

Message of the Youth “From San Paolo to the World”

That economics in 2031 may be one of communion, for us and for all



PREMISE

At the end of the *Economy of Communion* (EoC) in Freedom Assembly 2011, on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the project's beginning, all of us who have participated, in particular us youth, feel the responsibility and wish to launch a message from San Paolo to the world. We want to send our message to all those who believe, desire, and commit themselves to a different, more

just and solidarity-based economic system.

WE BELIEVE

We believe that:

- Economies and businesses should adopt, along with the principles of liberty and equality, the principle of *fraternity*. By doing so, economics will contribute to fulfilling the dignity of the human person of every race. In this way, it will be possible to respond to the questions of purpose and happiness embedded in the hearts of every man and woman;

- We cannot, and no longer, stand, to further tolerate, the fact that more than a billion people today still live in conditions of absolute poverty. We should not rest until every person on Earth has the basic necessities for a decent life, to live a life they love, develop their potentials and capacities, cultivate their personal and collective dreams. Nevertheless, more than anything else, we believe that there is a need for new men and women who choose a lifestyle of solidarity and moderation everyday, who use their creativity even as entrepreneurs and in institutions, who share their talents, risk themselves, and who love in concrete aspects of their lives.

- It is possible to build an economy that takes the principle of *fraternity* seriously and that when it is broken down into economic terms, it is called *communion*, for at least four reasons:

1. We already see a fraternal economy in the everyday choice to live the *communion of goods* and moderation by millions of people who, at different levels, share the same *spirituality of unity, culture of giving, and reciprocity*.

2. We see that a fraternal economy is a reality in the experiences of hundreds of EoC businesses, who despite difficulties and failures, whether small or large, remain faithful to the EoC's values, allocating profits toward brothers/sisters in need, creating jobs, spreading a *culture of giving*, imprinting these values in their management decisions on clients, workers, suppliers, and the civil society.

3. We now discover the presence of the same continual effort to live communion and fraternity in the many experiences of social, civil, and solidarity-based economies in the world – a varied movement in continual growth and which says in many languages that another post-capitalistic alternative to

the market economy is possible, if we want it and if everyone commits themselves together for it, immediately.

4. Finally, we believe that an *economy of communion* is possible, because in every man and woman on Earth is “inscribed in the depth of his or her being, whether believer or non-believer, the vocation to communion and love”, as Chiara Lubich told us. Only an economy of this type can fully satisfy our search for individual and social happiness.

WE ASK

With this threefold faith, we, youth of the EoC, representing thousands of young people and adults of various cultures, countries, religions, economic, and social conditions, want to ask for concrete changes, here and now.

1. In recent years, economic development has been drugged with the ethically questionable behavior of unregulated finance, which created such significant damage, putting the function of the very system at risk. The Western economic and financial system remains structurally fragile and requires new rules able to bring it back to its precious function for the Common Good. That is why we ask the governments of States to:

- Involve the civil society in development policies starting from the family, valuing part-time work, that of those responsible for child-care and assistance to the elderly or disabled.
- Fiscally facilitate employed work, families with dependent children, and environmental protection;
- Discourage, even with fiscal structures, highly speculative financial transactions;
- Combat fiscal evasion, eliminate “fiscal paradises”, and reduce unnecessary military spending to the sole protection of populations;
- Abolish customs barriers for products from countries that respect labor and the environment.

2. That is why we ask all citizens of the world, beginning with us present here today in San Paolo, to employ the co-essential values of liberty and equality with new conviction and commitment, even on the political, juridical, institutional levels, and also provide a concrete avenue for the need of fraternity among persons and peoples, favoring their own choices of consumption and savings, those enterprises that are ethically oriented and those that invest a significant part of their profits for the common good. The EoC tells us, in fact, that business profits have a social nature and vocation.

3. Since the beginning, the EoC has attributed great importance to the formation of “new men and women”. That is why we ask:

a. That primary and secondary school curricula include courses in care for the environment, legality, education to fraternity, globality, favoring integration, peace, communion, unity among peoples, and therefore reduce the risk of future wars and destruction on the planet.

b. That efforts by universities in countries with great financial and cultural resources give life, with reciprocal respect, to professor exchanges with other universities in the world, since there is no future for the youth without a high level or quality formation.

c. That in economics, political, and social sciences departments, may it be a recognized right of citizens to learn about economic visions and theories which are different than those that are dominant today.

CONCLUSION

We young people are aware of being the first generation in the history of humanity that seriously risks, on the global scale, having a future that is worse than that of our parents, due to the deep wounds that have been inflicted on the environment, air, water, and non-renewable energy over the last century.

Moreover, a growing individualistic, xenophobic and non-solidarity ideology is on the horizon of our post-modern civilization. At the same time, we are trustful and certain that Providence exists and is at work in our history, and that we, too, can have a future that is better than the past. We believe that the EoC began on Earth, here in Brazil twenty years ago, to nourish and make our hope/s possible.

Because of all of this, we young people here in San Paolo, present in May of 2011, with our roots in May of 1991, more than ever responsible for how economics and the world will be in 2031, believe that if our convictions, hopes, commitments, and wishes are shared by many men and women on all continents, if our and their everyday behaviors will be coherent as such, the aspiration for economics to not only be efficient and just, but also fraternal, will not be a simple utopia.

We participants of the EoC Assembly of San Paolo, even if we're the only ones, solemnly commit ourselves to this task, making a pact among us, confident that many others will join us and will be at our side, because we're convinced that communion is the most profound vocation of every person, enterprise, and community.

"That all may be one."

San Paolo, the 29th of May, 2011