



## WORLD MEETING OF POPULAR MOVEMENTS

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FINAL RELEASE | 24.10.2020

MEETING OF POPULAR MOVEMENTS WITH THE VATICAN

**Popular movements are deepening the paths of brotherhood and dignity that will make it possible to achieve social justice for all**

**The meeting of popular movements and the Dicastery for Integral Human Service concludes. Produced in videoconference format, as a result of COVID-19, was broadcasted live in five languages.**

For four hours, delegates from popular movements in different countries representing a diversity of humble, precarious and excluded workers, landless rural workers and homeless workers and their families, who in addition to suffering the injustices of this system fight against it in the desire for land, roof and work (3T) for all and everywhere, have transferred their reflections and proposals from the dialogue of the meeting to the Vatican Dicastery, represented by Cardinal Peter Turkson.

Cardinal Michael Czerny, who was in charge of welcoming, pointed out that this new meeting was part of the *culture of encounter* "indispensable for progress" and an opportunity to "learn in a new context" of pandemics. He invited all those in the meeting to ask themselves the five questions expressed in Fratelli tutti, 197: "How much love did I put into my work?" "What did I do for the progress of our people?" "What mark did I leave on the life of society?" "What real bonds did I create?" "What positive forces did I unleash?" "How much social peace did I sow?" "What good did I achieve in the position that was entrusted to me?". What did I provoke in the place that was entrusted to me, a clear invitation to personal conversion.

For his part, Juan Grabois, announced the different dialogues among this meeting, not without first transferring the importance of confronting the logic of discarding, the logic of the social poets: "that of creating, of recovering, that of that invisible army that Francisco values so much and that has put itself in the trenches of the difficult maps of the pandemic. Those of us who share the desire for land, housing and work, which has three dimensions: they are sacred rights, they are a social subject: the poorest workers without labour rights, the families without housing; peasants without land, land workers... and this social subject of exclusion and discard has the project of the popular economy, urban reform and agrarian reform. The discarded people with a positive transformation that has in front of the golden idol; and a transformation program". Grabois has encouraged strengthening the bonds of "love of our peoples, the thirst for



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justice, and the thought and example of all those who put their hands and heart into this service. Francis is one of them who leaves us treasures in his texts".

### **Letter to Francis on the occasion of the event The Economy of Francis**

This document will be presented at Francisco's Economy event, scheduled for next November, as a proposal for an alternative dialogue to the current "predatory system". It was presented by Marina Oliveira, Juliane Furno, Andrés Cappa and Jean Jores who have stressed that "the socio-environmental crisis cannot be overcome within the framework of the current system which idolises money".

Therefore, this alternative proposal basically involves placing "women, men and nature at the centre" of political decisions as opposed to the idolatry and power of money that governs. The popular movements, which recognise "the breadth of Francis' thought", propose "a vision that we consider to be in harmony with the radical nature of his teachings and the revolutionary nature of the Christian faith". A proposal based on five axes: Integral ecology and common goods; Economic democracy; Land, housing and work; Education, health, communication and technology; Sovereignty, human mobility and peace . The letter has its origin in "the documents elaborated in the three world meetings of popular movements, the various national and regional meetings held by community organizations and the interventions of Pope Francis on various subjects".

### **The post-pandemic period, in terms of land, housing and work.**

Joao Pedro Stidle, shared three issues. The concept of land, which "is more than cultivating and working it. Land is territory, it is culture, it is nature and of course the different ways of relating to it, among which we defend agro-ecology. Land is the right to food sovereignty". Secondly, he pointed out that the current reality of the production system "no longer solves the problems of humanity. It is a mode of production of the past. The capitalist continues to accumulate, and the rich continue to accumulate but there are no conditions to meet the fundamental needs of the people", 850 million people are hungry all over the world. And finally, the perspectives that "the current crisis helps us to put on the table the only possible alternative on the land aspect is peasant family agriculture, based on family work and respect for nature".

For her part, Rose Molokoane presented the situation of the slum dwellers, denouncing that "the different international bodies meet to discuss the problems that affect us, but without us" to affirm that "nothing for us without us", the impoverished of the system. For this reason, she demands that governments recognize "communities, informal settlements and villages" the need and the right they have "to occupy the land. We know



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how to change lives, but we don't have the resources because the land doesn't belong to us," she said, pointing to politicians who "don't have the will to support us. Speaking out without action is not going to change our lives. We have to create alternatives that will make governments listen to us and do things with us".

Speaker Aboubakar continued by sharing his thoughts on the issue of work, which the pandemic has highlighted, "aggravating social problems, especially inequality," and denouncing that work today "is an existential precariousness. Work today is exploitation, it is greed for profit, it is plundering nature, it is a form of metamorphosis of the social crisis, it is also a form of impoverishment of people". In this sense, he calls for "the decolonization of our mentalities" and to imagine another possible form of society "that can be implemented if we are able to connect our visions" and promote solidarity, so that they can cover their basic needs, "with the participation of diversities" and hopeful in "building alternative environments where the economy is at the service of the community" and of people.

### **Fratelli tutti, the shared desire for brotherhood, sisterhood, solidarity and social justice**

The dialogue continued with the intervention of Charo Castelló, who presented a perspective of the popular movements in relation to Fratelli tutti, highlighting, on the one hand, the power of shared dreams since "it is not a question of a dream or a chimera, a delusion, but of awakening the capacity to imagine a new and different reality, which is the first and indispensable step to walk towards it, to build it". That's why popular movements "have been claiming for years that charity, but also politics, is not just charity that is not just 'feeding', but working to transform those social, economic structures, that culture". "When popular movements demand the 3Ts, we want this principle to be put into practice, and it has enormous consequences for people's lives. Water, land, culture, work, etc., are all universal goods that no one has the right to appropriate.

On the other hand, Castelló recalled that work is the key to human dignity and to promoting social justice, and therefore she denounced "in so many places on this earth the rights of working people are trampled on. We have fought sometimes with a lot of vehemence over the importance of work in people's lives, not only because of what it means in terms of economic contribution, which is fundamental in the best of cases, but also because it is a space for development, for creation, for building environments for proper relationships," she said.

### **Introduction to the University of the Peripheries, light and hope on the horizon**



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In addition, the meeting shared the educational and emancipatory project of the Latin American University of the Peripheries, directed by and for the poor and working people. Charly Olivero, an Argentinean local priest, said that this university "begins at the bottom, in the compilation of the needs, problems and knowledge of the peripheries. And from there it launches into the production of contextualised knowledge that overcomes epistemological fragmentation, respects the knowledge of the poorest, and tries to build bridges towards validated global scientific knowledge".

### **Message from the Vatican...**

For his part, in the intervention made by Cardinal Peter Turkson, Prefect of the Vatican Dicastery, he agreed with the movements that "there are inequalities, lack of access to health, cruel economic systems, that is why the virus exposes us to many other pandemics that must be dealt with. They all have one thing in common, they undermine human dignity". The Fratelli tutti encyclical is an appropriate response to these deficiencies, he said.

Turkson wanted to make a special mention of the University of the Peripheries project, a comprehensive educational space to "motivate people to seek change. The University of the Peripheries (ULPE) project was developed to serve the peripheral populations and to remind them that the motivation for change lies in education. Fratelli Tutti is the foundation stone for building this education". From the dicastery we want to put all our efforts into reversing these deficiencies that threaten human dignity and that our people suffer.

### **Available documents**

[Letter to Francisco](#). Contribution from the popular movements in the event La economía de Francisco.