they had in their homes, that they could live without and not have problems. Naturally, the division between useful and useless is not easy, but work helped to refine the spirit of analysis of lower middle class students.

**COMPETITION:** (it refers to the creation of social attitudes that cultivate efforts to succeed above collective and individuals seen as opponents). The issue is related to the educational or un-educational elements that form people and help them deal with life, to stand out and Excel, feeding the individualism and cornering solidarity, the country’s collective progress: enrichment with the pursuit of power, was reinforced in this topic. The human being is not conditioned only by the desire of possession of property, but by power over others. The young students analyzed the motives that inspire those who cling to power as a way to enrichment.

**INDIFFERENCE** (Why should I care?): (this refers to the tendency of people apparently informed but who cultivate a passive and superficial attitude to economic and social inequalities).

The proposal of Professor put into question the attitudes of people, the diversion of personal attention to secondary elements, the effectiveness of the “spectacular-sport” to corner politics and economics, as well as cultural and aesthetic values for those who, against the society only in that, in mere spectators. Which when it is not football or sensationalism look the other way.

All these works lasted three months. They were accompanied by interviews, dialogues and discussions, analysis of movies and books, and the drafting of texts along with a video editing: “DO NOT LET THEM PULL YOUR STRINGS” that strengthened analysis and awareness of the students. Hope emerged in them that in the society that they want to build, brutal differences between wealth and poverty cease to exist; that we go peering into another world of equality. Today is utopian, but possible. If we start taking steps to do so.

Although the circumstances of its preparation were different, the aforementioned video is available on CAUCE: [equipocauceguatemala.blogspot.com/p/nosotros.html](http://equipocauceguatemala.blogspot.com/p/nosotros.html). Accompanied by this article, may be useful in schools and cultural centers, CEBs and/or reflection groups. The video “DO NOT LET THEM PULL YOUR STRINGS” is in: [youtu.be/LYSBFzc5Bq0as](http://youtu.be/LYSBFzc5Bq0as) In DVD it can be purchased at CAUCE: [equipocauce@gmail.com](mailto:equipocauce@gmail.com), tel: 502-22306363



# LA CANCIÓN DEL NEGRO ALÍ

2015 WINNER OF  
«LATIN AMERICAN SHORT STORY»  
CONTEST

RICHARD JOEL RICO LÓPEZ

Acarigua, Venezuela

«Siempre que triunfa la vida, pierde espacio la amargura» Alí Primera.

La tarde del viernes caía en medio de aquel abril caluroso, sofocante por momentos. Apenas se movían algunas de las hojas de los inmensos cedros y samanes que guardaban como gigantes centinelas las inmediaciones de la plazoleta de la pequeña ciudad. Se iba una semana más, y con ella una nueva jornada de trajines, rutina, cansancio, esperanza y desilusiones, entremezcladas en el pensamiento meditabundo que acompañaba el caminar del joven Ernesto. El dulce olor que emanaba de los árboles se entremezclaba con el amargo sinsabor que generaban inquietudes en el muchacho: ¿cómo hago para que el dinero alcance?, ¿cómo sustento a los míos?, ¿por qué me siento vacío en el trabajo que hago?, ¿por qué unos pocos tienen tanto y el gran resto tenemos tan poco? Todas estas interrogantes se repetían ensordecedoramente en su mente, y aunque trataba de pensar en otras cosas, estos pensamientos, cual ola que viene y va, le embestían intempestivamente, sin permitirle percibir cuántos metros avanzaba y quién o qué estaba en la siguiente banca de la plaza o justo a su lado.

De repente, con el mismo ímpetu con que le abor- daban sus pensamientos, sintió que le halaron por la manga de la camisa, y sin darle tiempo de pronunciar palabra alguna, alcanzó a oír en tono claro y fuerte: –¡Venga Negro! ¿Le limpiamos esos zapatos? El joven, aletargado por la interrupción en su pensamiento, apenas si lo miró y con el ceño fruncido por la incomodidad de aquel acto insolente, hizo con su cabeza sin mediar palabra un signo de negación antes de reanudar su marcha.

Empezaba nuevamente a sumergirse en sus pensamientos, cuando escuchó justo detrás de sí a alguien que cantaba con efusiva y clara voz: –Échala, tu palabra contra quien sea de una vez, así sepas que rompe el cielo échala, tu palabra por dentro quema y te da sed, ES MEJOR PERDER EL HABLA, QUE TEMER HABLAR, Échala... Larala... larala...

Ernesto volteó lentamente intentando no mostrar interés en lo que oía y al hacerlo, allí estaba, el mismo viejo que le halaba la camisa momentos antes, sonriente, efusivo, tarareando y bailando aquella canción que parecía estar dedicada a él que nada decía y

se encerraba en un mundo de ideas ambiguas y difusas. Por vez primera se detuvo a detallarlo. Era un personaje de mediana estatura, ojos grandes y barba espesa. Su ropaje dejaba mucho que desear por lo maltratado y viejo. Aparentaba tener unos 50 años, aunque en la miseria, los años parecen acelerar su marcha. Sobre su espalda una mochila llena de objetos de diferente utilidad. Las manos, que por instantes parecían maltratar lo poco que quedaba de un viejo cuatro (instrumento musical de cuerdas venezolano), se veían ennegrecidas y encallecidas por una vida de mucho trabajo y seguramente mucho dolor. El joven se acercó un poco más y pudo percibir un sutil olor a alcohol y tabaco, compañeros inseparables del hombre de la calle.

Insperadamente el viejo dejó de cantar, miró al joven y le dijo: –¿Ahora sí se decidió? Écheme una manito y déjeme limpiarle esos zapatos; mire los míos, están viejos, eso sí, ¡pero nunca sucios! ¿No sabe usted que los zapatos son el reflejo del alma del que los carga puestos?, comentó.

El joven apenas sonrió y sin mucho convencimiento sólo atinó a decir: –Empiece entonces, pero rapidito porque ya no tarda en caer la noche. En su interior había una motivación inconsciente que aún no entendía y que le había hecho prestar atención a tan curioso personaje que veía por primera vez en aquellos lares.

Silbando sin parar, el viejo limpiabotas comenzó lentamente a sacar de su mochila el betún y el cepillo, levantó cuidadosamente el pie del muchacho y comenzó su labor sin dejar por un momento de silbar la canción que antes había tarareado; el joven Ernesto, intrigado le preguntó: –Esa canción, de casualidad, ¿la cantaba usted refiriéndose a mí? –¡Claro! Y también por los otros cuatro clientes que me han ayudado hoy, todos pasaron molestos, mirando el piso, pensando en quien sabe qué y en un silencio que parecía un funeral; como usted puede ver, yo casi no me puedo callar y por eso es que le canto a la gente pa' que deje la amargura y empiece a levantar la cabeza.

Ante aquella aclaración, el joven sintió algo de vergüenza, se quedó observando con detenimiento el cuadro dantesco de aquel hombre, plagado de necesidades y dolores, con el cuerpo y rostro lacerado por las



marcas de sus sufrimientos. Aún así, en sus ojos había una llama viva que irradiaba esperanzas e ilusiones. Se dio cuenta de lo mucho que tenía y lo poco agradecido que había sido con la vida, reconoció en sí mismo la pobreza de su figura joven, con mayores recursos, y sumido en una permanente amargura: *—Cuando las cosas parecen ir mal, Dios se encarga de mostrarnos el verdadero dolor de Cristo padeciendo*, pensó para sí mismo.

Incorporándose nuevamente, dijo al viejo: *—¿Y de dónde es usted, amigo?*, ya con un aire de mayor confianza y curioso por saber más de aquel personaje que comenzaba a interesarle. Por primera vez en todo aquel rato de canciones y palabras incesantes guardó silencio. Levantando la mirada hacia el poniente se transformó su semblante, se quedó con la mirada perdida por unos segundos, luego volvió hacia el zapato y lus-trando con fuerza susurró una canción: *—“Yo vengo de donde usted no ha ido, he visto las cosas que no ha visto...”*, y continuó tarareando un murmullo *uh,uh,uh...* El joven se sintió consternado y a la vez extrañado por esa costumbre tan particular de responder con trozos de canciones y antes de que pudiera interrogarle nuevamente, el viejo limpiabotas le miró y dijo: *—¿Escuchó alguna vez de la tragedia de Vargas?* (40 km al este de Caracas) y volviendo su mirada hacia el horizonte, *—De ahí, ;de por ahí vengo, mijo! Rodando como una piedra; el agua se lo llevó todo, viví un tiempo en los refugios y otro más en la calle, y ya ni se cómo terminé en esta ciudad tan lejana; a lo mejor me estoy alejando de tan malos recuerdos.*

Aquella revelación interpeló a Ernesto sobre la forma desconfiada e inhumana con que le había juzgado en un primer momento. Para entonces había pensado en el fastidio de cruzarse con otro borracho más de la plaza; con sagacidad veloz buscó entre sus cosas, *—Viejo, si no le ofende, yo cargo aquí unas camisas y estos zapatos que me dieron en el trabajo y que podrían...*

Inusitadamente le interrumpió silbando nuevamente y cantando con los ojos inundados por un brillo especial: *—“...No es importante el ropaje, sino distinguirla a fondo, los que van comiendo dioses y defecando demonios. Zapatos de mi conciencia, mal que bien me van llevando, larala...”*

Ahora sí que Ernesto no entendía aquel misterioso personaje, plagado de necesidades, y aún así le daba igual tener o no tener ropa y calzado; impulsado por la intriga que le causaba y detectando algo familiar en las entonaciones que el viejo hacía, le dijo: *—¿Yo co-*

*nozco esa canción! Esa es de... ¿de Alí primera, cierto?*

*—¿Sí Señor! Y me las sé toíticas [todas] completas!*

Golpeó con su trapeador el zapato derecho del joven;

*— ¡Listo!, ahora sí esos zapatos están decentes.*

El joven asintió con la cabeza y buscando su cartera, *—¿Cuánto le debo, mayor?*

*—¿Lo que usted me quiera dar y si son las gracias, bien recibidas serán!*

El joven se sonrió ante tan original respuesta y le dio un par de billetes que el viejo guardó celosamente dentro de los bolsillos de su vieja mochila; habían pasado cincuenta minutos desde que se encontraron y ya se había olvidado, al menos por un tiempo, de sus afa-nes y preocupaciones, de la economía y la política, de tantas banalidades que le atormentaban. Ahora éstas le parecían vacías y TONTAS. Sin proponérselo, vivió en este corto encuentro un proceso de renovación que le impulsaba a semejanza de aquel ahora hermoso perso-naje, cantar por las maravillas del hoy y las vírgenes esperanzas del mañana.

*—Fue un placer conocerle amigo, mi nombre es Ernesto; si hay algo en lo que pudiera ayudarle sólo dígame.* El viejo terminó de guardar sus trapos en la mochila, tomó en sus manos nuevamente el viejo cua-tro, colocó la mano sobre el hombro derecho del joven y con una efusiva cara de emoción le dijo: *—Por ahora tengo en este viejo morral todo lo necesario para vivir feliz lo que queda del día de hoy.* Indicando con sus dedos hacia el poniente, se despidió diciendo: *—Por allí esta mi ruta, cuídese joven y no se olvide de empezar a ser feliz.*

Hizo un ademán de comenzar su marcha, cuando el joven, inquietado, preguntó: *—¿Y cuál es su nombre, viejo amigo?* El viejo volteó vivazmente. *—Me llaman Alí y para los buenos amigos como usted me dejo llamar el NEGRO ALÍ.*

Ya la noche comenzaba a caer sobre la ciudad. El viejo tomó su cuatro, soltó una carcajada y comenzó nuevamente a cantar: *“Es de noche, cuenta el limpia-botas cuánto ha hecho y cuenta el pregonero cuánto ha hecho...es de noche...”*

Ernesto con el llanto a flor de piel, también tara-reaba aquella dulce canción y cuando ya la figura del viejo comenzaba a perderse en el horizonte le escuchó nuevamente cantar: *“Es de noche...”*, el joven tomó su bolso, dio la vuelta, y mirando al cielo que mostraba sus primeros luceros, levantó los brazos cantando: *“...Y habrá Mañana”.*



## MACUILÍ

SALMO 27,10

**PREMIO DEL CONCURSO DE  
«PÁGINAS NEOBÍBLICAS 2016»**

**CYNTHIA ESTHER ALARCÓN MÚGICA**

*Xalapa, Veracruz, México*

Soy de un barrio conocido donde asaltan y arrebatan lo propio; no sólo cosas que el dinero puede comprar, sino también lo que no se puede ver: la inocencia, las ideas, el amor. De pequeña me crié entre animales de corral. Mi abuela era mi madre, mi madre no lo era. Mis recuerdos se han reconstruido de a poco, y de eso hoy vengo a hablarles.

El matrimonio de mis padres fue feliz por poco tiempo. El desencanto de la falta de empleo en el campo llevó a mi padre a un alcoholismo feroz que lo convertía en todo lo que sobrio no era: la violencia se apoderaba de él y se materializaba en golpes a mi madre, quien fue perdiendo la paciencia y la fe, y optó por marcharse lejos de casa con mi hermano en brazos y conmigo tomada de la mano.

Cuando tu familia se fractura y eres pequeño sueles buscar dónde va tu pieza en el rompecabezas sin forma aparente; mamá entró en una fuerte depresión que la hizo buscar consuelo en sustancias alterantes y brazos esporádicos, descuidando de este modo a sus hijos; nosotros, fuimos adoptados por nuestra abuela, mujer de gran corazón y escasos recursos.

Ese instante en que el hambre llega y no hay forma de calmarla ni alguien que resuelva esa carencia, tu niñez o adolescencia se ve quebrantada y obligada a tornarse lo más adulta posible; buscas, buscas sin parar alguna salida, y muchas veces ésta no es la mejor. Fue así como empecé a incursionar en la delincuencia juvenil. Buscaba aceptación, amigos, comida y, más que diversión, olvidarme un poco de mi soledad y pobreza. Naturalmente las drogas eran parte del juego: consumirlas, venderlas, necesitarlas; eran un bálsamo a mis heridas y a mi destrucción silenciosa. Ese ambiente de vicios e ignorancia, estados alterados, te hace perder la noción del tiempo, el espacio y del amor, desdibujado por no hallarlo en los encuentros sexuales involuntarios que terminaron por arrancarme la inocencia de mis pocos años. Mi mente albergaba la idea del suicidio cuando el efecto de las drogas terminaba, la ansiedad... y el preguntarme por qué habiendo tantos niños con familias y un hogar en que vivir, a mí me había tocado sufrir de esta manera.

En medio de esa crisis, ocurrió lo esperado. Una de tantas noches de soledad quise acabar con el dolor amarrando un mecate a una de las vigas del techo de mi cuarto. Me subí a una cubeta y dando un suspiro di un salto al aire. Pero el uso que mi abuela hizo del mecate en esas mañanas soleadas, no ayudó en nada, y éste se rompió al poco tiempo. Caí al suelo, sin aire, y con un dolor en el cuello que me duró semanas. Al siguiente día la conocí.

Yo vagaba entre las callejuelas y ella salió de la tienda de la esquina con una botella de agua en las manos. Nuestras miradas se cruzaron. Debo decir que tenía unos ojos protectores que yo en mi vida había visto. Me preguntó mi nombre y me invitó a que la acompañara. Llegamos al lugar donde entiendo ella daría una charla a un grupo de jóvenes.

Ella habló del valor de la vida y de la persona, habló del amor; sus palabras eran como espadas que atravesaban mis heridas; sentí un impulso, un deseo de salir de aquel sitio; era obvio que mi experiencia no era como la de esos muchachos que seguramente tenían padres, comida caliente, ropa limpia, y que sin duda iban a la escuela. Me sentí fuera de lugar y ellos me veían raro. No obstante, y sin saber por qué, permanecí allí. Cuando todo terminó traté de salir rápido, pero ella me alcanzó. Nos detuvimos bajo la sombra de un macuilí, cuyas flores eran desprendidas por el silente vendaval de marzo.

—¿Cómo estás? —me dijo sonriente.

—Bien, pero ya debo irme —respondí seria.

—Tú tienes algo y lo vamos a descubrir —comentó.

—No sé de qué me habla, hasta luego.

Traté de caminar rápido sin contar los pasos que me alejaban de ella.

—¡Magdalena! —me gritó de repente— *se te ha caído esto*. En sus manos sostenía un trozo de papel que yo sabía no era mío.

—Anda, ven y tómallo.

Entonces me acerqué, temerosa, molesta y acalorada, ¿qué clase de juego era ése? Al parecer se trataba de una hoja doblada.

—Se cayó de tu bolsa del pantalón cuando empe-



*zaste a caminar apresurada –me explicó calmada.*

Entonces la desdoblé y leí en voz baja: «Si mi padre y mi madre me abandonan, el Señor me acogerá. Salmo 27,10»


*–Pero ¿qué es esto?, esta hoja no es mía* –mis ojos la buscaron sin éxito para explicarle.

«Yo creo que sí es de ti», pareció musitar el macuilí.

Entonces lo entendí. En la vida hay toda clase de personas, mensajeros y hacedores de obras buenas de los que se vale Dios para amar y sanar a sus criaturas.

Luego de aquel día decidí levantarme. Trabajé en una fonda y retomé la secundaria. Entré a un grupo de ayuda psicológica y espiritual, donde había personas con problemas como los míos o aún peores. Antes de que mi abuela muriera pude terminar incluso la prepa. Luego, con mi buen promedio, conseguí una beca universitaria en modalidad abierta: Licenciatura en Trabajo Social. Cuatro años después, estoy aquí con ustedes.

Decidí contar mi historia y cambiar la vida de jóvenes como ustedes con vivencias y heridas similares a las mías: abandonados, atrapados en las drogas, hambrientos de pan y amor; abusados sexualmente... nuestros rostros son distintos, pero las batallas son las mismas.

Jamás volví a ver a esa mujer que tocó mi vida con el verso de aquel salmo, pero hoy gracias a ella estamos aquí. Bienvenidos sean todos ustedes, chicos/as, a su «Casa del Joven “Macuilí”». Ánimo, porque nuestra verdadera batalla comienza aquí. 

# SIMÓN DE CIRENE

PREMIO DEL CONCURSO DE  
«PÁGINAS NEOBÍBLICAS 2016»

AGUSTÍN CABRÉ  
Santiago de Chile

El hombre venía desde su cuna arrastrando una vida laboriosa. Labraba la tierra. Primero la acariciaba preparándola para la siembra. Después tiraba en los surcos la semilla que se iba a convertir en pan. Y esperaba. Cada luna nueva salía a contemplar el milagro de la vida: nacían los brotes así como le nacían los hijos. Él los trataba con igual ternura. Todo era sangre de su sangre. Abrazaba a su mujer como hubiera querido abrazar el mundo entero, todo el espacio planetario, con sus montes altos y sus valles verdes. Para él todo era divino.

Pero una tarde en que regresaba contento de su oficio de labrador, se vio obligado a ayudar a un condenado a muerte: los soldados lo empujaron, lo marcaron y le pusieron sobre sus espaldas anchas la cruz que el hombre que iba a morir ya no podía sostener.

Simón de Cirene se convirtió así en acompañante del dolor del mundo.

El hombre que iba a ser crucificado le agradeció desde el fondo de su alma humillada y de su cuerpo roturado ese gesto solidario: al comienzo fue de contratiempo para el labriego, y en el camino al Calvario, descubrió que ayudar a un hombre era más importante que roturar la tierra.

Porque el crecimiento de los trigos los da Dios por medio de los soles y las lluvias. Pero la ayuda a un martirizado la da el hombre, en respuesta a la vocación recibida. En eso se juega el honor de ser persona.

Desde entonces, Simón de Cirene no conoció jamás el descanso. El hombre de la cruz le dio, en agradecimiento, el don de tener siempre un corazón solidario.


Desde entonces, anda por todos los caminos de la tierra lanzando semillas de esperanza. No hay dolor en el mundo que no tenga la solidaridad de un Cireneo.

Los que entran a la mar en busca de

Lampedusa, los que tratan de esquivar los muros fronterizos, los que deben abandonar su tierra, su cielo y su cultura, los que son rechazados por el sistema que cobija dictaduras y ampara a los depredadores de gentes y paisajes, los que son mirados con sospecha o con burla porque pertenecen a minorías religiosas, sexuales, culturales... pueden encontrar un Cireneo.

Desde entonces, Simón no tiene patria, ni religión, ni condición social, política o cultural. Tampoco tiene edad ni nombre propio: una vez se llamó Antonio Montesinos; otra, Teresa de Calcuta. En ocasiones ha sido estrella de cine, y en otras aparece como médico de pueblos pobres. Se ha contagiado con el ébola en África, y siempre resucita convertido en vecino solidario, en mujer que recoge como suyos los hijos de la calle. Vive en todas las fronteras donde los comensales de la gran mesa de los opulentos dejan arrinconados a los que tienen hambre. Visita a los encarcelados y acompaña los funerales de los que mueren solos.

Todos los que tienen ojos para ver y oídos para escuchar pueden dar testimonio de este labriego convertido en hermano. En nuestros países latinoamericanos y del Caribe se le ha visto recorrer las calles, entrar en los tugurios, abrazar a los enfermos, defender a los que la injusticia institucionalizada de nuestras democracias formales persigue y condena.

Simón es joven y viejo, es mujer y varón, es sabio e ignorante, es del norte y del sur, es famoso y desconocido. Y como no piensa en sus intereses sino en la vida de los demás, hasta se le puede haber olvidado que ese don de la solidaridad se lo debe a un hombre que encontró en su camino: fue cuando volvía del campo y unos soldados lo cargaron con la cruz del condenado a muerte. 



# PARTICIPACIÓN FEMENINA: UNA DEUDA DE AÑOS

PREMIO DEL CONCURSO DE  
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Es un discurso común de este siglo, y se oye de boca de miles, el que afirma que la lucha femenina por la equidad ya ha cumplido sus objetivos. Desde las primeras sufragistas, hasta las independientes mujeres de altos cargos en el mundo actual, todo parecería indicar que, en los tiempos que corren, la lucha femenina por la participación ha ido ganando terreno hasta colocar el mundo en manos de las mujeres. Pero basta una mirada sólo un poco más atenta para que sea evidente que este discurso lleva impreso en cada una de sus letras la marca de la dominación patriarcal.

Si bien son innegables las conquistas de derechos por parte de las mujeres, aún falta un largo recorrido de lucha para poder hablar de participación plena de la mujer. En todas las esferas a contemplar, existen datos que demuestran la bajísima incidencia de la participación femenina. Se conoce, por ejemplo, que en el ámbito político en los últimos 20 años el porcentaje de mujeres en los parlamentos se ha duplicado... para llegar a representar apenas un 22% del total de los parlamentarios del mundo. En la región de las Américas, el total de mujeres parlamentarias es de un bochornoso 26'3%. El mercado laboral, por su parte, es terreno de las más marcadas desigualdades entre los sexos: en la mayoría de los países, las mujeres ganan en promedio menos que los hombres, a la vez que conforman el mayor porcentaje de la masa que engrosa las filas del trabajo informal y los empleos vulnerables y infravalorados. Las mujeres dedican entre una y tres horas más que los hombres a las labores domésticas y a la prestación de cuidados a hijos, personas mayores y enfermos (cifras: ONU Mujeres).

La historia universal ha sido sometida a una minuciosa tarea de invisibilización de sus personajes femeninos más destacados, quedando sus contribuciones al margen del reconocimiento cultural. En la esfera de las artes, escenario de las mujeres desde los tiempos más antiguos, se ha recurrido a numerosas tretas para borrar sus huellas, como cambiar su apellido por el del marido o del padre, alterar las firmas de sus obras o limitar su paso por las academias. El mundo científico no es más grato: becas, puestos de trabajo, salarios,

invitaciones a hablar en conferencias... se distribuyen desigualmente entre personas con los mismos méritos y diferente sexo. Los currículos de mujeres obtienen menor puntuación, a la vez que hay una larga lista de labores científicas llevadas a cabo por mujeres, por las cuales obtuvieron reconocimiento científicos hombres.

Alarmanes son, además, los números de casos de violencia contra las mujeres y el índice de feminicidios en el mundo: es el acto extremo de limitación de la mujer, el que le impide participar... de la vida.

Estas cifras y hechos revelan la invisible trama patriarcal que hilvana desde hace milenios las sociedades del mundo y ordena las relaciones entre los seres humanos, su vida cotidiana, sus producciones, los esquemas de pensamiento con los que se aprehende la realidad. Las conquistas de la lucha femenina son pruebas de la indudable capacidad de las mujeres para el análisis crítico de la sociedad y su transformación, así como de la fuerza de su organización colectiva, pero es un movimiento joven frente a toda una historia de dominación masculina. Las mujeres, en gran medida, siguen quedando fuera de diversas esferas, a menudo a causa de las violencias del sistema machista: leyes, prácticas y estereotipos de género que no las favorecen, bajos niveles de educación... entre otros.

Hacer visible la efectiva dominación masculina es el primer paso para pensar la participación femenina en el mundo actual. El segundo paso es interrogarla en el lugar en que la sitúan las coordenadas trazadas por el neoliberalismo y la globalización, que han dado lugar a nuevas formas de opresión de las mujeres. En la coyuntura actual, la opresión de las mujeres se entrelaza con la opresión de la sociedad de clases propia del capitalismo. En un contexto de producción capitalista, la familia patriarcal se configura como el órgano social que reproduce y sostiene las condiciones del sistema, y se produce la división de espacios de acuerdo con el género. El hombre se define como productor de mercancías, mientras la mujer se ve restringida a la elaboración de valores de uso para el consumo directo y privado. Esta división circunscribe



la esfera pública a lo masculino, y la privada a lo femenino; división que tiene efectos sobre la subjetividad de la mujer: el sentimiento de no ser reconocida, de ser inútil o incapaz, el temor al ridículo, las inquietudes sobre el cuerpo o la voz... son sensaciones que muchísimas mujeres han manifestado experimentar cuando se enfrentan a situaciones sociales fuera del círculo íntimo.

Por su parte, la inserción de las mujeres en el régimen del trabajo asalariado, lejos de contabilizarse como un acto de liberación, las empuja a las mismas condiciones de opresión que a sus compañeros hombres, con un plus: el trabajo asalariado implica un régimen pensado según los esquemas del trabajo tradicional masculino. No hay flexibilidad horaria, no hay guarderías para niños en los lugares de trabajo, no hay fórmulas que conjuguen la actividad productiva y reproductiva. Si se tiene en cuenta que el llamado «trabajo invisible» (labores domésticas, cuidado de hijos y enfermos) está mayoritariamente en manos de las mujeres, aquéllas insertas en el mercado laboral terminan cumpliendo con una agotadora doble jornada de trabajo, y esto las fuerza además a destinar menos tiempo a la educación, el ocio, la participación política, entre otras.

Numerosos son los desafíos que los tiempos que corren imponen a las mujeres, en una lucha a la que aún le falta mucho para declararse caduca. Involucrarse, fortalecer y acompañar sus acciones de desenmascaramiento y transformación del patriarcado es una de las rutas hacia la equidad. ■

## COLECCIÓN «TIEMPO AXIAL»

PATROCINADA POR ESTA «AGENDA LATINOAMERICANA»

Imprescindible para estar al tanto de los avances de la teología latinoamericana de la liberación y su encuentro con otras fronteras de pensamiento, los «nuevos paradigmas» del pensamiento mundial actual. He aquí los títulos ya publicados:

1. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, I.
2. John **HICK**, *La metáfora del Dios encarnado*.
3. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, II.
4. Faustino **TEIXEIRA**, *Teología de las religiones*.
5. José María **VIGIL**, *Teología del pluralismo religioso. Curso sistemático de teología popular*.
6. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, III.
7. Alberto **MOLINER**, *Pluralismo religioso y sufrimiento ecohumano* (sobre la obra de Paul F. Knitter).
8. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, IV.
9. R. **FORNET-BETANCOURT**, *Interculturalidad y religión*.
10. Roger **LENAERS**, *Otro cristianismo es posible. Fe en lenguaje de modernidad*.
11. Ariel **FINGUERMAN**, *La elección de Israel*.
12. Jorge **PIXLEY**, *Teología de la liberación, Biblia y filosofía procesual*.
13. **ASETT**, *Por los muchos caminos de Dios*, V.
14. John Shelby **SPONG**, *Un cristianismo nuevo para un mundo nuevo*.
15. Michael **MORWOOD**, *El católico del mañana*.

### Últimos, recién publicados:

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17. Diarmuid **O'MURCHU**, *Teología cuántica. Implicaciones espirituales de la nueva física*.
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19. John Shelby **SPONG**, *Vida eterna*.

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Los volúmenes 1, 3, 6, 8 y 13 forman la conocida serie «*Por los muchos caminos de Dios*», proyecto teológico colectivo de la ASETT, que confronta la teología de la liberación con la teología del pluralismo religioso. Vea la serie, en cuatro idiomas:

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También existe esta colección en portugués, «Tempo Axial», en la Editorial Paulus, de São Paulo, Brasil, [www.paulus.com.br](http://www.paulus.com.br)



# WHO'S WHO

## AMONG THE AUTHORS OF THIS AGENDA

*Only some; others need no introduction for our readers...*

**Nicolau Joao BAKKER**, son of Dutch immigrants, priest at Sao André Parish, in great Sao Paulo, Brazil. Studied philosophy, theology and social sciences, has always done pastoral work in rural and urban outskirts. Has been professor of Pastoral Theology at ITESP/SP, Popular educator at Centro de Derechos Humanos (Human Rights Centre) in Campo Limpo (CD-HEP/SP) and, as councillor for the PT, he dedicated eight years to politics at the Holambra county SP. He seeks a harmonious integration of theology, spirituality and a socio-transforming compromise, under an ecologically responsible inter-religious perspective. Since 2011, regularly writes in magazines such as Vida Pastoral, REB, Convergencia and Grande Sinal.

**Marcelo BARROS**, Camaragibe, Recife, Brazil, 1944, from a Catholic family of poor workmen. Biblical scholar, member of ASETT, has written 35 books about the popular reading of the Bible, Ecumenical Spirituality, Theology of the Earth, Theology of macro-ecumenicism and of cultural and religious pluralism. He is counsellor to the Pastoral da Terra and the Movimento dos Sem Terra(MST). Presently, lives in a secular community in Recife (PE), Brazil, under a health treatment, and collaborates with various theology magazines of different countries.

**Frei BETTO**, Carlos Alberto Libânio Christo, better known as Frei Betto, (Belo Horizonte, Minas Gerais, 25 August 1944) is a Brazilian Dominican monk, theologian of Liberation. He is author of more than 50 books of diverse literary genres and religious topics.

**Jordi COROMINAS** was born in Balsareny, Catalunya, the same village as Pedro Casaldàliga, who is his relative. Has lived for 14 years in Nicaragua and El Salvador where he directed a doctorate in Iberoamerican philosophy, which was one of the projects of Ignacio Ellacuría, president of the UCA University who was assassinated in 1989. Doctor in Philosophy, he is dedicated to the study of Zubiri's philosophy and his projection in the field of ethics, philosophy of religion and social philosophy. He works at Ramon Llull University of Barcelona. Among his best publications: Xavier Zubiri, La soledad Sonora (Taurus, 2006; Harmattan 2012); Ética primera, aportación de Zubiri

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**Magali do Nascimento CUNHA** is a graduate in Social Communication by the Federal University of Fluminense. Master in Social Memory by the Federal University of the State of Rio de Janeiro and Doctor in Communication Sciences by the University of Sao Paulo. Presently professor at Methodist University of Sao Paulo. She is author of A explosão Gospel. Um olhar das ciências humanas sobre o cenário evangélico no Brasil (Mauad, Rio de Janeiro 2007).

**Gonzalo DE LA TORRE GUERRERO** (1932, Carmen de Atrato, Chocó, Colombia). Licensed in Theology and Sacred Scriptures, specializing in exegesis, licenced in Ethics and Religious Sciences. Professor at different seminaries in Colombia and Spain. Founder and ex-principal of Fundación Universitaria Claretiana in Chocó. Has published various articles and books.

**Claudia FANTI**. Journalist and social activist, works in ADISTA, an Italian militant magazine, from which she supports the Latin American popular movements. She is member of the association for social promotion "Informazione equa e solidale" and co-founder of the association "Amig@sMst-Italia". Has written El Salvador. Il Vangelo second gli insorti and is co-author of La lunga Marcia adei senza terra. Socialismo del XXI secolo e modelli di civiltà dal Venezuela e dall'America Latina.

**Juan Antonio FERNANDEZ MANZANO** (1965) is Dr in Philosophy and Licenced in English Philology for the UCM. Professor of Political Philosophy at Faculty of Philosophy, UCM, Universidad Complutense de Madrid, and Director of the International Magazine of Political Philosophy Las Torres de Lucca. His last published works are Política para la Globalización, La recuperación de lo político en la era global (Antígona, Madrid, 2014) and Un Estado Global para un Mundo Plural (Biblioteca Nueva, Madrid, 2014).

**Alfredo J. GONÇALVES**, was born on the Isla de Madeira in Portugal in 1953. He is member of the Scalabrinian order. They specialize in working with migrants and refugees throughout the world. He has



lived in Brazil since 1969. He has always worked in social ministry: in the outskirts and favelas of São Paulo, with the homeless, with sugarcane workers. He was an advisor on social ministry for the CNBB.

**Fernando GUZMAN.** Licenced in Social Work, with a specialty in Organizations of Civil Society (FLACSO) and HHRR (PLED). Lay coordinator of Justicia, Paz e Integridad de la Creación (Justice, Peace, and Integration with Creation) from Misioneros Claretianos in Argentina, Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay. From there, and together with the PROCLADE ONG, he works jointly with initiatives and projects that try to promote Human Rights for all people in different communities in those countries. Works in Constitución, one of the poorest neighborhoods of Buenos Aires.

**Elfriede HARTH,** born in Colombia, lives between Bogotá and Frankfurt, and fights for access of women to priesthood. Interview and presentation : <https://goo.gl/FGwlx/>

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**Luís INFANTI DE LA MORA** (Udine, Italy, 1954). In 1978 underwent the Servite novitiate. Presently Apostolic Vicar of Aysén (Patagonia, Chile). His radical compromise with the cause of the Gospels, was manifest during his bishopric in defense of Life, not only human, but also of bio-diversity. Has been noticeable as a defender of water as a human right, especially in Chile, where it is privatized and huge hydro-electric projects are being presented in his region, such as Hidroaysen (see his pastoral letter on the internet *El Agua de cada día danosla hoy*).

**David MOLINEAUX.** Educator and writer, living in Chile for many years now. He has been giving courses about the evolution of life on Earth, the new cosmology emerging in science, and its humane and spiritual meaning. Has written two books on these topics: *Polvo de estrellas* (1998) and *En el principio era el sueño* (2002). To celebrate our humanity and the world in evolution he conducts groups of bio-dance.

**Luís RAZETO MIGLIARO,** Chilean economist, one of the Latin American theorists more proficient in solidarity economy or labor economy. His life has been one of dedication to theoretically base this economy as the only one worthy of the human being, making it a “comprehensive economy”. His scientific effort has always been multidisciplinary; socio-economic, anthropologic, philosophical, ethical and spiritual, as a matter of conviction. An expression of this is his last book *El Proyecto de Jesús*. He practises what he theorizes and writes and is director of the “Fundación Solidaridad” (Solidarity Foundation) and of Habitat for Humanity Foundation in Chile.

**João Pedro STÉDILE,** 1953, Brazilian economist and social activist. He is the present leader of the Movement of Rural Workers Without Land (MST), a ‘gaúcho’ of Marxist origin, and one of the major defenders of an agrarian reform in Brazil. Born in Rio Grande do Sul, son of small farmers of Italian origin (Trentino), lives now in the city of São Paulo. Studied economy at the Pontifical Catholic University (PUC-RS), with a postgraduate from UNAM, México. Counselling the Land Pastoral Committee (CPT) at a national level. Author of various books about the agrarian issue.

**Martín VALMASEDA,** member of CAUCE, Centro Audiovisual de Comunicación y Educación, in Guatemala ([www.equipocauce.com](http://www.equipocauce.com)), engaged in the production of videos, recordings, leaflets and books for educational and popular settings.

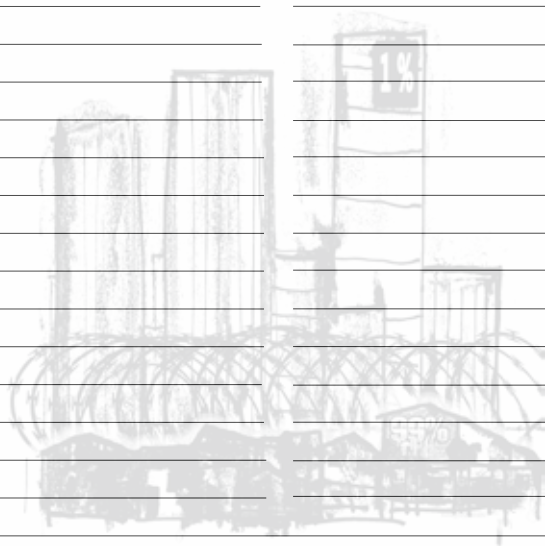
**Gustavo YELA** is Professor of Philosophy at University of San Carlos de Guatemala in the School of Communication Sciences and of Professor Training. Writes articles for the magazine ‘De Domingo’ of the ‘Prensa Libre’ newspaper. He is the author of various articles in academic journals and of the *Periódico Universitario de Odontología*. He is researching a Master’s thesis about the Critical and Liberating Philosophy of Ignacio Ellacuría.

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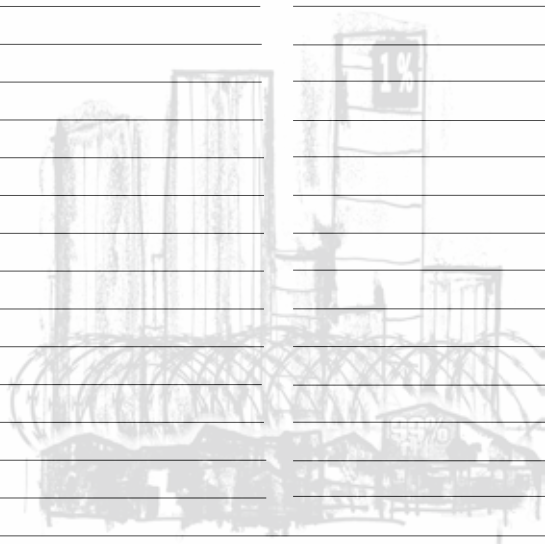


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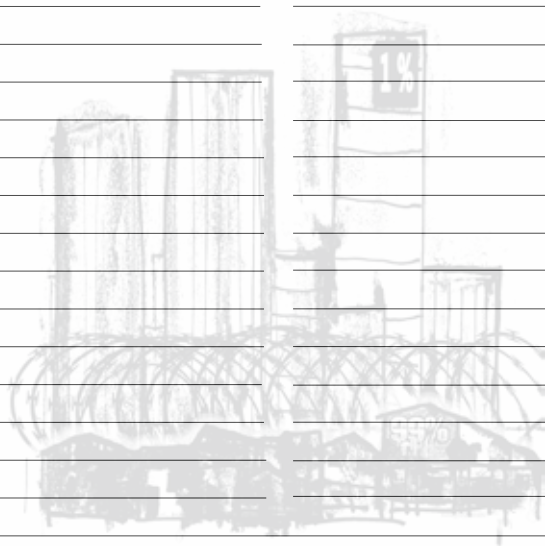




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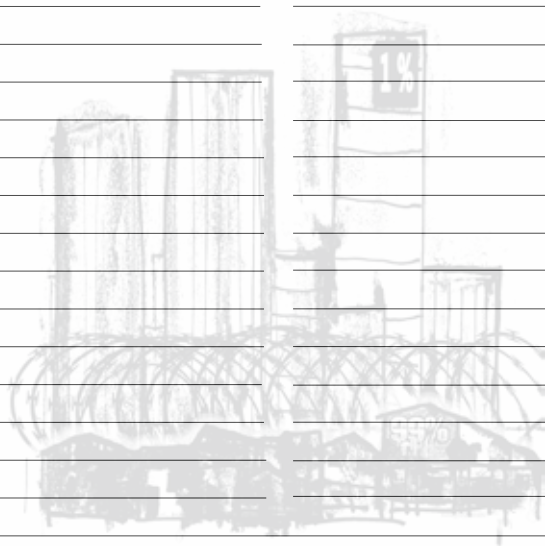




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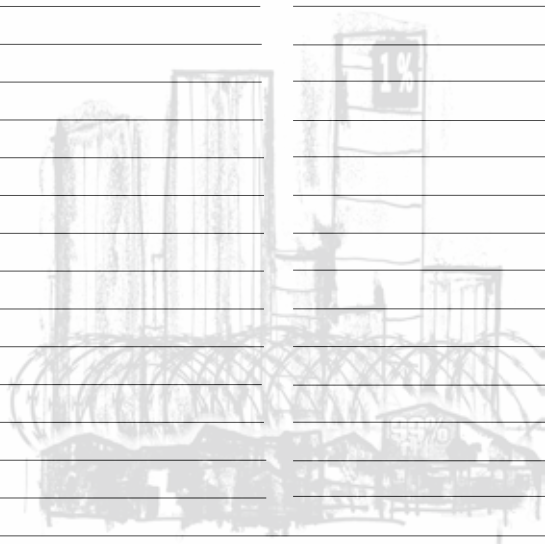


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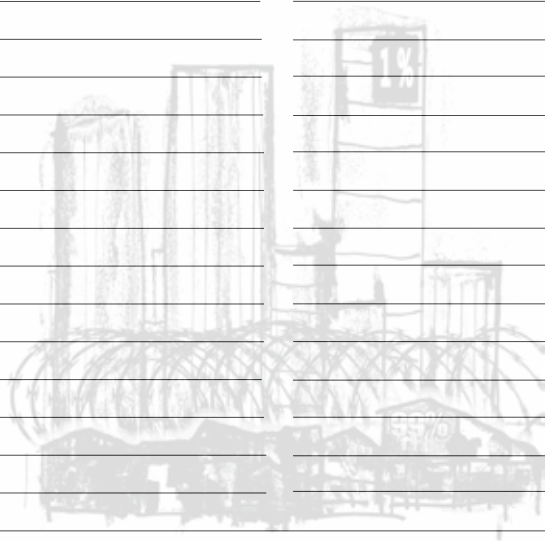




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people have wealth equivalent to the assets of the poorest half of humanity.

The richest 1% of the population in the year 2016, will exceed its own record of assets breaking through the psychological barrier having acquired 50% of the wealth in the world -- and it continues to grow.

To what percentage of the pie will the extremely wealthy have to shrink us, before we awaken and decide to put an end to this situation unworthy of humanity, and decide to change the economic system that has brought us here? When will we assume effective awareness that we are the overwhelming majority -- the 99% !?

It's time to wake up because it's urgent to change the rules. That of the past three decades has already proven to be unsustainable and is leading us into social explosion and planetary crisis. We need struggle for the egalitarian and just society that both our humanity and our planet deserve.

This is the Utopia worth dreaming of and struggling for.

*Pedro CASALDÁLIGA  
José María VIGIL*