

# **Development and the Catholic Church Understanding Populorum Progressio and Caritas Veritas**

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## **Caritas in Veritate and Development Debate**

“Truth preserves and expresses charity’s power to liberate in the ever-changing events of history. It is at the same time the truth of faith and of reason, both in the distinction and also in the convergence of those two cognitive fields. Development, social well-being, the search for a satisfactory solution to the grave socio-economic problems besetting humanity, all need this truth. What they need even more is that this truth should be loved and demonstrated. Without truth, without trust and love for what is true, there is no social conscience and responsibility, and social action ends up serving private interests and the logic of power, resulting in social fragmentation, especially in a globalized society at difficult times like the present” (Caritas in Veritate, 2009, # 5). These are the prophetic statements of the present Pope on integral human development in charity and truth.

Integral development has been one of the most repeatedly highlighted issues of the Church. In all the various issues discussed by the Church in her social teachings, it is integral development which takes priority of place.

It is expedient to underscore the reasons behind the promulgation of the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*. Pope Benedict the XVI, states in the encyclical, "At a distance of over forty years from the Encyclical's publication (*Populorum Progressio*), I intend to pay tribute and to honour the memory of the great Pope Paul VI, revisiting his teachings on integral human development and taking my place within the path that they marked out, so as to apply them to the present moment. This continual application to contemporary circumstances began with the Encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, with which the Servant of God Pope John Paul II chose to mark the twentieth anniversary of the publication of *Populorum Progressio*. Until that time, only *Rerum Novarum* had been commemorated in this way. Now that a further twenty years have passed, I express my conviction that *Populorum Progressio* deserves to be considered "the *Rerum Novarum* of the present age", shedding light upon humanity's journey towards unity" (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 8).

Before Pope Benedict XVI, Pope John Paul II in his Encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, that is, Social Concerns of the Church, promulgated in 1988 paints a somber picture of the state of global development. He cites the originality of Pope Paul VI's *The Development of Peoples* and emphasizes the moral and ethical dimension of development. After surveying the difficult state of the poor countries, the Pope lays strong blame on the confrontation between the two global blocs, liberal capitalism of the West, and Marxist collectivism of the East. He refers to the obstacles hindering development as the "structures of sin" and

calls for conversion toward solidarity and the option for the poor. While he does speak of the responsibilities of the poor countries, by far his strongest challenge is to the affluent world.

Twenty years after *Populorum Progressio*, Pope John Paul II celebrated that encyclical of Paul VI with a strong statement updating the Church's teaching on international development. The document reflected the severity of global economies at the end of the 1980s, with debt, unemployment, and recession seriously affecting the lives of millions not only in the developing countries but also in the more affluent countries. It echoed several of the justice-related themes addressed by the Pope in his worldwide travels.

It could be stated without any doubt that on the Fortieth Anniversary of the publication of *Populorum Progressio*, that is, 'On the Development of Peoples' it is expedient to relocate this encyclical and draw inspiration for Christian social commitment to address the unequal power relations and denial of equal opportunity.

## **Development Debate**

In September 2000, the World's leaders adopted the UN Millennium Declaration, committing their nations to stronger global efforts to reduce poverty, improve health and promote peace, human rights and environmental sustainability (UNDP, 2003). It is reported that the Millennium Declaration is an attempt to raise the voice of the people and bring to the fore their concerns. This exercise was undertaken to set targets so that the results are also measurable. This Millennium Declaration adopted at the Millennium Summit reflects the concerns of 147 Heads of States and Governments. The Declaration focused on the following areas: 1)

Values and Principles, 2) Peace, Security and Harmony, 3) Development and Poverty Eradication, 4) Protecting our Common Environment, 5) Human Rights, Democracy and Good Governance, 6) Protecting the Vulnerable, 7) Meeting the Specific Needs of Africa, 8) Strengthening the United Nations (UN, 2000).

In the Millennium Declaration presented on September 2000, it was stated that "We request the General Assembly to review on a regular basis the progress made in implementing the provisions of this Declaration, and ask the Secretary-General to issue periodic reports for consideration by the General Assembly and as a basis for further action". Thus, those who were involved in the formulation of Millennium Development Goal were already aware of the need to build in systems for assessment and further action plan.

It is significant to note that world over various attempts were made to highlight the crippling effects of poverty and hunger and to engage in eradicating them. As part of the awareness and implementation of Millennium Development Goal in South Asia too many activities, events, programmes and campaigns were undertaken. Campaigns like *Wada na todo*, that is, "Fulfill Your Promises" and Global Campaign Against Poverty were initiated by the national, regional and global civil society organizations to ensure that governments act on their policy commitments made both at the national and international levels. All these efforts resulted in the organization of the summit, namely, 'Stand Up Against Poverty' during October 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> 2006. Further, the Global Day of Action Against Poverty was organized on October 17<sup>th</sup> 2006. But irrespective of all these, poverty and hunger continues unabated. Moreover, they have debilitating effect on those social groups and nations that are already discriminated and marginalized.

Some of the fundamental questions that haunt global family today is irrespective of human civilization having made massive progress, why are vast majority of social groups and nations untouched by development or the outcome of development? In spite of innumerable and continuous local, national, regional and global efforts to eradicate poverty and lead people in the path of development, why are many people still under the iron grip of poverty, hunger and misery? Do people really count in the process and outcome of development or are they there to pay for the development of some people who have the power to under develop the people for their own development?

Over the years, many international organizations and forums have highlighted similar concerns. The Social Development Summit at Copenhagen in 1995 crystallized the world-debate on social development, with the participant governments agreeing to accord social development and human well being the highest priority both now and into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The framework for action evolved there were:

- 1) Place people at the centre of development, and economy at the service of human needs;
- 2) Integrate economic and social policies to make them mutually supportive;
- 3) Recognize that sound and broad-based economic policies are a necessary foundation to achieve sustained social development;
- 4) Promote a more just distribution of income and access to resources through equity and equality of opportunity for people at all levels;
- 5) Recognize that empowering people to strengthen their own capacities is the main objective of development and its principal resources.

A mapping of the extensive literature on development points to the following conception of development: a) Development is usually seen as economic growth. Here economic indicators are used to measure the growth or stagnation of economy of a country. b) Development is related to improvement in life chances. Many of the development agencies while talking about development refer to efforts to provide for the basic needs of people. This would refer to improved facilities in education, health, housing, social welfare etc. c) There are others who would consider development as growth and redistribution. Here development is equated with growth, equity and self-reliance. d) Finally, development is increasingly seen as a process of liberation from dependency and exploitation.

To further unravel and explore the multifaceted realities of development, one needs to dovetail economic growth with social security and equality. Development now is not just related to technology, neither is it solely dependent upon human endeavor. It is intimately related to the extent of a group's command over resources, both human and material. It inevitably includes the process of inclusion of some and the exclusion of other groups. The overtly glittering and glamorous process, paradigm and outcome of development obscured the unequal and iniquitous socio-economic structure of India. While the skewed social structure determined the process and outcome of development, development in turn also reinforced a skewed socio-political and economic structure.

It is of seminal significance to state this historical fact that affluence and destitution, conspicuous consumption and continued starvation have become two sides of the same national and international process of centralised command over natural resources. The irony is that those who are engaged in production in the most difficult and arduous conditions are forced to starve. While those who are engaged in consumption continue to control

the means of production. This divide has been accepted as fixed and final, ironically, in an age, which swears by equity and justice and claims to be committed to eradication of all forms of disabilities, which the man through the ages has created for himself.

Thus, it is dawning on all those who want to understand the various dimensions of local and international development, that development is not a neutral entity. Underdevelopment of a vast majority of people and countries is directly related to the unprecedented development of some people and countries. Individuals, social groups and countries who wield power also determine economic sphere. Thus, even the best of the intentions, goals and targets set for eradicating poverty and ensuring human development and dignity seem to be at the best public pronouncements.

**Table 1: Human Development Indexes of South Asian & Other Countries**

Countries	Pop. Living below 1\$ a day %	IMR - per 1000 births	MMR per 1000 births	Rural Population on with drinking water %	Urban Population on with sanitation %	Adult literacy %	HDI ranking
Bangladesh	36.0	51	600	97.0	71.0	40.6	139
India	34.7	67	440	79.0	61.0	58.0	127
Nepal	37.7	66	830	87.0	73.0	42.9	143
Pakistan	13.4	84	200	87.0	95.0	44.0	144
Sri Lanka	6.6	17	60	70.0	95.0	91.9	99
China	16.1	31	60	66.0	69.0	85.8	104
South Africa	2.0	56	340	73.0	93.0	85.6	111
US	-	7	12	100.0	100.0	100.0	7

*Source:* Human Development Report 2003. Oxford University Press: New Delhi, 2003

Most of the South Asian countries experimented with 'planned economy' in the last five decades. They even introduced land reform policies hoping that this would lead to production and equal distribution. But the results were far from satisfactory. Keeping in line with liberalization and privatization pressure, most of these countries also enacted 'New Economic Policy'. It was stated that this would lift the descending economy to newer levels of growth. But the reality is that while the economy is supposed to grow poverty continues to remain or the number of the poor is on the increase.

Table 2 highlights the fact that in most of the South Asian countries, more than one third of the population is forced to live below the poverty line. Sri Lanka and Pakistan seem to have done even better than China. Further, even in health indicators and educational indicators the scenario of South Asia is grim. Countries like India are supposed to be in the forefront of IT revolution. But in aspects related to ordinary masses it is way behind and is ranked 127.

Interestingly, since the development is always discussed in terms of economic dimensions the real impact of all that is considered development continues to be seen in statistical terms. In the recent past there has been a growing awareness that any debate on development has to pay attention to the entire socio-political, economic and cultural aspects in its totality. From this perspective one can state that development involves ensuring that the benefits of development is extended to all the segments of the population and in a special way to the most downtrodden of any society or country.

## Locating *Populorum Progressio*

Pope Paul the VI as early as the 1960s seems to have had some deep insights into the crisis of development and insisted on the development of people. In his *Populorum Progressio* he argued, "The development of people has the Church's close attention, particularly the development of those peoples who are striving to escape from hunger, misery, endemic diseases and ignorance; of those who are looking for a wider share in the benefits of civilisation and a more active improvement of their human qualities; of those who are aiming purposefully at their complete fulfillment... Today the people in hunger are making a dramatic appeal to the peoples blessed with abundance. The Church shudders at this cry of anguish and calls each one to give a loving response of charity to this brother's cry for help".

During his leadership as the universal pastor, Paul VI expected and urged the universal church and its Episcopal bodies to become a loving and serving church. The following initiatives from his side highlight this fact: 1) Three synods held in 1969, 1971 and 1974 deal with issues that are related to human development, well being and dignity; 2) His address to the national and regional conferences of bishops encourage and direct them to give the poor and the oppressed central place in their pastoral concerns; 3) Following from these, he established the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace. This commission becomes the agent through which the church intervenes in justice and peace issue both within the church and in the world.

Two interlinked themes are central to the encyclical *Populorum Progressio*. First one is 'Man's Complete Development' and the second theme is 'The Development of the Human Race in the Spirit of Solidarity'. In his interaction with various social groups and religious communities and during his travel

to various regions of the world Paul VI seem to have been affected by poverty and hunger. But above all, he seems to have been concerned by growing injustice. These experiences made him to state in bold terms, "There is also the scandal of glaring inequalities not merely in the employment of possessions but even in the exercise of power".

Thus, two interrelated aspects of development and underdevelopment, power and powerlessness is the haunting issue that Paul VI tries to highlight and address in this encyclical. He argues that while the vast masses are denied of the outcome of development, a small minority continues to lay hands on the all the outcome of development. But it is not just the appropriation of wealth and resources but unequal power relations become an issue that need to be addressed by the church.

Going further, a careful reader of the encyclical *Populorum Progressio* will realize that the encyclical points towards the structural nature of poverty and misery as well as the structural dynamics of power and powerlessness. But the encyclical does not stop there. It goes on to present a fuller vision of human development and development of all human beings.

Paul VI had mentioned in unambiguous terms that development has to be integral and this has to be in solidarity not by denying the rights and dignity of fellow human beings. This demand he made at the local and international levels. According to *Populorum Progressio*, "The development We speak of here cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be well rounded; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man. As an eminent specialist on this question has rightly said: "We cannot allow economics to be separated from human realities, nor development from the civilization in which it takes place. What counts for us is man—each individual man.

each human group, and humanity as a whole.” (*Populorum Progressio*, # 14). These insights have been guiding force in the various interventions of the church.

### **Salient Features of *Caritas in Veritate***

The Encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate* is a letter of the Pope Benedict XVI, On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth. As stated above, this Encyclical was promulgated by the present Pope to highlight the various issues of integral development addressed by Pope Paul VI. This Encyclical consists of the following six sections: The Message of *Populorum Progressio*; Human Development in Our Time; Fraternity, Economic Development and Civil Society; The Development of People, Rights and Duties and the Environment; The Cooperation of Human Development and The Development of Peoples and Technologies.

The introduction of the Encyclical, talks about the interdependence of integral human development with charity and truth. This section draws heavily from the Biblical traditions and foregrounds the importance of charity and truth in the development process and outcome. The Pope very well articulates the fact that charity is at the heart of the Church’s Social Doctrine. The Encyclical considers charity as an outcome of authentic love. Further, it goes on to state that truth is the light that gives meaning and value to charity (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 1 and 2).

The introductory section of the Encyclical goes on to deal with two themes – justice and commitment- relevant to the commitment for development in an increasingly globalised society. Justice that the Encyclicals talks is not just based on rights and duties but on the relationships of gratuitousness, mercy and communion. Further, by promoting common good – good of the individual and of society- integral development is ensured.

With the background of the *Gaudium Et Spes*, that is, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* conveys two fundamental truths that the Church communicated in and through her social teachings. The first is that the whole Church in all her being and acting – when she proclaims, when she celebrates, when she performs works of charity – is engaged in promoting integral human development. This is her public role which is much more important than her charitable and educational activities. The second truth is that authentic human development concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension.

Pope Benedict XVI in this Encyclical draws to another theme that is central to *Populorum Progressio* which is development is a vocation. Drawing from *Populorum Progressio*, Pope Benedict XVI states that to regard development as a vocation is to recognize on the one hand, that it derives from a transcendent call and on the other hand that it is impossible, on its own, of supplying the ultimate meaning. Also, development as vocation presupposed responsible freedom of the individual and the peoples. Further, development as vocation also demands respect for truth and also calls for charity (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 16 to 19).

The second chapter, Human Development in Our Time, spells out the various aspects of development as seen by the Church once again drawing much from Pope Paul VI. This Encyclical acknowledges the fact that Pope Paul VI had an articulated vision of development. For the pontiff, development was supposed to rescue people from hunger, deprivation, endemic diseases and illiteracy. Pope Benedict XVI states that according to the expectations of Pope Paul VI, growth has taken place and it continues to be a positive factor that has lifted billions of people out of misery. But the same economic growth has been and continues to be weighed down by malfunctions and dramatic

problems, highlighted further by the current crisis. This is directly linked with the destiny of human beings.

The Encyclical goes on to observe that the picture of development has many overlapping layers. The actors and the causes in both underdevelopment and development are manifold. The world's wealth is growing in absolute terms, but inequalities are on the increase. Corruption and illegality are unfortunately evident in the conduct of the economic and political class in rich countries, both old and new, as well as in poor ones. Among those who sometimes fail to respect the human rights of workers are large multinational companies as well as local producers. International aid has often been diverted from its proper ends, through irresponsible actions both within the chain of donors and within that of the beneficiaries (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 21 and 22).

The Encyclical argues that development needs above all to be true and integral. It further realizes that in our own day, the State finds itself having to address the limitations to its sovereignty imposed by the new context of international trade and finance, which is characterized by increasing mobility both of financial capital and means of production, material and immaterial. This new context has altered the political power of States. Many economists and social scientists have argued that the State has been relegated to the background and the market has over taken many of the functions of the State. Welfare States are slowly becoming repressive States and are enacting anti-people and anti-poor policies.

Like the previous Encyclicals, this Encyclical too speaks about the promotion of workers' associations that can defend their rights. The Encyclical takes note of migration of those who both in their place of origin and destination are subjected to exploitation. These people are also called the 'People on the Move'. Taking

into account of the migrants and the people on the move, Pope Paul VI established the Pontifical Council for the Pastoral Care of the Migrants and Itinerant People on 19<sup>th</sup> March 1970 (Vatican Website). This insistence on the rights of the workers is a very welcome sign from the point of view of the Vatican.

Following the traditions of the earlier social teachings of the Church, this encyclical too speaks about hunger and safe drinking water. The Encyclical underscores the fact that hunger and lack of safe drinking water is not due to economic problems but due to institutional problems. It states that what is missing is a network of institutions capable of guaranteeing regular access to sufficient food and water. This is very encouraging when many regimes are not bothered about the basic needs of the citizens of their countries but is willing to invest huge amount of money in the name of security. Along with these issues, the Encyclical goes on to respect for life, right to life and right to religious freedom.

The third chapter speaks about fraternity, economic development and civil society. It reemphasizes the Church's value of distributive justice against the commutative justice that the market economy has been spear heading vehemently. The former plea of Popes not to consider the poor as a burden but people who can contribute in the over all development is repeated here too. It is in this context the Encyclical speaks of common good. It is in adhering to justice and common good the solutions to many evils affecting our times can be found. The Encyclical is categorical in its demand that justice should be applied to every economic activity.

While analysing the emerging managerial economy, the Pope states that there is a growing conviction that business management cannot concern itself with the interests of the proprietors, but must also assume responsibility for all the other stakeholders who contribute to the life of the business; the workers, the clients, the

suppliers of various elements of production, the community of reference. The Pope also draws everyone's attention to the cosmopolitan class of managers who do not produce but only manage the economic affairs. But Pope Paul VI taught that every one who works is a creator (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 40).

The development of people, rights and duties and the environment are the themes that are taken up in the fourth chapter. In this section an attempt is made to establish linkage between rights and duties. The Encyclical cautions against the over stress on rights without linking this demand with rights. From this discussion the Pope calls our attention to another fact. That is, the notion of rights and duties in development must also take account of the problems associated with population growth. Morally responsible openness to life represents a rich social and economic resource. Quoting the statement from the Second Vatican Council, the Encyclical says that 'States are called to enact policies promoting the centrality and the integrity of the family founded on marriage between a man and a woman, the primary vital cell of society' (Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 11).

Going further, the Encyclical strongly emphasizes the need for pro-people ethics. The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly — not any ethics whatsoever, but an ethics which is people-centred. The Pope is categorical in presenting a pro-people development in this section. In development programmes, the principle of the centrality of the human person, as the subject primarily responsible for development, must be preserved. The principal concern must be to improve the actual living conditions of the people in a given region, thus enabling them to carry out those duties which their poverty does not presently allow them to fulfill. Social concern must never be an abstract attitude. Development programmes, if they are to be adapted to individual situations, need to be flexible; and the people who benefit from

them ought to be directly involved in their planning and implementation (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 40).

The Encyclical draws our attention to the possibility of positive aspects in globalization. It states that today the material resources available for rescuing the people from poverty are potentially greater than before, but they have ended up largely in the hands of people from developed countries. The Encyclical goes on to argue that it is possible to steer the globalization of humanity in relational terms, in terms of communion and the sharing of goods (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 42).

Then the Pope goes on to speak about rights and duties in chapter four. The Pope tries to present the link between rights and duties. Taking clue from his predecessor, he states that it is important to call for a renewed reflection on how rights presuppose duties, if they are not to become mere licence. Nowadays we are witnessing a grave inconsistency. On the one hand, appeals are made to alleged rights, arbitrary and non-essential in nature, accompanied by the demand that they be recognized and promoted by public structures, while, on the other hand, elementary and basic rights remain unacknowledged and are violated in much of the world (John Paul II, 2003).

Going further, the Encyclical spells out the fact that international cooperation requires people who can be part of the process of economic and human development through the solidarity of their presence, supervision, training and respect. From this standpoint, international organizations might question the actual effectiveness of their bureaucratic and administrative machinery, which is often excessively costly (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 47). The Encyclical thus focuses on an important aspect while speaking about international cooperation.

This section further deals with the relationship that is needed between human beings and nature and sees nature as a gift to human beings by God. Today the subject of development is also closely related to the duties arising from our relationship to the natural environment. The environment is God's gift to everyone, and in our use of it we have a responsibility towards the poor, towards future generations and towards humanity as a whole. Further, the Pope cautions that projects for integral human development cannot ignore coming generations, but need to be marked by solidarity and inter-generational justice, while taking into account a variety of contexts: ecological, juridical, economic, political and cultural. The concern of the Pope becomes clear in these sentences, human beings legitimately exercise a responsible stewardship over nature, in order to protect it, to enjoy its fruits and to cultivate it in new ways, with the assistance of advanced technologies, so that it can worthily accommodate and feed the world's population (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 48 to 50).

The Pope drawing from the understanding of calls our attention to building one human family. Pope Paul VI noted that the world is in trouble because of the lack of thinking. He was making an observation, but also expressing a wish: a new trajectory of thinking is needed in order to arrive at a better understanding of the implications of our being one family; interaction among the peoples of the world calls us to embark upon this new trajectory, so that integration can signify solidarity rather than marginalization (John Paul II, 1998). Thinking of this kind requires a deeper critical evaluation of the category of relation. The Pope also cautions to the fact that the relationship of human family is both present and transcendental.

Trying to unravel one of the profane facts of human family, the Encyclical amplifies the fact of interpersonal relationship. As

a spiritual being, the human creature is defined through interpersonal relations. The more authentically he or she lives these relations, the more his or her own personal identity matures. It is not by isolation that man establishes his worth, but by placing himself in relation with others and with God. Hence these relations take on fundamental importance. Thus, building relationship becomes central to building human family. (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 53). This relational aspect is between human beings, between God and human beings. Moreover, this relationship is not just limited to here and now but to a metaphysical level to place development to a higher plane.

Stressing the need for cooperation to build human family, the Pope states that cooperation for development must not be concerned exclusively with the economic dimension: it offers a wonderful opportunity for encounter between cultures and peoples. If the parties to cooperation on the side of economically developed countries fail to take account of their own or others' cultural identity, or the human values that shape it, they cannot enter into meaningful dialogue with the citizens of poor countries (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 59). One of the areas, the Encyclical speaks about is in access to education. Another area that requires international cooperation is migration. With regard to address the issue of migration, the Pope is of the view that the international community requires bold, forward-looking policies of international cooperation if it is to be handled effectively.

The Pope pushes the world community to think of global interdependence. He says that in the face of the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is a strongly felt need, even in the midst of a global recession, for a reform of the United Nations Organization, and likewise of economic institutions and international finance, so that the concept of the family of nations can acquire real teeth. He calls for giving poorer nations an effective voice in

shared decision-making. This seems necessary in order to arrive at a political, juridical and economic order which can increase and give direction to international cooperation for the development of all peoples in solidarity. (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 67). Here the Encyclical does well by calling for solidarity at the global level in a world which is progressively imposing borders and barriers.

Drawing our attention to the linkage that exists between the development of the peoples and technology the Encyclical says that technology is highly attractive because it draws us out of our physical limitations and broadens our horizon. But human freedom is authentic only when it responds to the fascination of technology with decisions that are the fruit of moral responsibility. Hence the pressing need for formation in an ethically responsible use of technology. Moving beyond the fascination that technology exerts, we must reappropriate the true meaning of freedom, which is not an intoxication with total autonomy, but a response to the call of being, beginning with our own personal being (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 70).

In the concluding section, the Pope building on the fundamental facts that were raised in the *Populorum Progressio*, draws our attention to go further. Paul VI recalled in *Populorum Progressio* that man cannot bring about his own progress unaided, because by himself he cannot establish an authentic humanism. Only if we are aware of our calling, as individuals and as a community, to be part of God's family as his sons and daughters, will we be able to generate a new vision and muster new energy in the service of a truly integral humanism. The greatest service to development, then, is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God. Openness to God makes us open towards our brothers and sisters and towards an understanding of life as a joyful task to be

accomplished in a spirit of solidarity (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 78). The Pope further invites us to work for development with our prayer to God and engage in development with truth and charity.

## Understanding *Caritas in Veritate*

It is pertinent at this juncture to present some of the positive aspects and some of the limitations of the Encyclical. This Encyclical like other Encyclicals is located within the framework of Social Teachings of the Church. Also, the Encyclical states clearly that the Church does not have technical solutions to offer to the problems faced by the world. Neither does it interfere in any way in the policies of the States. But the Church has a mission of truth to accomplish, in every time and circumstances for a society that is attuned to man, to his dignity, to his vocation (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 19). It is due to this fact that the Encyclicals are more universal in nature.

In terms of the language the Encyclical uses secular language which makes it readable by those who do not follow the documents of the Church. This is a progressive step and hopefully this would be continued in the days to come. This would make the Church more universal and global and thus would have impact in the documents that it comes out with.

The Encyclical does justice to many of the emerging issues of human family. Some of them are: dignity of labour, mobility of labour, migration, international cooperation, fair trade, promotion and protection of nature etc. When many of the regimes are trying to relegate these issues to the background and often concentrate on non-issues, the Church's insistence of the centrality of these issues is very crucial. Moreover, the Pope locates the reasons to these malaise not in individuals but in the institutions themselves.

The attempt by the Church to foreground this fact that 'everyone who works is a creator' is something that needs to be further made known to all. This Encyclical attempts to give the rightful place to human beings as creators and not just workers who labour can be exploited (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 41).

Like the earlier Encyclical, this Encyclical too calls for bringing the social order under the moral order (*Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, # 67). Further it calls for interdependent relationship between these two orders and further these to contribute for the well being and integral development of human beings.

The importance of this Encyclical as continuation of the social teachings of the Church becomes clear from this statement. The encyclical reiterates the centrality of social teachings of the Church, which is to illuminate with an unchanging light the new problems that are constantly emerging. Following from *Populorum Progressio*, the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, once again can be seen a conscience keeper for the Christian world.

Though in this Encyclical there is an attempt to use secular language, but the tendency is to fall back to the traditional terminologies or what is known as 'church idioms and language'. For instance, charity is the term used here. But today most people would use 'solidarity' to express the interdependence. When Church is trying to become ecumenical, universal and global, it is expedient that it also progressively changes its idioms and language. This is all the more needed since forty years ago Pope Paul VI had already come out with a much progressive Encyclical in the form of *Populorum Progressio*.

Though there is a shift in the language in terms of his or her, he or she but that is not the case through out the Encyclical. Moreover, man is even now used while the term human is slowly occupying some space. Recognizing the truth of women and men

being children of God, it would have been more universal and acceptable to be sensitive to this emerging demand. Even if it has reservations on the priesthood of women, yet being sensitive to a gender balanced language would go a long way in bring Church's document universal and inclusive. Similarly, using language like believers and non-believers even in this age once again makes Church an excluding institution.

In terms of the content, while the Encyclical is an attempt to present Church's understanding of development, it fails to take into account the discussion on underdevelopment, the causes behind underdevelopment and the people who are affected by underdevelopment. Moreover, it deals only with the development issues between nations but fails to see the underdevelopment within nations.

This Encyclical like the previous ones speaks about reform but is silent on what reforms it has in mind. Any discussion on this issue would have made the Encyclical more effective since many regimes only speak about economic reform in a fast globalizing world but do not take into account land reform, educational reform, electoral reform, judicial reform, administrative reform etc. Only a discussion on over all reform would go a long way in ensuring integral development of people.

In the discussion on rights and duties, the Encyclical stresses rightly the need to have the right match between rights and duties. But at times, the Encyclical over stresses the importance of duties and almost decries the assertion for rights. Instead of making blanket statements like this the Encyclical can take specific instances and can discuss the issue.

Irrespective of these limitations, the Encyclical is a useful document in the line of social teachings of the Church. The

interdependence of many themes charity and truth, Agape and Logos (Love and Word), communication and communion, justice and common good make the document an integrated one. In a fast secularizing, globalizing world where individualism, consumerism, authoritarianism and exclusivism are becoming the trend, the insistence of this Encyclical to build human family would go a long way in foreground this demand.

## Conclusion

Historical data bear testimony to the fact that Church at different times through its Encyclicals made profound statements about some of the crucial aspects of development and human beings. The *Populorum Progressio* in its time, tried to highlight the crucial issues involved in the development of people. Following in this tradition, after forty years, the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* relooks at some of the issues raised by Pope Paul VI and goes further to deal with some of the current issues of importance.

Today the very human existence is threatened by dehumanizing cultures. The culture of death, which enforces starvation death, suicide, abortion, female infanticide, murders of politically conscious people who oppose the existing unjust socio-economic structure, the slow 'murder' of the under-privileged who are denied food and basic facilities. The culture of poverty, which has forced the masses in to malnutrition, hunger and slow death, inspite of the fact that it is they who toil to produce every object. The culture of domination and subjugation, which contradicts every form of freedom and liberty. The culture of silence, which forces the oppressed to suffer silently every form of inhuman treatment and finally reduces them to sub-human living. It is in this backdrop the Church through this Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* once again calls

for the centrality of human beings, the human family and inter-dependent and integral development.

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