

St Patrick's Pontifical University

Maynooth

**“My Peace I Give You” (John 14: 27):  
Benedict XVI's Logic of the Gift and Peacebuilding in Catholic  
Social Teaching**

Peter Jacob Shanet

A dissertation submitted to the Faculty of Theology  
in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the  
degree of Doctor in Theology

Supervisor: Dr Michael Shortall

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## **Declaration**

I, Peter Jacob Shanet, declare that this research is my original work and that it has never been presented to any institution or University for the award of a degree. Also, I referenced literature and other sources used in this work. Finally, I bear the responsibility that this work complies with the guidelines of St Patrick's Pontifical University, as contained in the Student Handbook of Academic Honesty and Policy.

Sign \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this thesis to God, who has always been my inspiration: my late parents, Mr Peter Shanet and Mrs Margret Shanet, and my siblings, Miss Magdaline and Miss Elizabeth. Your intercessions absorbed every pressure and sustained my effort to accomplish this task; thirdly, the late Pope Benedict XVI, whose ideas I will forever admire and promote.

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## **Abbreviations**

**UN** – United Nations

**CSDC** – Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

**MILF** – Mindanao (or Moro) Islamic Liberation Form (Philippines)

**CST** – Catholic Social Teaching

**CSTHOUGHT** – Catholic Social Thought

**USCCB** – United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

**CBCN** – Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria

**CV** – Caritas in Veritate

**BHNs** – Basic Human Needs

**FT** – Fratelli Tutti

**QA** – Quadragesima Anno

**SRS**– Sollicitudo Rei Socialis

**RN** – Rerum Novarum

**PT** – Pacem in Terris

**AL** – Amoris Laetitia

**GS** – Gaudium Et Spes

**LS** – Laudato Si

**LG** – Lumen Gentium

**LE** – Laborem Exercens

**MM** – Mater Et Magistra

**SC** – Sacramentum Caritatis

**UADC** – Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio

**CCC** – Catechism of the Catholic Church

**PP** – Populorum Progressio

**IMF** – International Monetary Fund

**WB** – World Bank

**CPCJP** – The Catholic Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace

**R2P** – Responsibility to Protect

## **Abstract**

This thesis deals with two themes in Catholic Social Teaching: the principle of gratuitousness and peacebuilding. The former is a relatively new articulation in Catholic Social Teaching that relies on the logic of the gift. The latter has and continues to be a global issue. The early scholarly discussion on gift-giving is widely traced to Marcel Mauss (1872-1950). He raised questions that drew the attention of philosophers and sociologists such as Jacques Derrida (1930-2004), Jean-Luc Marion (1946 - ), and René Girard (1923-2015). They advanced the discussion, highlighting opportunities and ambiguities. This thesis argues that Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI writes about the logic of the gift in a positive perspective and situates it within Catholic Social Teaching. The dissertation maintains that rather than Catholic Social Teaching relying on the criteria of law and order guided by reason, the logic of the gift – which is based on the Christian notion of God, creation, the Trinity, and the human person – provides a resource for Catholic models of peacebuilding. It argues that this approach can supplement Basic Human Needs Theory– a significant model in the field of peacebuilding – that aligns with earlier Catholic social thought. The thesis concludes that Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI’s writings on the subject can be a moral framework of encounter that supports theologically informed means to consider peacebuilding models and the practices of those who engage them.

**Keywords:** Joseph Ratzinger, Benedict XVI, the gift, gift-giving and receiving, the logic of the gift, peacebuilding, Catholic Social Teaching, and basic human needs.

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## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

This thesis examines Benedict XVI's logic of the gift, Catholic Social Teaching, and peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of Catholic Social Teaching.

### 1. Motivation

The initial motivation for this research was the increased number of attacks, killings, and kidnappings in my homeland during the last decade. I am a priest of the Catholic Diocese of Kafanchan, in the southern part of Kaduna State, in Northern Nigeria. Since 2014, the people of southern Kaduna have experienced repeated attacks by Fulani nomads and other bandits. Today, violence is prevalent in the region.<sup>1</sup>

In 2017, the then-bishop of Kafanchan diocese, Joseph Bagobiri, published a book about the systemic attacks and killings in the area. He observed that:

The jihadists established themselves in these places (North Africa, Turkey, and now southern Kaduna) not through persuasive, nonviolent preaching of their religion, but through the use of armed or military force. The Fulani jihadists are following the same pattern today in Southern Kaduna, the middle belt region and now with incursion into both the south east and south west of Nigeria... In southern Kaduna today, even with sitting governments at state and federal levels, land is being confiscated and occupied by Fulanis through the use of armed power.<sup>2</sup>

Highlighting the exceptional violence in southern Kaduna, Benjamin Yakubu Bala of the Catholic Institute of West Africa Nigeria notes:

In Kaduna state, the violence assumed a dangerous dimension, especially in the southern part. Several attacks continued to be carried out sporadically across villages, resulting in the wanton killing and destruction of property, animals, and farm land... One cannot forget the senseless killing of innocent citizens by the dreaded Boko Haram (BH) since 2009 up to the time of working on this book in January, 2020. There

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<sup>1</sup> For more information, see Joseph Danlami Bagobiri, *Christians: Seed of Another Humanity* (Ikeja: Nilesorphem Limited, 2017); Matthew Hassan Kukah, *Witness to Justice: An Insider's Account of Nigeria's Truth Commission* (Ibadan: Book Craft, 2011), 201 and 203.

<sup>2</sup> Bagobiri, *Christians: Seed of Another Humanity*, 4-5.

are also armed killer herdsmen reported to be...the fourth deadliest terror group in the world' by the *Independent*, a United Kingdom online newspaper.<sup>3</sup>

In 2022, BBC Africa reported a vicious attack on a church while Mass was being celebrated, describing how “armed men rushed through the church doors around 11:30 am on Sunday and set up dynamite that had congregants scampering to escape... One Mr Nwovu says, ‘I saw an entire family being wiped away, friends, relations those I know’.”<sup>4</sup> To date, no one has been prosecuted for this attack. Furthermore, TVC News, a national television station, reported collusion with the Nigerian army the previous year.<sup>5</sup> On June 19<sup>th</sup> 2023, it was reported that three hundred and sixteen people had been killed in Kaduna State by bandits and other terrorist groups during the previous six months.<sup>6</sup>

In this context, fundamental questions need to be asked. The previously mentioned Benjamin Bala has been forthright: “A serious question for the people is whether, after praying to God for his intervention, they should simply fold their hands and watch the seeming conspiracy come to fruition.”<sup>7</sup> Bala was motivated to generate discussion on the Catholic vision of legitimate armed defence in a violent context. Of course, many more questions arise: what are the institutions of peacebuilding doing? What are the responsibilities of domestic and international communities and states? More specifically, how is the Catholic Church responding to such conflict situations?

The Catholic Church and other international and global institutions make efforts to build peace. In 1992, the then United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, announced his agenda for peace, stating:

The sources of conflict and war are pervasive and deep. To reach them will require our utmost effort to enhance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to

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<sup>3</sup> Benjamin Yakubu Bala, *Self Defence: Permissibility and Legitimacy* (Ibadan: St Paul Publications, 2020), 28-29. Boko Haram is a recognised Islamist terrorist organisation found mainly in the northwest region of Nigeria.

<sup>4</sup> Nduka Orjinmo, “Nigeria Owo Church Attack; Blood on the Altar,” in *BBC News Abuja*, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2022, Accessed on June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2023, [www.bbc.com/africa](http://www.bbc.com/africa)

<sup>5</sup> Ayodele Ozubako, “DSS Arrest Soldier for Hiring, Selling Guns to Kidnappers, September 27, 2022,” *Journalists’ Hangout*, TVC News, Nigeria. During the broadcast, Babajide Otidoju narrated different situations where Nigerian soldiers were caught supplying weapons to bandits. Recently, on January 24, 2023, the same television station reported that apart from the reports of the killings of other religious groups, one hundred and forty-five Catholic priests alone were reported killed by bandits and other terrorist groups in 2022. These reports suggest the terrible situation of insecurity in Nigeria.

<sup>6</sup> Ayodele Ozubako, “316 Killed in Six Months in Kaduna,” *Journalists’ Hangout* (June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2023), TVC News, Nigeria. Available on YouTube. Here, the past six months represent January to June 2023.

<sup>7</sup> Bala, *Self-defence: Permissibility and Legitimacy*, 30

promote sustainable economic and social development for wider prosperity; to alleviate distress and to curtail the existence and use of massively destructive weapons.<sup>8</sup>

This concept of peacebuilding has widespread currency.<sup>9</sup> Many institutions and activists are involved in post-war and social reconstruction.

One model of peacekeeping that resonates with Boutros Boutros-Ghali is the Basic Human Needs Theory. In 1979, John Burton, who pioneered the theory, released *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems*. He contends that deep-rooted conflict emerges when basic human needs are unmet, and divisive issues can be resolved when people's needs are identified and fulfilled.<sup>10</sup> The theory has attracted the attention of internationally renowned scholars, including Nobel Peace Prize winner Amartya Sen, Martha Nussbaum, and William Ury. Other authors such as Kevin Avruch, Christopher Mitchell, Ronald Fisher, and Doob Leonard have applied Burton's theory to practical peacebuilding activities.<sup>11</sup>

## 2. A Synopsis

Commitment to human dignity has driven the Catholic Church to engage in a variety of peacebuilding activities. The recent documentary heritage of Catholic Social Teaching may be said to arise from conflict and violence. The opening lines of *Rerum Novarum* (1891) by Leo XIII (1810-1903) begin with addressing violence: "The elements of the conflict now raging are unmistakable" (RN, 1). It continued through international affairs in *Pacem in Terris* (1963) by John XXIII (1881-1963). He writes:

It can obviously happen, and indeed it happens, that political communities enter into a rivalry of interests; These conflicts cannot, however, be resolved by force of arms, fraud

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<sup>8</sup> Boutros Boutros-Ghali, "An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace-Making and Peace-Keeping," in *International Relations* 11, no 3 (1992): 201-218, 201, Accessed on January 21, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/MGLyRPfx>. For more information, see Robert Scott Appleby has highlighted how different scholars from diverse backgrounds have contributed to the formulation of Boutros-Ghali's ideas on peacebuilding. Read Appleby, "Peacebuilding and Catholicism: Affinities, Convergence, Possibilities," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, eds., Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby and Gerard F. Powers (Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2010). 11-12.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 11; William Holden and Kathleen Nadeau, "Catholic Responses to Peacebuilding, Climate Change and Extractive Industries," in *Budhi: A Journal of Ideas and Culture* XXIV, no. 2 (2020), 89.

<sup>10</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention, Conflict Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990), 95; *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems* (Australian National University Press, 1979), 79 & 81.

<sup>11</sup> Kevin Avruch and Christopher Mitchell, *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice* (Oxfordshire, England: Routledge, 2013); Sandole Dennis, "John Burton's Contribution to Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: A Personal Review," in *International Journal for Peace Studies* 6, no. 1 (2001): 11-21 Accessed on January 29, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/mz7RS44s>; Ronald Fisher, *The Psychology of Intergroup and International Conflict* (New York: Springer Verlag Publishers, 1990); Doob Leonard (ed.), *Resolving Conflict in Africa: The Fermeda Workshop* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

or deception, but as befits people, through mutual understanding, objective estimation of data and fair compromise” (RN, 93).

The recent publication of *Fratelli Tutti* (2020) by Pope Francis corroborates:

War, terrorist attacks, racial or religious persecution, and many other affronts to human dignity are judged differently, depending on how convenient it proves for certain, primarily economic, interests. What is true as long as it is convenient for someone in power stops being true once it becomes inconvenient. These situations of violence, sad to say, ‘have become so common as to constitute a real ‘third world war’ fought piecemeal’ (FT, 25).

A commitment to human dignity motivates these pontiffs to address violence arising from social, economic, and other systemic injustices.

The national and local bishops’ conferences have also responded to violence and different forms of injustice in their regions.<sup>12</sup> For instance, in 2009, the African bishops stated: “To serve reconciliation, justice and peace, every form of discrimination, intolerance and religious fundamentalism must be overcome.”<sup>13</sup> More than ten years later, the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) expressed concern about the conflict in their country, observing: “There are, unfortunately, several killings, banditry, kidnapping, assassinations, armed robbery, reckless use of force by security agencies and lynching . . . These realities [they said] make living in Nigeria very precarious.”<sup>14</sup> Although these concerns were met with strong statements and financial aid, the conflict continues.

Among the many approaches to peacebuilding in the recent Catholic tradition, four merit consideration: just war, pacifism, social justice, and pastoral accompaniment. In 1983, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) released its pastoral letter, *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response*, in which it defends the Church’s insistence on Just War amidst terrorism and violence.

The Christian has no choice but to defend peace, properly understood, against aggression. This is an inalienable obligation. It is the how of defending peace which offers moral options. We stress this principle again because we observe so much misunderstanding about both those who resist bearing arms and those who bear them.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> The Medellin Conference of South American bishops and the United States Conference of Catholic bishops have issued different statements concerning peace and violence. See USCCB, *Pastoral Letter: The Challenge of Peace*, 1983, PDF.

<sup>13</sup> African Bishops, “The Church in Africa in Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You Are the Salt of the Earth and You Are the Light of the World,” *Propositions*, nos. 12.

<sup>14</sup> Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), “Moving Beyond Precarious Living in Nigeria,” *A communique issued at the end of the second plenary meeting of the Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) at the Divine Mercy Pastoral Centre, Agbamaya, Obada, Oko, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 11-20 September 2019*. Accessed on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. [www.cbcn-ng.org](http://www.cbcn-ng.org).

<sup>15</sup> USCCB, *Pastoral Letter: The Challenge of Peace*, 1983, PDF, no. 73.



Responding to this pastoral letter at the time, David Hollenbach asserted that the Church should supplement pacifism to just war approaches in order to achieve justice and peace.<sup>16</sup> Drew Christiansen articulates the Church's stance on social justice, stating:

For John XXIII, the substance of peace was the promotion, safeguarding, and defence of human rights; for Pope Paul VI it was socio-economic development, as in the famous dictum 'if you want peace, work for justice' (*Populorum Progressio*, 1968); and for John Paul II it was solidarity, understood as 'the unswerving persevering commitment to the common good' (*Sollicitudo rei Socialis*, 1988), including both human rights and development.<sup>17</sup>

In 2016 the *Catholic Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace* (CPCJP) and *Pax Christi International* (PCI) hosted a conference on non-violence and just peace in Rome. At the end of the conference, the participants, scholars of Just War Theory and pacifists, recommended that the Church subscribe to nonviolent activities.<sup>18</sup> These nonviolent activities include social justice, a commitment to human rights, the principles of distribution, solidarity, and subsidiarity. Finally, there is pastoral accompaniment. Theodora Hawksley has observed: "Catholic Social Teaching on peace needs to develop theological resources that support this practice (Pastoral Accompaniment)."<sup>19</sup> Scholars, activists and leaders are often divided on all the models.<sup>20</sup> While some argue that the Church should adopt all the models, others reason that nonviolence is the preferred model for the Church.

On April 19, 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger was elected the 265<sup>th</sup> pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church, taking the name Benedict XVI. His chosen name consciously links him to St Benedict of Nursia, the patron saint of Europe and Pope Benedict XV, who was pontiff during

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<sup>16</sup> David Hollenbach, *Nuclear Ethics: A Christian Moral Argument* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 86.

<sup>17</sup> Drew Christiansen, "Catholic Peacemaking, 1991 – 2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II," *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (2006), 22 (Parenthesis are original).

<sup>18</sup> Read The Council Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace Pax Christi International, *Conference for Nonviolence and Just Peace: Contributing to the Catholic Understanding of and Commitment to Nonviolence* Rome, April 11-13, 201, accessed on May 15, 2023, PDF; Steve Chase, "Review of Works: The Catholic Church Returns to Gospel of Non-violence by Mary Dennis," in *International Journal on World Peace* 36, no. 4 (2019): 92 – 96; Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Just War Pacifism, Just Peace," in *Theological Studies* 80, no 1 (2018), 171.

<sup>19</sup> Theodora Hawksley, *Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020), 80.

<sup>20</sup> For more information, see Cahil, *Blessed are the Peace Makers: Pacifism, Just War, and Peacebuilding* ((Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2009), 312-320.

the First World War.<sup>21</sup> At his first audience, he expressed admiration for Benedict XV's commitment to peacebuilding:

Treading in his footsteps, I would like to place my ministry at the service of Reconciliation and Harmony between persons and people since I am proudly convinced that the great good of peace is first and foremost a precious but unfortunately fragile gift to pray for, safeguard and build up day after day with the help of all.<sup>22</sup>

Also, in his first *Message of the World Day of Peace* (2006), he re-iterated the rationale for choosing his name:

The very name Benedict, which I chose on the day of my election to the Chair of Peter, is a sign of my personal commitment to peace. In taking this name, I wanted to evoke both the patron saint of Europe, who inspired a civilisation of peace on the whole continent, and Pope Benedict XV, who condemned the First World War as a useless slaughter and worked for a universal acknowledgment of the lofty demands of peace.<sup>23</sup>

From the outset, Benedict XVI clearly signalled his commitment to peacebuilding. On the sixtieth anniversary of the D-Day invasion in June 2004, he joined several political leaders and spoke about peacebuilding concepts such as forgiveness and reconciliation with reference to Germany and its allies.<sup>24</sup> It will be an argument of this thesis that his writings on gift-giving make significant contributions to Catholic Social Teaching in relation to peacebuilding.

Benedict XI teaches that peace is the gift of God and writes meaningfully on the dynamic of the gift. He conceived of the gift as grace or gratuitousness, an encounter between humans and God and humans. For example, in *Caritas in Veritate* (2009), a central text for our thesis, the logic of the gift is the ability “to give and receive, without one group making progress at the expense of the other;” it is contrary to “giving in order to acquire” (CV, 39). He makes explicit that the logic of the gift is already present in the principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

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<sup>21</sup> Benedict states: “I chose to call myself Benedict XVI ideally as a link to the venerated pontiff, Benedict XV, who guided the Church through the turbulent times of the First World War. He was a true and courageous prophet of peace who struggled strenuously and bravely, first to avoid the drama of war and then to limit its terrible consequences. In his footsteps, I place my ministry in the service of reconciliation and harmony between peoples, profoundly convinced that the great good of peace is, above all, a gift of God, a fragile and precious gift to be invoked, safeguarded and constructed, day after day and with everyone's contribution... The name Benedict also evokes the extraordinary figure of the great ‘patriarch of western monasticism,’ St. Benedict of Norcia, co-patron of Europe with Cyril and Methodius.” Catholic News Agency, “Pope Tells Why He Chose the Name of ‘Benedict XVI,’” Accessed on September 27, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va); Benedict XVI, Message for the *Celebration of World Day of Peace* 2006, no.2; Daniel Philpott, “The Surprise of Forgiveness in Modern Catholic Teaching and Practice,” in *The Surprise Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*, eds. JJ. Carney and Laurie Johnston (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), 291.

<sup>22</sup> Benedict XVI, *General Audience*, Wednesday, April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2005, accessed on December, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>23</sup> Benedict XVI, “In Truth Peace,” *Message of the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2006, no. 2, Accessed August 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>24</sup> Daniel Philpott, “The Surprise of Forgiveness in Modern Catholic Teaching and Practice,” in *The Surprise Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*, 291.

Gift-giving is a pivotal element of both human society and Christian tradition. It is a noticeable theme in the Bible. For example, the book of Deuteronomy refers to it, stating: “But remember the Lord your God, for it is he who gives you power to get wealth” (Deut. 8: 18).<sup>25</sup> In the New Testament, St. Paul proclaims: “You will be enriched in every way for your great generosity.” (2 Cor. 9: 11). The letter from James states that “Every generous act of giving, with every perfect gift, is from above, coming down from the father of lights, with whom there is no variation or shadow due to change” (James 1: 17).

The gift features in several documents of the Church, notably in recent times, Vatican II (1962-1965), the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (CCC, 1992), the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (CSDC, 2004) and social encyclicals. For instance, *Gaudium et Spes* states that “Man can only discover his true nature in a sincere giving of himself” (GS, 24). Elsewhere, *Lumen Gentium* (1964) emphasises how everyone receives gifts from God and should share those gifts for the general good of humanity and the Church. It states:

From this source, the Church, equipped with the gifts of its founder and faithfully guarding His precepts of charity, humility, and self-sacrifice, receives the mission to proclaim and to spread among all peoples the Kingdom of Christ and of God and to be, on earth, the initial budding forth of that kingdom...In virtue of this Catholicity, each individual part contributes through its special gifts to the good of the other parts and of the whole Church (LG, 5 & 13).

Here, two crucial perspectives on the gift are presented: first, the gifts we exchange come from God, and second, giving confers responsibility on every person to share with others in the interest of unity and the common good.

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church* uses terms such as communion, charity, and solidarity to express the Church’s teaching that God’s saving action is about giving and receiving (CCC, 1607 & 1939). It also states that “the mutual attraction” to connect or to communicate is “the creator’s own gift,” and all humans share in it (CCC, 1607). These explanations of the gift are predicated on two assumptions: the first is that the human act of giving can be understood only in light of the divine gift, and the second is that communion results from the dynamic aspects of the gift. In essence, we communicate not just because we are social beings but because we are receivers and givers. The *Compendium* develops the discussion further, explaining that God is a giver of all that exists. It states:

In every religious experience, therefore, importance attaches to the dimension of *gift* and *gratuitousness*, which is seen as an underlying element of the experience that the human beings have of their existence together with others in the world...as well as to

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<sup>25</sup> All Biblical references are from the *New Revised Standard Version*.

the repercussions of this dimension of the human conscience, which senses that it is called to manage *responsibly and together* with others.<sup>26</sup>

We may say that the logic of the gift underpins the *Compendium*'s position.

The idea of the gift is also present among saints of the Church. For example, St Catherine of Sienna (1347-1380), reflecting on communion, charity, and solidarity, used the language of the gift to deepen understanding of the relationship between God and humans. She teaches that everything about the human person is a gift, arguing that God gave us both social and spiritual gifts. According to her, God gives diverse gifts to each of us. As an illustration, she states: "And so I have given many gifts and graces, but spiritual and temporal with such diversity that I have not given everything to one single person."<sup>27</sup> Saint Teresa of Avila (1515-1582) speaks of the gift as favour received:

I had experienced a tenderness in devotion, some part of which, I think can be obtained by one's own efforts. This is a favour neither wholly of sense nor wholly spirit, but entirely the gift of God. It seems however that we can do a great deal towards the obtaining of its grievous pains, and on His life, which was full of afflictions. we can also do well by rejoicing in the contemplation of His works, His greatness, His love for us, and a great deal more.<sup>28</sup>

Here, the key word is favour. Teresa understands the foundation of her success despite persecution as a gift from God. Recently, Saint John Paul II also used the concept of the gift to support human values such as the dignity of the human person and peace. In 1979, during a visit to Ireland, he appealed to the Irish people for peace: "Come back to Christ, whose parting gift to the world was peace."<sup>29</sup> In *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* (1987), he states:

The danger of the misuse of material goods and the appearance of artificial needs should in no way hinder the regard we have for the new goods and resources placed at our disposal and the use we make of them. On the contrary, we must see them as a gift of God and as a response to human vocation, which is fully realised in Christ" (SRS, 29).

The saints of the Church, supported by the teaching of the Church, consistently used the concept of the gift as a descriptive term to speak of that which is from God or of God.

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<sup>26</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 2004), 13.

<sup>27</sup> See Catherine of Siena's teaching in *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 1994), 423.

<sup>28</sup> St Theresa of Jesus, *The Complete Works of Saint Teresa of Jesus*, Vol. 1, trans., E Allison Peers (London: Sheed and Ward, 1946), 58.

<sup>29</sup> John Paul II, *The Pope in Ireland: Addresses and Homilies* (Dublin: Veritas, 1979), 23.

Protestant theologians such as John Milbank and John M. Barkley have also reflected on the gift.<sup>30</sup> To illustrate, Milbank links it with forgiveness in a chapter called “Forgiveness: The Double Waters” in his 2003 book *Being Reconciled: Ontology and Pardon*.<sup>31</sup> He states:

Hence giving, since it is not enacted in order to achieve human purity of motive but to establish reciprocity, is already a receiving according to a reception transcendently prior to any purely possessive calculation of what one might, perhaps, receive by giving. And, likewise, to forgive is to re-establish reciprocity only possible as the attainment of mysterious harmony through its participation in the divine infinite harmony.<sup>32</sup>

He observes that the word ‘forgiveness’ combines two words: “for” and “give.” Milbank argues that we offer forgiveness as we grow and participate in the divine-like attitude of giving through social giving.

In 2015, John Barclay published a study on the theology of gift titled *Paul and the Gift*.<sup>33</sup> He contends that the gift is expressed in different ways, such as “kindness, favour, generosity, or compassion enacted in diverse services and benefits, with the expectation of some reciprocating gratitude or counter-gift.”<sup>34</sup> Rather than focusing on the personal experience of the gift, Barclay’s contribution lies in the theological perspective. The insight is that his central focus is “*divine* gift-giving, which for Paul is focused and fulfilled in the gift of Christ.”<sup>35</sup> We may suggest that the discourse on the gift might not have been uncritically appropriated from the early theological perspective.

However, the gift has received much critical analysis in the twentieth century. Theorists have approached it from sociological, anthropological and philosophical perspectives. The originating contribution was of French sociologist Marcel Mauss (1872- 1950). In his essay, *The Gift* (1924), he contends that the gift in archaic society refers to social relationships expressed in economic exchange.<sup>36</sup> He describes it in the following terms: “I must give them

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<sup>30</sup> Risto, Saarinen illustrates that World Council of Churches captures the views of protestant and Catholic theologians on the gift, maintaining that these adopted the language of the gift when discussing the unity of the Church in Delhi, 1961. See Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of the Gift* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 1-2.

<sup>31</sup> John Milbank, *Being Reconciled: Ontology and Pardon* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003), 44-60.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 57.

<sup>33</sup> John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift* (Grand Rapids: William B Eerdmann Publishers, 2015).

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 575.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>36</sup> The first edition of *The Gift* appeared in French, *Essai Sur Le Don* (1924), but was first published in 1925. We can access it in the following books: *Essai sur la don* in *Sociologie et Anthropologie* (1950), translated by Ian

(the gifts, *taonga*) to you since they are the *hau* of the *taonga* which you gave me. If I were to keep this second *taonga* for myself, I might become ill or even die.”<sup>37</sup> The gift enhances social solidarity and imposes an obligation on the receiver to pass it on because a gift never belongs to the individual who holds it. Rather, the gift object is for a clan, community, or broadly speaking nature. Its goal is solidarity and the common good.<sup>38</sup> However, the same gift can lead to competition that leads to violence because, in his report, it is based on the principles of rivalry. Givers compete with one another to see who offers the best gift, and receivers are compelled to pass on the object received.<sup>39</sup> The competition leads to violence.

Near the end of the century, Jacques Derrida (1930 - 2004), in *Donner le temps* (1991), translated as *Given Time* (1992), presents an altogether different and more complex definition, maintaining that the gift contradicts itself since its conditions cannot be met in ordinary life experience.<sup>40</sup> According to him, then, the gift must necessarily be given freely, or else it will turn into poison, a destruction of the gift.<sup>41</sup> In short, even though giving freely represents an absolute gift and can be found in unconditional hospitality, the gesture is impossible because there is always some exchange. In Derrida's view, this apparent impossibility of the gift is not nihilism but the fall of the gift. Since the condition of the gift cannot be met, Derrida concludes that “it leads to hurting, to doing harm; here one need hardly mention the fact that in certain languages, for example in French, one may say as readily ‘to give a gift’ as ‘to give a blow.’”<sup>42</sup> From this perspective, he insists, the gift can be a good or bad thing, describing it as *aporia*.<sup>43</sup>

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Cunnison as *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies* 1969, Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Ian Cunnison (London: Cohen & West LTD, 1969); Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Jane I. Guyer (Chicago: Hau Books, 2016), Mauss, *The Gift: The Form, and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., W.D Halls (London: Routledge, 1990) and Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Bibliotech press (Glandale, CA: Bibliotech Press, 2018). For more information about Mauss' Essay on *The Gift*, see footnotes, number one, in chapter one of Risto Saarinen's books *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving* (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2005). The thesis will use the names of editors to differentiate which book it refers.

<sup>37</sup> Marcel Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Ian Cunnison, 9.

<sup>38</sup> Matthias Fritsch, “The Gift of Nature in Mauss and Derrida,” in *The Oxford Literature Review* 37, no. 1 (2015), 1.

<sup>39</sup> Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Society*, trans., Bibliotech (Milton Keynes: Bibliotech Press, 2018) 59.

<sup>40</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, trans., Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 13.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.* 12.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

By contrast, Jean-Luc Marion (1946 -) in *The Reason of the Gift* (2011) argues that the gift is possible.<sup>44</sup> It is continuous giving or a givenness.<sup>45</sup> As a perfect gift, givenness leads to social cohesion since it is about love and constant giving. However, compensated gift-giving imposes obligation and pressure on the receiver to repay in some way. This can lead to violence, as in the example provided previously by Derrida. Marion contends that “the gift is given up without knowing whether an acceptable will ratify it.”<sup>46</sup> In contrast to the gift, a sacrifice hopes for a return or compensation or a more profitable gift. However, some sacrifices may not be compensated by a good and so be characterised as a gift.

Finally, the interpretation advanced by the French thinker René Girard (1923 – 2015) asserts that there is only a divine gift. In his book, *I See Satan Falling* (2001), Girard argues that Jesus Christ’s Passion was not a sacrifice but an event premeditated by God to send the gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>47</sup>

Two points may be highlighted from the above overview. First, there is consensus that while the gift enhances social relationships with moral implications, it also generates competition and violence: receivers reject offers, givers compete, and gifts can harm a receiver’s well-being. For example, western aid can be an instrument of neo-imperialism rather than freely given and accepted.<sup>48</sup> At a personal level, while ministering as a priest in northern

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<sup>44</sup> Marion, *The Reason of the Gift*, trans., Stephen E. Lewis (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 74-75.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid, 76. Givenness is a phenomenological term that has diverse meanings among phenomenologists. For Marion, *givenness* is not just the question of being, as Martin Heidegger writes. Marion argues that givenness is a continuous and unconditional giving. See Jean-Luc Marion, *The Reason of the Gift*, trans., Stephen E. Lewis (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 20-21. Accessed May 4, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. Malo describes Marion’s givenness as a saturated phenomenon. See Antonio Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” in *International Philosophy Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (2012), 158. Givenness for Marion also means pure gift. See Robyn Horner, *Rethinking God as Gift: Marion, Derrida and the Limits of Phenomenology* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2001). Marion describes this concept as ceaseless re-given. See Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans., Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 85-86; Marion, *God Without Being*, trans., Thomas A Carlson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 99; Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005).28; Derrida and Marion, “On the Gift: A Discussion Between Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion, Moderated by Richard Kearney,” in *God, the Gift, and Post Modernism*, eds., John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 61.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.; Marion, *The Reason of the Gift*, 75.

<sup>47</sup> René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, ed., James G. Williams (New York: Orbis Books, 2001), 150. Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Meteer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987, 217.

<sup>48</sup> Roland Paris and Timothy Sick discuss how long and lasting financial contribution towards state building has led to a form of neo-imperial and capitalist exploitation. See Roland Paris and Timothy Sick, “Understanding Contradictions of Post War Peacebuilding,” in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, eds., Tom Woodhouse, Huge Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Mitchell (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 304; Karl-Heinz Peschke explains how western countries, especially Europe and the United States of America, offer money as debt to African and Latin American countries and also restrict the market share and import duties to their advantage, making their debtors poorer. In this way, gift-giving turns to poison. Read Karl-Heinz Peschke “Debt Crisis and Debt Relief,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 70, no. 4 (2005), 357.

Nigeria, I encountered many vulnerable people who rejected donations for fear that their donors would control them. Others accepted gifts but regretted doing so. In short, the gift is ambiguous and has negative and positive dimensions. Second, the Christian tradition, particularly Catholic Social Teaching, can enrich the general discussion of the gift and its relation to violence and peacekeeping. Benedict XVI, I propose, is an example of such a positive perspective.

### 3. Rationale

Drew Christiansen highlights the potential and opportunity to adopt Benedict XVI's concept of gift-giving in *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) in human situations. In an article titled "Metaphysics and Society: A Commentary in *Caritas in Veritate*" (2010), he writes:

I would hope Pope Benedict himself, whose weekly homilies are so often examples of clarity and spiritual insight, would himself continue to explicate his teaching and apply it both to situations of everyday life and to pressing global challenges. *Caritas in Veritate* challenges philosophers and theologians to revisit the question of gift-giving and the economy.<sup>49</sup>

This thesis responds to Christiansen's hope that Benedict XVI's teaching on the gift, may be utilised in the everyday and global challenge. It applies the gift to peacebuilding for two reasons. Firstly, if Christiansen hoped that Benedict would write on the gift and global issues, one can also write on the gift and peacebuilding because, firstly, like the economy, peacebuilding is a global reality. Secondly, the economy is widely linked to violence and peacebuilding. It can be a cause and an effect of violence. Intuitions of peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching concentrate on areas of heightened economic underdevelopment and areas that cannot almost manage the financial crisis when writing about peacebuilding.<sup>50</sup> For instance, while placing the Catholic vision of just war vis-a-vis the gospel of Christ, Cahill argues that peacebuilding involves "active conflict prevention, education, and economic development."<sup>51</sup> This thesis argues that if there is literature that links economic development with peacebuilding, and Benedict's logic of the gift is related to the economy – as Christiansen calls philosophers and theologians to revisit the question of the gift and economy – it follows that one can also argue that the gift correlates with and can impact peacebuilding.

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<sup>49</sup> Drew Christiansen, "Metaphysics and Society: A Commentary in *Caritas in Veritate*," in *Theological Studies* 71, no. 1 (2010), 27.

<sup>50</sup> For more information, see Institute for Economics and Peace, *Positive Peace Report 2018: Analysing the Factors that Sustain Peace*, Sydney, October 2018, 3, Accessed on March 2019. PDF.

<sup>51</sup> Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Just War and the Gospel," in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Ethicists Engage the Tradition*, eds., Tobias Winright and Laurie Johnson (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 12.



The rationale for this thesis is twofold. Firstly, I have personal experience of gift-giving and conflict in my locality. For instance, financial support has been provided to victims by various individuals and organisations following violent attacks. This has helped to restore people's property and livelihoods in some areas. However, such support has been rejected by leaders in other places for fear that donors would convert people to their culture and beliefs.<sup>52</sup> Faced with this experience, I asked myself: what is the true meaning of giving? And why would someone reject it, especially when the intention was good? Since then, I have continuously reflected on gift-giving – or what we call *Kyauta* – and its ramifications. It led me to explore Catholic Social Teaching's understanding of gift-giving. Hence, I asked: what is the teaching of the Church on gift-giving, and can it enhance peacebuilding? Secondly, the hope is that this thesis may make a contribution. It is, therefore, inspired by Christiansen's above call.

#### **4. Research Hypothesis**

The thesis, in essence, proposes that Benedict XVI's logic of the gift is a moral framework that presents a significant resource for models for building peace. It argues that Benedict XVI's logic of the gift, particularly as it is situated in Catholic Social Teaching, is a moral framework of encounter that supports a theologically informed means to consider approaches to peacebuilding.

Benedict XVI made an important, if not undervalued, contribution to the dialogue on the gift. To restate: The hypothesis researched in this thesis is that Benedict XVI's logic of the gift – or the principle of gratuitousness – provides a resource for models of peacebuilding as developed in Catholic Social Teaching and secular models such as those related to The Basic Human Needs' Theory of peacebuilding. The hypothesis is based on a central premise that Benedict XVI's presentation of a positive perspective on the gift develops the Catholic Social Teaching tradition. It could potentially be a powerful resource in peacebuilding.

#### **5. Research Question**

Therefore, this thesis addresses the question: in what way may Benedict XVI's logic of the gift – or what he calls the principle of gratuitousness in his contribution to Catholic Social Teaching – provide a resource for models of peacebuilding?

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<sup>52</sup> There is a situation where a Catholic Bishop, Matthew Hassan Kukah of Sokoto Diocese, tried to aid the education of some Muslim children. Still, the leaders of this community turned down the offer, assuming that their children would be converted to Christianity.

The following secondary questions assist in this project. Each one is addressed in each consequent chapter.

1. How has the discussion of the logic of the gift developed within the broader context of scholarly discourse?

2. How did Joseph Ratzinger, prior to becoming Pope Benedict XVI, discuss the logic of the gift?

3. As Pope, how does he articulate the logic of the gift within Catholic Social Teaching?

4. How does the documentary heritage of Catholic Social Teaching treat violence and peace?

5. How does an alternative theory, such as the Basic Human Needs Theory, respond to violence and peacebuilding?

6. How do Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis respond to violence and situate themselves in Catholic Social Teaching on peacebuilding?

7. How may Benedict XVI's logic of the gift, particularly as situated in Catholic Social Teaching, be a resource for considering the theory and practice of peacebuilding efforts?

## **6. Research Methodology**

This thesis deploys a conceptual, critical, historical, and analytical methodology. It involves in-depth analysis or close reading of relevant texts to our research questions. It takes selected authors and their seminal texts that represent the scholarly discussion on gift-giving, the above-mentioned Marcel Mauss, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion, and Rene Girard. This provides an intellectual context to situate the works of Joseph Ratzinger, especially focusing on his classic *Introduction to Christianity* (1971) and *In The Beginning: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall* (1990). The thesis then turns to take his primary contribution to the documentary Catholic Social Teaching, namely *Caritas in Veritate* (2009). It returns to core texts of the documentary heritage to trace considerations of violence and peace. It places this alongside secular models, particularly those related to the Basic Human Needs Theory of peacebuilding, such as John Burton, Amartya Sen, and William Ury. Finally, the thesis engages the catholic models of peacebuilding, relating these secular models and approaches with Benedict's principle of gratuitousness.

## **7. Structure**

This thesis comprises seven chapters: each chapter addresses a secondary question that teases out the central research question, which we named as follows: in what way may Benedict XVI's

logic of the gift – or what he calls the principle of gratuitousness in his contribution to Catholic Social Teaching – provide a resource for models of peacebuilding?

Chapter one provides an overview of the evolution of scholarly discussion on the gift by tracing its development. It takes four diverse definitions and interpretations advanced by four leading scholars – Mauss, Derrida, Marion and Girard. Where relevant, exchanges between them are taken into account. This context is an intellectual history. It is, therefore, centred on the question: in the context of scholarly discourse, how has the discussion of the logic of the gift developed? Although these theorists argue from social, anthropological, and philosophical backgrounds, their reflections open the door to situating Benedict XVI's thinking on the topic.

Chapter two addresses the question: prior to becoming Pope Benedict XVI, how did Joseph Ratzinger discuss the logic of the gift? We consider the works of Ratzinger as a theologian and outline his theological methodology and understanding of major themes, including God, creation, human existence, freedom, sin, and salvation. In particular, the chapter examines his discussion of the gift. These interrelated theological themes are intended to present a complete vision of the human person as made for giving and receiving or encounters with God and others.

The third chapter deals with Benedict XVI's systemic discussion of the logic of the gift in *Caritas in Veritate* (2009). In this Encyclical, the logic of the gift is articulated as the principle of gratuitousness. The chapter shows how he situated the concept within the Catholic tradition and uses it as a hermeneutical key to interpret principles of Catholic Social Teaching, such as solidarity and the common good. Therefore, this chapter addresses the question: As Pope, how does he articulate the logic of the gift within Catholic Social Teaching?

Chapter four explores peacebuilding in the documentary Heritage of Catholic Social Teaching to identify significant models of peacebuilding in the tradition. The discussion addresses how the documentary Heritage of Catholic Social Teaching treats violence and defines peacebuilding. It examines peacebuilding in the writings of selected popes, ranging from Leo XIII (1810 - 1903) to John Paul II (1920 – 2005), to highlight its relationship with Benedict's concept of the gift. It deliberately avoids discussing Benedict XVI and Pope Francis' approach to peace, as we will turn to both in the final chapter.

Chapter five examines the Basic Human Needs Theory of peacebuilding to extend the discussion on peacebuilding in the previous chapter. It features a critical discussion of the contributions made by three leading authors who promote the theory: John Burton, Amartya Sen, and William Ury. Like in chapter four, this chapter brings forward ideas from these authors

and dialogues them with Catholic Peacebuilding models. This chapter addresses the question: How does an alternative theory, such as the Basic Human Needs Theory, respond to violence and peacebuilding? It connects this theory's vision of peacebuilding with the Catholic tradition's understanding of peacebuilding and Benedict's concept of the gift.

Chapter six draws together thematic strands throughout the study to answer the question: How do Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis respond to violence and situate themselves in Catholic Social Teaching on peacebuilding? It is divided into two sections. The first focuses on Benedict XVI's presentation of Catholic Social Teaching's vision of peace, bringing to the fore the force of the logic of the gift as his primary originality. The second presents Pope Francis' view of peacebuilding, showing how he aligns himself with Benedict XVI and the tradition before him. The discussion on these two popes illustrates the tradition's teaching on peacebuilding at the moment and how Benedict's logic of the gift is in use but not explicitly and especially mentioned in peacebuilding efforts, even by theologians and ethicists.

Chapter seven, which is the final chapter, draws together the main findings of this study to answer the question: how may Benedict XVI's logic of the gift, particularly as situated in Catholic Social Teaching, be a resource for considering the theory and practice of peacebuilding efforts? It is divided into three sections. The first offers the general findings of each chapter, from chapters one to six. The second presents the summary of the argument of the thesis. It, then, offers an in-depth analysis of the argument on a wide range of themes, including human dignity, economics, climate change justice, solidarity, and non-violence. It is then the culmination of the argument in addressing the research hypothesis.

The general conclusion addresses the central research question, arguing for the hypothesis that Benedict XVI's logic of the gift is a moral framework of encounter that supports theologically informed means to consider approaches to peacebuilding. It finishes with several recommendations and possible avenues for future research.

## **8. Conclusion**

In summary, the work explores the logic of the gift and peacebuilding in Benedict XVI's writings and highlights its potential for application in peacebuilding in global and particular contexts. Different models of peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching and the Basic Human Needs Theory of peace are considered. This study contributes to the moral understanding of the concept and act of giving in peacebuilding and offers recommendations for peacebuilding efforts. It illustrates the value and the need to revisit and especially mention Benedict XVI's principle of gratuitousness in Catholic Social Teaching on Peacebuilding. It is to give as Jesus

gave: “My Peace, I Give You” (John 14: 27). Additionally, the dissertation may point to future proposals and strategies for peacebuilding ministry and efforts.

## CHAPTER ONE

### Interrogating the Logic of the Gift: Seminal Contributions to the Dialogue

#### 1.1 Introduction

Writing on contemporary approaches to gift-giving, Risto Saarinen observes:

In a somewhat strange manner, theology is a latecomer in this discussion (the gift). Only after Derrida's analyses began to show theological aspects did different theologies [Marion, Milbank] start to develop around the issue of the gift. This is strange above all for the simple reason that 'the gift' has been a prominent interpretive concept throughout the history of theology.<sup>1</sup>

This chapter takes its lead from the above observation, highlighting that scholarly discussion on the gift existed prior to theology. It focuses on four key authors, namely Marcel Mauss (1872 – 1950), Jacques Derrida (1930 – 2004), Jean-Luc Marion (1946 – ) and René Girard (1923 – 2015). It does so for the following reasons. Firstly, the scholarly discussion about the gift is commonly traced to the French sociologist and anthropologist Mauss.<sup>2</sup> Secondly, it turns to Derrida because, as Saarinen pointed out, he is an important turning point. Thirdly, it takes the work of Marion to respond to Derrida, writing more explicitly about the theological aspect of the gift.<sup>3</sup> Finally, it considers different perspectives of Girard to fill out the picture.<sup>4</sup>

These four authors are significant enough to consider the question: in the context of scholarly discourse, how has the discussion of the logic of the gift developed? This chapter

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<sup>1</sup> Risto Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2005), 33.

<sup>2</sup> Ho-Chia Chueh, "Exploring Gift Theories for the New Immigrants: Literacy Education in Taiwan," in *Educational Philosopher and Theory* 44, no. 10 (2012), 1111. Accessed on September 20, 2021. DOI: 10.1111/j.1469-5812.2012.00861.x / <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1469-5812.2012.00861>; Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*, 17; John M. Barclay, *Paul & the Gift* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 12.

<sup>3</sup> Marion's use of the Parable of the Prodigal Son, Prayer and God to explain the logic of the gift suggests a theological aspect of the gift. Also, his givenness is a mixture of phenomenology and theology. See Jean-Luc Marion, *The Reason of the Gift*, trans. Stephen E. Lewis (Charlottesville and London: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 86-87; Jean-Luc Marion, *God Without Being*, trans., Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 97; Saarinen, *God and the Gift*, 33.

<sup>4</sup> René Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, (California: Stanford University Press, 1978), 217.

therefore is an intellectual history. It begins with Mauss and culminates with an appraisal of the development of ideas and exchanges that occur thereafter. Although these theorists argue from social, anthropological, and philosophical standpoints, their reflections set the scene and tease out the themes that will help situate Benedict XVI's thinking on the topic.

## 1.2 Marcel Mauss

Marcel Mauss was born in 1872 in France. A sociologist and anthropologist, he was a nephew of the often-recognised founder of sociology, Émile Durkheim. He is perhaps better recognised for his influence on anthropology, especially with his analyses of topics such as magic, sacrifice and gift exchange in different cultures around the world. His most famous work is *The Gift* (1924). He died on 10 February 1950.

Mauss studied gift-giving in archaic societies of Polynesia, Melanesia, and the American Northwest.<sup>5</sup> His previously mentioned seminal work, *The Gift*, treated the gift as a commodity for economic exchange or transaction, contending that the mutual exchange in archaic societies pre-dated money economic transactions.<sup>6</sup> He argues that gift-giving is an array of exchanges, ranging from pleasantries to economic items and valuable possessions.<sup>7</sup> In his view, "such gifts are voluntary, but in fact, they are given and repaid under obligation."<sup>8</sup> It means "the form usually taken is of the gift generously offered. However, the accompanying behaviour is formal pretence and social deception, while the transaction itself is based on obligation and economic self-interest."<sup>9</sup> Simply put, there is an obligation behind the apparent generosity, so there is no gift. Giving is about receiving, returning or recompense.<sup>10</sup>

His model of the gift, then, consists of a socio-economic exchange that circulates and is guided by rules. The gift circulates because archaic societies believe in the spirit of reciprocity. There is an underlying assumption: the assistance one gives to another or the presentation one makes as a gift would be returned in the same or a different form. Reciprocity grows and becomes socially embedded through the circulation of gifts. As Marion Fourcade states: "The

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<sup>5</sup> Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Bibliotech press (Glandale, CA: Bibliotech Press, 2018), 5.

<sup>6</sup> *The Gift* appeared in French, *Essai Sur Le Don* (1924). It was first published in 1925 and translated into English by different scholars. The thesis will differentiate every edition of this book by mentioning the name of its translator.

See footnote 34 in the general introduction of this thesis.

<sup>7</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Jane I Guyer (Chicago: Hau Books, 2016), 61-62.

<sup>8</sup> Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Ian Cunnison, 1; Mauss, *The Gift Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Bibliotech Press, 3.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Erik Heppel and Mark Rathbone, "The Gift as Philosophical Critic of the Social Grant System in South Africa," in *Acta Academia* 52, no. 1 (2020), 126.

social bond comes first; its purpose and motives for individuals come in second.”<sup>11</sup> At the same time, the process of mutual exchange can be a virtuous circle within the community.

Such reciprocity is obligatory because it shapes the idea of material and non-material exchange and generosity amongst community members.<sup>12</sup> Its goal is to create social ties. Mauss regards social bonding as the soul of gift-giving. He goes so far as to say that the object one gives does not belong to the individual but to the community, clan, and even nature. Based on that, it must circulate. He reports:

You give me a *tunga*, I give it to another, the latter gives me *taonga* back, since he is forced to do so by the *hau* (spirit of the gift) of my gift; and I am obliged to give this one to you since I must return to you what is in fact the product of the *hau* of your *taonga*.<sup>13</sup>

Hence, one cannot separate the circulation of the gift from reciprocity, obligation, and continuous exchanges.

In the archaic societies that he studied, influential people offered gifts to show other clans and chiefs that they possessed more goods than others. Such actions usually resulted in vices, including jealousy, rivalry, competition, and war. According to Mauss:

In certain kinds of Potlatch, one must expand all that one has, keeping nothing back. It is a competition to see who is the richest and also the most madly extravagant. Everything is based upon the principles of antagonism and rivalry. The political status of individuals in the brotherhoods and clans, and ranks of all kinds, are gained in a ‘war of property’.<sup>14</sup>

Therefore, the virtuous circle can become a vicious circle. Firstly, despite the rivalry involved in gift-giving, exchanges of gifts take place in archaic society. While what matters most for Mauss is the underlying social contract the gift enhances, he also recognises that it can destroy the same social cohesion.

### 1.2.1 The Potlatch and Kula

The central examples given from his anthropological studies are the *Potlatch* and *Kula*.<sup>15</sup> The *Potlatch* was held for significant events like births, deaths, weddings, and so on. Mainly, it was practised by indigenous peoples on the Pacific Northwest coast of Canada. It was a feast and an offering of all valued objects, gestures, and services. The word means ‘to nourish’ or ‘to

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<sup>11</sup> Marion Fourcade, “The Imperfect Promise to the Gift,” in *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development* 11, no. 2 (Summer 2020), 209. Accessed on September 27, 2021. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1353/hum.2020.0011>.

<sup>12</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*; trans., Ian Cunnison; Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies* (San Antonio: Bibliotech Press, 2018). The later book cited here is a reproduction of the previous publication. It was mentioned that the original texts of these English editions appeared in French, *Essai Sur le don* (1924).

<sup>13</sup> Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 9.

<sup>14</sup> Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Bibliotech Press, 59.

<sup>15</sup> Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 5; Mauss, *The Gift*, Expanded edition trans., Jane I Guyer (Chicago: Hau Books, 2016), 62 and 63.



consume'.<sup>16</sup> In short, it involves giving away or distributing goods such as food and services including hospitality and labour.<sup>17</sup> The exchange is characterised by a display of wealth, competition, and displays of social status. Mauss writes:

The Potlatch concerns not only men who rival each other in generosity, the object they transmit or destroy, and the spirit of the dead which take part in the transactions and whose name the men bear; it concerns nature as well...men say that gift-exchange brings abundance of wealth.<sup>18</sup>

It has multiple aspects: honour, rivalry, prestige, return, sacrifice, transgressor, and interest. The key to all this is the obligation to return.

To turn to the concept of The *Kula*. It is an exchange system of gifts practised by the people of Papua, New Guinea. It is an important and the first element of the gift in Trobriand.<sup>19</sup> It is an exchange of services and goods that begins a series of other exchanges of services and goods that can also include exchanges between tribes and other neighbouring countries. According to Mauss:

The *Kula*, in its essential form, is itself only the one element, the most solemn one, in vast system of services rendered and reciprocated, which indeed seems to embrace the whole of Trobriand economic and civil life. The *Kula* seems to be merely the culminating point of that life, particularly the *Kula* between nations and tribes.<sup>20</sup>

*Kula* is the most important part of the *Potlatch* or the entire network of exchanges that can take place in a clan or community. Mauss writes: "The *kula* is a kind of grand Potlatch; it is the vehicle of a great inter-tribal trade extending over all the Trobriands."<sup>21</sup> Its significance is that it is the main purpose of existence or the spirit of the community. It can extend beyond the community to unite institutions and nations of similar tribes or communities.<sup>22</sup>

There are similarities and differences between these two exchange systems. Similarly to each other, they both constitute Mauss's 'idea of the gift' as an exchange that underlines and drives the value exchange system and culture. Furthermore, they both engender obligation and reciprocity. They are both an essential aspect of their respective cultures. However, they are

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<sup>16</sup> Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 4.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 38 and 39.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 12; See Marion Fourcade, "The Imperfect Promise to the Gift," *Humanity: An International Journal of Human Rights, Humanitarianism and Development* 11, no. 2 (Summer 2020), 212. Accessed on September 27, 2021. Doi: <https://doi.org/10.1353.hum.2020.0011>.

<sup>19</sup> Mauss, *The Gift: The Form, and reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., W.D Halls (London: Routledge, 1990), 11; Mauss, *The Gift: The Form, and reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 41.

<sup>20</sup> Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Bibliotech Press, 44.

<sup>21</sup> Mauss *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 20.

<sup>22</sup> Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Bibliotech Press, 44.

also quite different. The *Potlatch* is a feast that bears elements of prestige, honour, and rivalry. At the same time, it can enhance cohesion, sometimes resulting in rivalry and competition. However, *Kula* is services rendered and reciprocated in a polite manner that does not result in competition and rivalry.<sup>23</sup> It assumes solemn forms with givers overstating modesty when performing an act of giving. The *Kula* brings about unity since allies and neighbouring nations are brought together through the free exchange between them. They are then two ends of a spectrum. As Mauss reports: “Just as the Trobriand *kula* is an extreme case of the gift exchange, so the potlatch in North-West America is the monster child of the gift system.”<sup>24</sup>

Mauss argues that *potlatch* and *kula* tell us something important, and indeed fundamental, about gift-giving. Firstly, it is guided by rules. Secondly, it may deliver different results. It could be solidarity or competition in the case of the *potlatch* and worry on the side of givers in the case of *kula*. For instance, on the *potlatch*, Mauss states: “The remarkable thing about these tribes is the spirit of rivalry and antagonism that dominates all their activities (gift-giving).”<sup>25</sup> The sociopolitical scientists Volker M. Hein, Christine Unrau, and Kristine Avram espouse this point, writing:

Gift exchanges such as the *potlatch* or the *kula* practised by indigenous people are neither fully voluntary nor a duty or necessity; they are about showing respect but sometimes also about establishing hierarchy and exclusive prestige; they are not altruistically motivated, but neither can they be explained as a result of cost-benefit calculations.<sup>26</sup>

Corroborating their views, Marion Fourcade states: “The gift is nothing but an expression of egoism, a perverse trick to anchor one’s social position and oblige others towards oneself.”<sup>27</sup> Mauss’ view is that the gift, whether as *Potlatch* or *Kula*, is about the exchange of friendship and pleasantries, rivalry, competition, and obligation. The insight is that gift-giving is more than cohesion. It can also trigger conflict and disrupt the free flow of social relations.

### **1.2.2 The Gift: Obligation, Violence and Peace**

Mauss reports that both voluntary and obligatory acts of giving are commonplace and significant in archaic society. He tries to hold that both aspects can hold in the archaic practice of gift-giving: the obligation to give and receive a thing does not disrupt voluntary gift-giving

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<sup>23</sup> See Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 19.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>25</sup> Mauss *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Cunnison, 4.

<sup>26</sup> Volker M. Hein, Christine Unrau and Kristine Avram, “Gift-Giving and Reciprocity in Global Society: Introducing Marcel Mauss in International Studies,” in *Journal of International Political Theory* Vol. 14 no. 2 (2018), 128. Accessed on September 16, 2021. ProQuest.

<sup>27</sup> Fourcade, “The Imperfect Promise to the Gift,” 209.

and receiving. In his words: “We are talking no longer in terms of law. We are talking of men and groups since it is they, their society, and their sentiments that are in action all the time.”<sup>28</sup> Whatever the people give, receive, and reciprocate, the obligation and freedom to do so are constituent parts of that gift. There is no gift without obligation. To highlight, Fourcade comments: “The obligation to accept a gift is perhaps the most sensitive of all because it is precisely in the moment that the gift is received that the social relationship is put to the test.”<sup>29</sup>

Every member of society is obliged to give, receive, and reciprocate. Ignoring these obligations could cause war amongst communities and clans: “To neglect to invite, as to refuse to take, is equivalent to declaring war; it is to refuse alliance and communion.”<sup>30</sup> He added, “I must give them (the gifts, *taonga*) to you since they are the *hau* of the *taonga* which you gave me. If I were to keep this second *taonga* for myself, I might become ill or even die.”<sup>31</sup> Because a gift constitutes these obligations, it raises the question of force and fear. Givers are not free to give and receive. The violence that the gift triggers arises from the competition, the obligation to receive and give, and rivalry.

However, the same obligation can also lead to social cohesion. Mauss reports that it ensures social and moral decorum, unity, and peace.<sup>32</sup> He writes: “We should come of ourselves and regard the duty of giving as a liberty, for in it there lies no risk.”<sup>33</sup> It can, therefore, also lead to peace. For instance, Hein, Unrau, and Avram refer to Mauss regarding the role of gift-giving in unity and social cohesion. They write: “Starting from the conceptualisation of the specifics of non-market exchanges, Mauss addresses the question of how clans or tribes managed conflicts and established lasting relationships before markets and contracts came into being.”<sup>34</sup> We are left, therefore, with an inescapable ambiguity.

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<sup>28</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 68.

<sup>29</sup> Fourcade, “The Imperfect Promise to the Gift,” 209.

<sup>30</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 74.

<sup>31</sup> Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, Ian Cunnison, 9.

<sup>32</sup> Gregoire Mallard dwells on how Mauss uses the gift (Kula) to write about social, national, and international unity. He writes: “Mauss thus saw in the exchange of the gift the perfect illustration of how old Germanic nations understood the formation of international contract bonds, or how ‘clans with tribes, great extended families within clans, chiefs, and even kings interacted outside ‘the close circles of their groups’ and how they forged ‘links, alliances, and mutual assistance (a contract that) came into being by means of the gage (pledge or collateral) ... And acts of generosity.’” See Gregoire Mallard, “The Gift: Marcel Mauss on War, Debt, and the Politics of Reparations,” in *Sociological Theory* 29, no 4 (December 2011), 238.

<sup>33</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 69.

<sup>34</sup> Hein, Unrau and Avram, “Gift-Giving and Reciprocity in Global Society: Introducing Marcel Mauss in International Studies,” in *Journal of International Political Theory*, 127.

### 1.2.3 The Ambiguity of the Gift

As stated previously, whilst Mauss maintains that people are obligated to circulate gifts, it is voluntary.<sup>35</sup> In addition to obligation, the gift involves generosity and counter-gift. For instance, he states:

Suppose you have some particular object, *taonga*, and you give it to me; you give it to me without a price. We do not bargain over it (*utu*), and he makes me a present of something *taonga*. Now I give this thing to a third person who after a time decides to give me something in repayment for it.<sup>36</sup>

People offer free gifts, but their gestures impose duty and responsibility on their receivers. As famously put by Mary Douglas, there is no free gift because of the obligation that every gift imposes on receivers.<sup>37</sup> These two points set the context for the ambiguity of the gift.

Douglas resolves the problem by rejecting freedom and insisting on the obligation of the gift. This thesis argues that the ambiguity must remain – the gift can be free and obligatory and serve both unifying and violent functions. It could be seen as a coin with two sides. Or, better put, a complex act. While it brings about social progress, it also disrupts it. To highlight, Erik Heppel and Mark Rathborn contend that in South Africa, the gift is a good thing but not always: “In terms of Mauss’ conception of the gift, the social grant system in South Africa may be detrimental to the recipients as well as to the South Africans as a whole.”<sup>38</sup>

The question of ambiguity resides in the observation that the gift involves social ties and rivalry, solidarity, and competition. For more emphasis, Mauss’ theory elevates the question of the gift beyond the level of a mere system of exchange and rules by asserting that the concept also involves generosity, reciprocity, human behaviours, and society’s spiritual well-being. He asserts: “There are not merely ideas, legal and moral rules, but also men and groups and their behaviours.”<sup>39</sup> These moral rules shaped people’s way of living, making them unselfish and more generous.<sup>40</sup> This act of giving was meant to secure “the peace of markets and villages.”<sup>41</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> Marcell Mauss, *The Gift: The Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., W. D Halls, 1.

<sup>36</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 8-9.

<sup>37</sup> Mary Douglas, “No Free Gift: Introduction to Mauss Essay on the Gift,” in *Risk and Blame: Essays on Cultural Theory* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 1994), 155.

<sup>38</sup> Erik, Heppel and Mark Rathbone, “The Gift as Philosophical Critique of the Social Grant System in South Africa,” *Acta Academia* 52, no. 1 (2020), 128. Accessed on September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021, <https://doi.org/10.18820/24150479/aa52i1/2>

<sup>39</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 78. Reflecting on Mauss’s vision of the gift, Yunxrang Yan and Lewis Hyde explain how the idea of the gift in Indian culture promotes distributive justice and other principles that are crucial to social cohesion. See Yunxrang Yan, *The Glow of Gifts: Reciprocity and Social Networks in Chinese Village* (Stanford: Stanford University Press 1996), 11; W. Lewis Hyde, *The Gift: Imagination and the Erotic Life of Property* (New York: Random House, 1983), 152.

<sup>40</sup> Mauss, *The Gift*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 79.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

It is said that, to a large extent, these moral rules hide hatred and replace war.<sup>42</sup> Mauss then highlights one vital aspect of the gift's role: the management of aggression and social services that deal with it.

The gift in Mauss offers promises and concerns. Two points are essential. Firstly, the gift is grounded in reciprocity, which promotes either social cohesion or creates competition and rivalry. It could contribute to peacebuilding efforts and violence. Secondly, the gift is both free and obligatory. Taken together, Mauss' discussion of the gift culminates and concludes in an ambiguity and an apparent contradiction.<sup>43</sup>

This core question initiated a century of reactions. Attention now turns to Jacques Derrida's most significant response.

### 1.3 Jacques Derrida

Jacques Derrida was an Algerian-born French philosopher born in 1930. He developed the philosophy of deconstruction, which he utilized in multiple texts through close readings of the linguistics of Ferdinand de Saussure, Edmund Husserl and Martin Heidegger. During his career, Derrida published over forty books, including *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money* (1992), with hundreds of essays and public presentations. He significantly influenced social sciences, particularly anthropology and sociology, and, of course, philosophy. He died in on October 9<sup>th</sup>, 2004.

In *Given Time I*, Derrida argues that the gift is best understood in the familiar and ordinary dynamic of life and human encounter, in the manner that Mauss did.<sup>44</sup> He speaks of three cardinal elements of the subject: the giver, the gift, and the receiver. The giver or receiver may represent a group, an institution, a clan or an individual. The gift itself could be an object, a non-object, or even a symbol:

Let us suppose, then, an intention-to-give: some 'one' wants or desires to give. Our common language or logic will cause us to hear the interlace of this already complex formula as incomplete. We will tend to complete it by saying 'some 'one' (A) intends-to-give B to C, some 'one' intends to give or gives 'something' to 'someone other.' This 'something' may not be a thing in the common sense of the word but rather a symbolic object."<sup>45</sup>

In other words, A, B and C are the giver, the gift, and the receiver. He writes:

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<sup>42</sup> Fourcade, "The Imperfect Promise to the Gift," 210.

<sup>43</sup> John M.G Barclay, *Paul & the Gift* (Michigan, Grand Rapid: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2015), 16.

<sup>44</sup> *Ibid.*, 11-14.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 11.

For the gift to be possible, for there to be gift event, according to our common language and logic, it seems that this compound structure is indispensable. Notice that in order to say this, I must already suppose a certain pre-comprehension of what the gift means. I suppose that I know and that you know what ‘to give,’ ‘gift,’ ‘donor,’ ‘donee’ mean in our common language. As well as ‘to want,’ ‘to desire,’ and ‘to intend.’<sup>46</sup>

If these elements or conditions – the exchange of gift between giver and receiver – are necessary, the absence of any of them renders the gift’s dynamic baseless.<sup>47</sup> The conditions that make the gift possible also render it impossible. He states: “Conditions of possibilities define or produce the annulment, the annihilation, the destruction of the gift.”<sup>48</sup> For Derrida, the inescapable conditions for a gift are exchange and reciprocity. Both bear the obligation to return or pass on a thing. It makes the gift impossible.<sup>49</sup> He concludes: “if there is gift, it cannot take place between two subjects exchanging objects, things or symbols.”<sup>50</sup> In other words, the obligation to give, receive and pass on, or even mention that a thing is a gift, destroys the meaning of the gift. He states: “If the gift appears or signifies itself, if it exists or if it is presently as a gift, as what is, then it is not, it annuls itself.”<sup>51</sup> For Derrida, then, Mauss’s view on the gift is contradictory.<sup>52</sup> For this reason, Robyn Horner mentioned that in Mauss, the gift cancels itself since, as a present, it is not free altogether.<sup>53</sup> The ambiguity in Mauss deepens to an *aporia*.

### 1.3.1 The Nature of the Gift: An Impossible Reality

As we have seen, Derrida maintains that there are conditions in any discussion about the gift’s logic, but they also generate complex situations. The moment they engage, a system of exchange, reciprocity and return begins, rendering the gift incomplete. A gift is annulled whenever the giver or receiver interprets whatever is given as a gift or remembers it as a gift, or the giver imposes debt on his receiver. Put in another way, whenever A or C interprets B as a gift, a system of exchanges or reciprocity commences. Precisely, this encounter creates a condition of impossibility. We previously referred to this impossibility as the contradiction of the gift. Derrida writes:

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<sup>46</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, trans., Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 11.

<sup>47</sup> Antonio Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 52, no. 2 (June 2012), 151. Accessed on September 21, 2021. <https://doi.org.jproxy.nuim.ie/10.5840/ipq201252215>.

<sup>48</sup> Jacques Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 12.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 52.

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 26-27.

<sup>52</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>53</sup> Robyn Horner, *Rethinking God as Gift and the Limit of Phenomenology* (Fordham University Press, 2001), 8

If what Mauss demonstrates, one way or the other, is indeed that every gift is caught up in the round or the contract of usury, then not only the unity of the meaning 'gift' remain doubtful but, on the hypothesis that giving would have a *meaning* and *one* meaning, it is still the possibility of an effective existence, of an effectuation or an event of the gift that seems excluded.<sup>54</sup>

He proposes that we must not anticipate or return the gift if there is a gift. "For there to be a gift, it is necessary (*il faut*) that the donee does not give back, amortise, reimburse, acquit himself, enter into a contract, and that he never have contracted a debt."<sup>55</sup>

To say that the gift is impossible could also mean there is no gift. At one point, Derrida writes: "I never said that there is no gift. No. I said exactly the opposite. What are the conditions for us to say there is a gift?"<sup>56</sup> It is not something impossible, but its conditions are not achievable: "Its very appearance, the simple phenomenon of the gift, annuls it as gift... As soon as the other accepts, as soon as he or she takes, there is no more gift."<sup>57</sup> The appearance of B, which is the object or non-object of the gift, is not realistic. In fact, in relation to Mauss, Derrida would say there is no gift because he presents these conditions as *sine qua non*. If they are, then there is no gift. No wonder Derrida observes: "One could go as far as to say that a work as monumental as Marcel Mauss's *The Gift* speaks of everything but the gift."<sup>58</sup> However, he does not suggest that the impossibility of the gift is nihilistic. Instead, he describes it as an impossible possibility, arguing that the gift is not accessible.<sup>59</sup> The gift, as impossible reality, therefore, means, on the one hand, we cannot logically prove its existence, but on the other hand, we do not deny its reality. It is an *aporia*, a mystery.<sup>60</sup>

### 1.3.2 The Aporia of the Gift: Violence and Peace

The *aporia* of the gift, as narrated previously, leads Derrida to write about violence. Similar to Mauss, he observes that the gift imposes obligations and compensation. Receivers and givers are constantly under pressure to pay back and receive. This notion of the gift causes problems.<sup>61</sup>

He states:

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<sup>54</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 26.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

<sup>56</sup> Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion, "On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean Luc Marion, Moderated by Richard Kearney," in *God, the Gift, and Post Modernism*, eds., John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 60.

<sup>57</sup> Derrida, *Giving Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 14; Malo, "The Limits of Marion's and Derrida's Philosophy of the Gift," 150.

<sup>58</sup> Derrida, *Giving Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 24.

<sup>59</sup> Kevin D O'Gorman, *Jacques Derrida's Philosophy of Hospitality* (PDF), 54. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/258283240>

<sup>60</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 27.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.



We know that as good, it can also be bad, poisonous (*Gift, gift*), and this from the moment the gift puts the other in debt, with the result that giving amounts to hurting, to doing harm; here one need hardly mention the fact that in certain languages, for example in French, one may say as readily ‘to give a gift’ as to give a blow.<sup>62</sup>

The understanding is that the gift triggers hatred and violence. For instance, Mary Douglas writes:

Charity is meant to be a free gift, a voluntary, unrequited surrender of resources. Though we laud charity as a Christian virtue, we know that it wounds. I worked for some years in a charitable foundation which annually was required to give away large sums as the condition of tax exemption. Newcomers to the office quickly learnt that the receiver does not like the giver, however, cheerful he be.<sup>63</sup>

The gift, therefore, has a negative character. By way of illustration, in the ancient Roman Empire, gifts created obligations that put people under pressure. As Derrida noted above, the German language uses the same word to mean poison.<sup>64</sup>

Leonard Lawlor’s reflection on non-violence in Derrida provides an expanded explanation of the gift and violence. He concludes:

Violence for Derrida consists in a taking, and thus non-violence must be found in the direction of giving. Thus, another way of saying that this idea of an impure/pure non-violence is an impure/pure gift, that is, a gift that is excessive in relation to economic exchange—this is why it is pure—but also a gift that is economic—since no gift can be completely outside of exchange, making the gift impure.<sup>65</sup>

To avoid violence, Derrida maintains, one must forget that he or she receives a gift.<sup>66</sup> Precisely, violence occurs whenever a receiver gets a gift with a surprise, that is, without expecting reimbursement or reading it accordingly. Another example from Lawlor is worth referencing. He states:

When I give a gift as such, recognized as such, the recipient is taken into the trap of being in debt; and when I give a gift as such, I give a surprise. The literal meaning of ‘surprise’ means ‘to take over.’ This “taking over” or “grasping” (*la prise*) is why the surprise which interrupts exchange is violence.<sup>67</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Mary Douglas, “No Free Gift: Introduction to Mauss Essay on the Gift,” in *Risk and Blame: Essays on Cultural Theory* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 1994), 155, accessed on March 11, 2023, ProQuest Ebook Central; R. L. Stirrat and Heiko Henkel agree with Douglas that Mauss’ presentation of the gift suggests that there is no free gift. See their “The Development Gift: The Problem of Reciprocity in the N.G.O World,” *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 554 (November 1997), 66. Accessed on September 14, 2023, <https://doi.org.may.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/0002716297554001005>

<sup>64</sup> John M. G. Barclay, *Paul and the Gift*, 39; Heppel and Rathbone, “The Gift as Philosophical Critique of the Social Grant System in South Africa,” 123.

<sup>65</sup> Leonardo Lawlor, “The Most Difficult Task: On the Idea of an Impure, Non-violence (in Derrida),” *Studia Phenomenology* 19, (2019), 253.

<sup>66</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 14-17.

<sup>67</sup> Lawlor, “The Most Difficult Task: On the Idea of an Impure, Non-violence (in Derrida),” 254.



Thus, the central causes of violence and peace in Derrida stem from the dynamics and conditions of giving and receiving articulated by Mauss: obligation, exchange, and compensation.

### 1.3.3 Absolute Gift: Nature and Hospitality

Derrida deconstructs Mauss' logic of the gift to present a scenario of impossibility.<sup>68</sup> He contends that a thing or gesture must adhere to three implications to the earlier stated conditions to be a gift. First, givers must forget that they have ever offered something as a gift; second, the gift must not circulate. And finally, receivers must forget that they have received anything from someone. He writes:

For there to be a gift, not only must the donor or donee not perceive or receive the gift as such, have no consciousness of it, no memory, no recognition; he or she must also forget it right away and moreover this forgetting must be radical that it exceeds even the psychoanalytic categoriality of forgetting. This forgetting of the gift must even no longer be forgetting in the sense of repression.<sup>69</sup>

The contention is that a gift must be freely given. For him, the terms that capture the proper meaning of a perfect gift are nature<sup>70</sup> and unconditional hospitality.<sup>71</sup>

Concerning nature, Derrida narrates a story about two elders who came across a significant amount of money. For him, it was nature that offered them such an amount without any conditions attached. He writes: "The two friends are not necessarily rich, but they can afford the luxury of giving alms" because nature gives without adhering to any conditions.<sup>72</sup> According to this explanation, even if these elders give alms or offer a donation from this wealth, they cannot be regarded as givers because the item they offer comes not from them but from someone beyond them who cannot receive in return and so has no origin or address. Derrida writes:

Nothing is said about the origins of this wealth or the condition of this social condition; everything happens as if it were natural, as if nature had decided this belonging to social class. Fortune comes to us from nature, by chance; it is luck. It gives *gratis* to those who have the grace to receive from this gift, it gives them a gift that gives them the wherewithal to give.<sup>73</sup>

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<sup>68</sup> Malo, "The Limits of Marion's and Derrida's Philosophy of the Gift," 160.

<sup>69</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 16.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 126.

<sup>71</sup> Ho-Chia Chuch, "Exploring Gift Theories for New Immigrants in Taiwan," 1116.

<sup>72</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 126.

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

The combination of nature and fortune results in an authentic and perfect gift. Derrida is showing that nature has allowed us to participate in its act of giving. Interestingly, he did not tell us what nature is all about but argues that we become co-givers rather than givers when we give. Nature presents anything, not by exchanges and obligation, but a chance or luck encounter – a gratuitous encounter.<sup>74</sup>

Like Mauss, while giving can lead to obligation and violence, it may also enhance the dynamics of social relationships that supersede violence. Derrida calls such a gift “unconditional hospitality”.<sup>75</sup> Arguing that the gift must be given without condition, Derrida writes about unconditional hospitality in his later writings. According to him:

In the hospitality without conditions, the host should, in principle, receive even before knowing anything about the guest. A pure welcome consists not only in not knowing anything or acting as if one knows nothing, but also in avoiding any question about the other’s identity, their desire, their rules, their language, their capacity for work, for integration, for adaption.<sup>76</sup>

Derrida prefers this category of hospitality since it cancels reciprocity and promotes giving without knowing the identity of receivers or receiving without knowing the giver. Here, the gift takes a central stage in social interaction, challenging everyone to receive other people regardless of their identity and social status.<sup>77</sup> Also, unconditional hospitality represents absolute gratuity.<sup>78</sup> He desires that the unconditional hospitality that reflects free giving be a model.

We know that there are numerous what we call ‘displaced persons’ who are applying for the right of asylum without being citizens, without being identified as citizens. It is not for speculative or ethical reasons that I am interested in unconditional hospitality, but in order to understand and to transform what is going on today in our world.”<sup>79</sup>

However, here lies the problem of Derrida. He maintains that the gift of genuine hospitality is a phenomenon we desire and can write about but cannot grasp.<sup>80</sup> For instance, reflecting on the treatment of immigrants in France, he demonstrates how he is interested in unconditional hospitality but concludes that it will continue to elude us. Derrida created an image of the gift

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 137.

<sup>75</sup> Derrida, “About Hospitality,” in *Politics and Friendship: A Discussion with Jacques Derrida*, Paragraph 17. Accessed on September 14<sup>th</sup>, 2021.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> Heppel and Rathbone, “The Gift as Philosophical Critique of Social Grant System in South Africa,” 135

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 152.

<sup>79</sup> Derrida, “Hospitality, Justice and Responsibility,” in *Questioning Ethics: Contemporary Debates in Philosophy*, ed., R Kearney and M. Dooley (London: Routledge, 1998), 70.

<sup>80</sup> Kevin D. O’Gorman points out that Derrida had a bad experience of the French’s treatment of immigrants, hence his reason for doubting unconditional hospitality. See Kevin D. O’Gorman, *Jacques Derrida’s Philosophy of Hospitality* (PDF), 54. <https://www.researchget.net/publication/258283240>

in unconditional hospitality but insists that such a gesture is also impossible. He continues to maintain that it is an *aporia*.

### 1.3.4 Developing the conversation on the Gift

We summarise Derrida's notion of the gift in two ways. Firstly, his contribution to the logic of the gift lies in his analysis of Mauss. He criticises Mauss in various ways, contending that the gift must not include reciprocity, reimbursement, passing on, circulation and exchange.<sup>81</sup> If there is no "free" gift, then there is no gift. Any condition attached to it, whether restitution or solidarity, renders a thing less than a gift. He added that both the giver and recipient must not understand whatever they receive as a gift. This reading of Mauss accepts that the gift leads to hurting and violence while arguing that it is a far more complex phenomenon.

Secondly, Derrida still tries to hold to the belief in the gift's possibility and impossibility. This belief becomes evident in his discussion of unconditional hospitality in the lived experience.<sup>82</sup> For instance, the gift of unconditional hospitality could take place in new encounters with people.<sup>83</sup> This encounter with the "other," namely immigrants, vulnerable people, the poor, *et cetera*, can build peace in environments saturated with nepotism, sectionalism, and racism. However, all too easily, this does not happen. While possible, it is not realistic.

Thirdly, Derrida refuses to make his point clear and distinct. For instance, it is not wholly clear to say that the conditions that make the gift impossible, yet insist there is such a thing as a gift. In other words, the impossibility of the gift should be understood as the denial of the gift. Derrida leaves those who engage in discussion on the gift in doubt.<sup>84</sup>

Whereas Mauss reinterprets the gift in the framework of reciprocity, economic and social exchange that enhances human relations and social interaction in archaic society, Derrida constantly cross-examines the language used by Mauss. He deconstructs Mauss's understanding of the gift, arguing that it suggests something else rather than the gift. Rather than arguing that Derrida denies the gift's existence, this discussion proposes that he deepens Mauss' ambiguity. Rather than a simple contradiction as in Mauss, for Derrida, there are many endless contradictions that lead us to an *aporia*.

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<sup>81</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I: Counterfeit Money*, 12.

<sup>82</sup> Kevin D O'Gorman, *Jacques Derrida's Philosophy of Hospitality*, 54.

<sup>83</sup> Drawing from the experience of immigrants in Taiwan, Ho-Chia Chuch argues that Derrida's notion of the gift in the framework of unconditional hospitality leads to encounters with other people. See Chuch, "Exploring Gift Theories for New Immigrants in Taiwan," in *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 1119.

<sup>84</sup> Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*, 26.

Yet, as observed in Mauss, the mystery of the gift opens possibilities and fertile grounds for further thought.

#### 1.4 Jean-Luc Marion

Jean-Luc Marion (1946 – ) is a French philosopher and theologian and a student of Derrida. His work as a philosopher engaged Rene Descartes, Martin Heidegger, and Edmund Husserl. In theology, Marion was influenced by Henry de Lubac, Hans Urs Von Balthasar, and Louis Bouyer. His works, especially *God Without Being* (1995), were linked with the gift and love. Among the awards Marion received was the *Premio Joseph Ratzinger of the Fondazione Vaticana Joseph Ratzinger – Benedetto XVI*, 2021.

The starting point of Marion's argument is radically different to Derrida's. Inversely, he purports that the gift is, in fact, possible. A gift should not be thought of by only looking at the giver, the gift, and the receiver but rather by bracketing these conditions and establishing a new notion of "givenness." He writes: "In order to achieve a description, if any is possible, of the gift, we can lead to open for the first time a new horizon, much wider than those of objectivity and being, the horizon of givenness."<sup>85</sup> In his reasoning, givenness would bracket the said conditions for the gift, and so presents an absolute concept of the gift.

Marion explains how he employs the term in *Being Given: Towards a Phenomenology of Givenness* (2002).<sup>86</sup> He writes:

I would be speaking of givenness as a unified concept, while a simple analogy (a paronymy) would enable us to establish a network of terms that remain equivocal (*es Gibt, Geben, Gegeben, Gabe Gebung. Gegebenheit* etc.), as would their usage by different authors. Givenness would not define a concept and would not even designate a phenomenon but, like an abstract idea, would unduly fix a confused illusion – an effect of language.<sup>87</sup>

Marion explains the meaning of givenness as a continuous donation. He observes: "In French, givenness is *donation*,"<sup>88</sup> that is, gift-giving. It is a description of the reality of continuous giving. It is the understanding of the world, our being, as primarily given and receiving. In his words: "The gift then remains a being that is subsisting and available, free from the process

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<sup>85</sup> Derrida and Marion, *On the Gift: A discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean Luc Marion*, moderated by Richard Kearney," in *God, the Gift, and Post Modernism*, 61.

<sup>86</sup> *Being Given* originally appeared in French in 1991 as *Etant Donne: Essai d'une Phenomenologie de la donation*. See Marion, *Being Given: Toward A Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans., Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002).

<sup>87</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

that made it possible, actual. Thus, givenness (donation) does indeed persist as a gift given, but in another sense, it disappears in this given, which hides in it the giving gift.”<sup>89</sup>

A proper understanding of givenness should be urged. The reflection of Erik Heppel and Mark Rathbone on the topic is relevant. They state: “According to Marion, the mark of real giving is the abandonment of the gift by the giver.” They add that a perfect gift or givenness is giving “without being aware of the effect your gift has delivered.”<sup>90</sup> Similarly, Antonio Malo explains that for Marion, total giving means abandoning the gift.<sup>91</sup> In sum, givenness refers to giving without consciousness of whatever we give and the impact of that which is given. Here, consciousness is described as consciousness of the ego.<sup>92</sup> In other words, receivers and givers have to carry their attitudes with a sense of humility, without any mistrust, malice or trying to take pleasure out of it.

According to Marion, a givenness is an act of continuous and unconditional giving or ceaseless re-giving.<sup>93</sup> Although “givenness” is a phenomenological concept, Marion reasons that traditional phenomenology or philosophical reflection – that focuses on the gift, giver and receiver – cannot fully explain the gift.<sup>94</sup> Marion is decisive: “The gift is given...it is accomplished all the better according to givenness.”<sup>95</sup> Givenness reveals an absolute gift because it does not open the door for compensation and repayment. It testifies itself when it is described as givenness because it dwells in continuous donation. Marion states:

Givenness is less accessible than is the gift. Nevertheless, we can presume that if givenness opens a horizon for the gift, it will testify itself at least by not immediately assigning the gift to social and ethical behaviour (even if it eventually does this), but rather by allowing the gift to appear without requiring that it be dissolved into an

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<sup>89</sup> Ibid.

<sup>90</sup> Heppel and Rathbone, “The Gift as Philosophical Critique of the Social Grant System in South Africa,” 156.

<sup>91</sup> Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” in *International Philosophical Quarterly* 156.

<sup>92</sup> Heppel and Rathbone, “The Gift as Philosophical Critique of the Social Grant System in South Africa,” 157.

<sup>93</sup> Givenness is a phenomenological term that has diverse meanings amongst phenomenologists. For Marion, it is ceaseless re-given or continuous giving. It is the view that some expressions of the gift are beyond human grip. *Givenness* is not just the question of being, as Martin Heidegger writes. See Jean-Luc Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, trans., Jeffrey L. Kosky (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2002), 85-86; *God Without Being*, trans., Thomas A Carlson (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991), 99; Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*.28; Derrida and Marion, On the Gift: A Discussion between Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion, Moderated by Richard Kearney,” in *God, the Gift, and Post Modernism*, eds., John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 61. See Antonio Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” 162. Marion argues that givenness is a continuous and unconditional giving. See Jean-Luc Marion and Stephen E Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift* (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2011), 20-21. Accessed May 4, 2021. ProQuest Ebook Central. According to Malo, Marion calls givenness a saturated phenomenon. See Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” 158.

<sup>94</sup> Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” 161

<sup>95</sup> Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, 114

exchange. In order to appear, the gift reduced to “givenness” would only have to be given – no more and no less.<sup>96</sup>

Givenness hides the conditions of the gift and presents the gift as an entity and action that explains itself.

Given that it can explain itself, givenness is compared with God in Jesus Christ. In Marion’s words:

The phenomenon shows itself in itself and through itself only in as much as it gives itself in and through itself. But then another question crops up: *what phenomenon* has ever, without remaining and without reserve, respected the phenomenological program? What phenomena has ever *accomplished* it ‘to the end, *eis telos*’? The demands of Christian theology here takes on the entirety of its immense claim: ‘only the one who loved his own until the end, *eis telos*’ (Jn. 13: 1).<sup>97</sup>

In his action, Christ is a gift that presents itself accordingly. He did nothing but continue to offer himself to people. Here, the theological aspect of Marion’s givenness or the gift is made clear. Jesus Christ is an absolute gift. He ceaselessly re-gave himself until the end. He becomes the real givenness, a term that Marion describes as a saturated phenomenon.<sup>98</sup>

Marion, it could be said, suspended Derrida’s conditions for the gift and placed the action within a more original reality. Therefore, he argues that the gift is more than an object and should not be merely objectified. This argument allows for a more significant consideration of gifts as non-objects, such as love, time, forgiveness, and so on.<sup>99</sup> At a fundamental level, the most basic agenda of Marion for deploying givenness as that which can testify itself is to avoid Mauss’ ingredients of the gift, including exchange and reciprocity, and return in the general idea of the gift as continues donation, a description of the reality of being. Furthermore, an appreciation of the givenness allows the human person to let their ego be measured and identified with a gift's positive or negative impact.<sup>100</sup> An absolute gift, then, resides in givenness.

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<sup>96</sup> Marion, “The Reason of the Gift,” in *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*, eds., Leask Ian Graham and Cassidy Eoin G, and trans., Shane Mackinlay and Nicolas de Warren (New York: Fordham University Press, 2005), 113. Accessed on May 5, 2020. ProQuest Ebook Central. <https://hdl-handle-net.jproxy.nuim.ie/2027>

<sup>97</sup> Marion, *Givenness and Revelation*, trans., by Stephen E. Lewis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 77.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.; Malo, “The Limit of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” *International Philosophical Quarterly* 158 and 160. A saturated phenomenon means “given to intuition exceeds the intentionality of consciousness.” Ibid., 160

<sup>99</sup> Malo, “The Limits of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” 158.

<sup>100</sup> Gabriel Andrus, “The Cogito and the Gift: An Analysis of the Relationship between Descartes and Jean Luc-Marion,” in *Philosophy Today* 61, Issue 1 (2001), 222, accessed on March 22, 2021. DOI:10.5840/philtoday2017322154.

### 1.4.1 Givenness as Absolute Gift

Marion writes: “If the givee preceded the gift in expectation of receiving it, or even by asking for it, and if it subsisted after it, appropriating it and enjoying it, the gift would suffer a double disqualification.”<sup>101</sup> To avoid disqualification, his notion of givenness calls for a new way of thinking that does not utilise the categories of the gift. Givenness, for Marion, is a way of interpreting life and reality. To live in accordance with this givenness, givers need to give without disclosing their identity, assuming the character of giving and receiving without the consciousness of the ego, because conscious gift-giving generates reimbursement or return, leading to disqualification. The climax of givenness is found in Marion’s already-mentioned saturated phenomenon. This complete and novel understanding of givenness is explained in three stages. Each stage is described as an absolute gift.

Marion categorises givenness into three different levels, namely, anonymous giving, hiding the process of givenness, and offering a non-object gift.<sup>102</sup> In the first level, he maintains that the giver withdraws from the gift or gives anonymously.<sup>103</sup> Put differently, donors are described as “non-existent givers.”<sup>104</sup> In this type of giving, the “thing” given is present and appreciated by the recipient, but the giver remains absent, even if the receiver perceives to know the giver. A deceased person is an example of such a giver. Under this perspective, the receiver may or may not know the giver but cannot return the gift because the giver has died or is absent. Even if the receiver abandons the gift, say he or she dislikes it or dislikes the giver, the character of the gift remains.<sup>105</sup>

The second level of givenness is when we conceal the entire process of giving and receiving. The giver and receiver do not know each other and are, therefore, not present to each other. This is to say givers can recall that they offer a donation but have no idea of their receiver. The receivers know that they received a gift but cannot locate the giver because they refuse to be recognised. In this sense of the gift, givers donate through an intermediary. For example, “the campaign to raise money for humanitarian cause.”<sup>106</sup> Marion described this act of giving

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<sup>101</sup> Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, 85-86. See also Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*, 28.

<sup>102</sup> Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, 85-106.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 85; Malo, “The Limit of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” in *International Philosophical Quarterly* 16.

<sup>104</sup> Marion, “Reason of the Gift,” in *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*, 113.

<sup>105</sup> Malo, “The Limit of Marion’s and Derrida’s Philosophy of the Gift,” in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 156.

<sup>106</sup> Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, 87.

as participating in the gift's logic "without constituting it intrinsically."<sup>107</sup> It helps parties to see the gift as a gift and appropriate it accordingly, that is, without compensation or return. Marion also references giving to an enemy or the ungrateful as examples of receivers in this level of givenness.

Marion's third and final classification of an absolute gift is when one gives that which one does not possess or is a non-object. He writes:

Without doubt, there is nothing more precious than my attention, my care, my time, my faith or even my life. And, in the end, the other person expects nothing less and can hope for nothing more. Nor I from him. For in giving these non-objective gifts, which elude being either understood or possessed, which supplies no gain or assignable return and which really provide nothing (nothing real; *ne rem*), I in fact give myself in my most complete selfhood.<sup>108</sup>

Marion considers this level of the gift as the best of the three, asking: "What can I give that is more precious than such a gift?"<sup>109</sup> At times, we do not recognise these non-objects as gifts.<sup>110</sup> He names love, prayer, death, and the Eucharist as absolute gifts.<sup>111</sup> For instance, Andrew Prevot writes, "Marion speaks of the gift of prayer, a divine gift."<sup>112</sup> The philosopher Wellington Santana writes about Marion's gift of love, maintaining that with love, the gift does not fall into the burden of reciprocity.<sup>113</sup>

These three stages of givenness present the gift as that which makes itself available and sustainable by itself. Making itself available opens the horizon of givenness, a continuous act of giving among receivers. For Marion,

In giving themselves, they not only make themselves accessible; they open a new situation for those who receive them – the examination where everyone is equal, except for their competence, an arrangement that negates social and natural status – above all a new temporal sequence – at the moment of the distribution (givenness).<sup>114</sup>

The gift, then, is that which is short of any trace or space or hides itself. It frees the discussion of the gift from ambiguity and *aporia* since it negates any social status and even rivalry. The

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<sup>107</sup> Marion and Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift*, 82.

<sup>108</sup> Marion, "The Reason of the Gift," in *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*, 115.

<sup>109</sup> Ibid.

<sup>110</sup> Marion, "Sketch of a Phenomenological Concept of the Gift," in *Post Modern Philosophy and Christian Thought*, trans., Johnny Conley and Danielle Poe, ed., Merold Westphal (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 125.

<sup>111</sup> Marion, *God without Being*, trans., Thomas A. Carlson (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1991), 177-182. See also Horner, *Rethinking God as Gift: Marion, Derrida, and the Limits of Phenomenology*, 141.

<sup>112</sup> Andrew Prevot, "The Gift of Prayer: Towards a Theological Reading of Jean-Luc Marion," in *The Journal of the Theology Society* 41, Issue 2, (2014), 273. Accessed on May 4, 2021. <https://doi.org/10.1017/hor.2014.76>.

<sup>113</sup> Wellington Jose Santana, "Is Love a Gift? A Philosophical Inquiry about Givenness," *Journal Metadata* 55, no. 134 (2007), 442. <https://doi.org/10.1590/0100-512x201n1340wjs>

<sup>114</sup> Marion, *Being Given: Towards A Phenomenology of Givenness*, 63-64.



gift in givenness, and in these three stages, one could say, goes beyond an object to addressing the question of distribution and equality.

#### 1.4.2 The Gift and Sacrifice

One contentious topic on the gift is how it relates to sacrifice. Marion is aware of this problem. While sacrifice is commonly called a gift, he maintains that it cannot be so because a sacrifice is an exchange. Sacrifice is offered as an appreciation for something or to strengthen a relationship. In this way, it necessitates conditions and exchange and raises the social status of the one who makes it. According to Marion: “In making this supposed gift to my opponent, my purpose is simply to strengthen my position, it is my position *vis-a-vis* him, and I sacrifice this piece to him.”<sup>115</sup> A sacrifice that relinquishes something for something, Marion reasons, cannot be a gift or express givenness since it presupposes compensation.

Marion accepts aspects of sacrifice as a gift. Rather than rejecting the concept of sacrifice, Marion speaks of it in the sense of givenness. In his words, sacrifice is only a part of the process of givenness: an activity that falls within givenness. Sacrifice returns what was already given. It is not about offering a new thing. He writes: “Sacrifice does not separate itself from the gift but dwells in it totally.”<sup>116</sup> Sacrifice is “to make a gift by taking from among gifts already given in order to re-give it.” It is “a gift from the gift itself,” not a counter-gift.<sup>117</sup> Sacrifice is that which returns to its origin.<sup>118</sup>

Marion develops this point further in considering the so-called Sacrifice of Isaac in the Book of Genesis (Gen 22: 1-19). According to the story, God tested Abraham’s faith by requiring his son, Isaac. Marion argues that Isaac is an absolute gift to his parents, Abraham and Sarah. He argues that Isaac suffered disqualification because Sarah, Abraham’s wife, was conscious that he was an exchange. Unlike her, Abraham sees Isaac as givenness and is so caught in the ceaseless re-giving by re-giving him.<sup>119</sup> This action means that when Abraham attempts to offer him as a sacrifice to God, Isaac only resumes his proper status, the gift in the context of givenness. Marion maintains that the event was not a sacrifice but rather a re-giving of a gift, offering a gift from what was already given. Here, he uses givenness as both a transcendental and an empirical term to explain the question of gift-giving and sacrifice.

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<sup>115</sup> Marion and Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift*, 72.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> Heppel and Rathbone, “The Gift as Philosophical Critique of the Social Grant System in South Africa,” 130.

<sup>119</sup> Marion and Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift*, 86-87.

### 1.4.3 The Gift's Ambiguity: Violence and Peace

Marion is aware that gift-giving may also ignite violence and reconciliation. To probe the relationship between the gift and violence, it is important to discuss his example of offering a donation to an enemy regarding his analysis of givenness. He maintains that offering a donation to an enemy is a perfect gift since the enemy may receive the gift without showing appreciation or could deny and return the gift angrily. An enemy may think of killing the giver because of what they harbour. It is worth quoting him at length:

Not only will he (an enemy) not render a gift in return for mine; he will deny that there is even a gift at issue, but he will also foster a still more tremendous hate for me...I will deserve to be even more hated by him, because I have wanted to make him benefit from my wealth, to render him slave to my protection, to overpower him by my generosity, and so on. He will therefore take vengeance on me in order to free the least obligation of recognition. He will kill me rather than acknowledge that he owes me the least recognition. Even so, is my gift compromised by this? Not at all, for a gift that is scorned and denied, even transformed into an affront, nonetheless remains perfectly and definitively given.<sup>120</sup>

Marion acknowledges the difficulty: the gift, even a perfect gift, can engender hatred, violence and killing, but the character of the gift does not disappear even when it is rejected in such circumstances. Marion contends that we must not understand the enemy's attitude as a counter-gift.<sup>121</sup> He, the enemy, denies the giver and does not open a space for an exchange.

Marion also thinks that violence occurs in family and society when people fail to understand that the gift resides in givenness. For instance, someone who cannot discern the gift in the context of givenness could misinterpret it as wickedness and sheer injustice. If that happens, Marion warns, the result would be anger and jealousy, leading to hatred and violence. He turns to the Parable of the Prodigal Son in the Gospel of Saint Luke (Lk 15: 11-32) to support his claim.<sup>122</sup>

This gospel passage presents three main characters: a father and two sons. The parable tells of a younger son who demanded a share of his father's wealth, and the father granted his request. Marion calls this wealth *ousia*.<sup>123</sup> He interprets *ousia* in two senses: first, as disposable goods, and second, as wealth and a gift.<sup>124</sup> Marion maintains that the father's "wealth" remains a gift only while it is in the family house for everyone's use. However, the same *ousia* in the

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<sup>120</sup> Marion, "Reason of the Gift," in *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*, 114-115.

<sup>121</sup> Marion and Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift*, 82.

<sup>122</sup> Marion, *God Without Being*, 97-99.

<sup>123</sup> Marion is not the first to name the gift *Ousia*. Aristotle had done that earlier. See Aristotle, *Physics* 4.10. 217b-18a, in *The New Aristotle Reader*, ed J. L. Ackrill (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1978), 120-122.

<sup>124</sup> Marion, *God Without Being*, 95-97.

sense of “wealth” changes to *ousia* as disposable goods if they are in the hands of any individual rather than family members.

Marion contends that by demanding his share of the wealth, the younger son wishes to have ordinary and disposable goods. He is not interested in any gifts but in “wealth” or disposable goods. According to Marion, the younger brother asks “nothing of his father, and above all not to owe him a gift; he asked to have a father no longer – the father without a gift.”<sup>125</sup> The only moment this younger son enjoyed the *ousia* as a gift was when he returned home.

He maintains that it is not only the younger son who fails to view the *ousia* as a gift; the elder brother follows suit. He, too, sees the *ousia* in the family home as disposable goods. Thus, he was angry towards his father and the maids who worked for his father. However, only the father understands the “wealth” or *ousia* as a gift, according to Marion. The father’s ongoing generosity is a true meaning of givenness. The father did not ask for the *ousia* after the younger son’s return. Instead, he gives him more *ousia* and gifts. Marion states: “The father gives back to his son his filiation; with the ring and the fatted calf; he gives him what the son did not even think to ask for, the paternal gift of filiation to the son.”<sup>126</sup>

Where lies the link between the gift, violence, and peacebuilding? Marion signals the connection between these three topics when he asks: “What does the gift consist of in the Parable of the Prodigal Son?” He later answers: “Here, the jealous lack of intelligence of the elder son – who understands the paternal gift as little as does his younger brother – enlightens us.”<sup>127</sup> Marion grasps the true meaning of givenness in the father’s love towards the two sons. “The father does not see the *ousia* as the sons see it.” Marion goes on to say, “The father sees in it (*ousia*), the gift ceaselessly re-given at a new cost (eventually in forgiveness).”<sup>128</sup> He goes on: “The father is not fixed on the *ousia* because with his gaze he trans-pierces all that is not inscribed in the rigour of a gift, giving, received, given goods, common by definition and circulation.”<sup>129</sup>

Two points worth mentioning. On the one hand, there was anger that could have resulted in violence coming from the elder son when he refused to participate in the celebration of the coming of his brother. This happens because he failed to understand the gift from the point of

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

view of givenness. On the other hand, there was calmness and peace in the family because the father discerns the *ousia* as a gift/givenness. He is not aggrieved with either of his two sons. In other words, the two brothers' inability to understand the "wealth" or *ousia* from the perspective of givenness is the cause of anger, jealousy and hatred, which could have resulted in a violent reaction.

#### 1.4.4 Advancing Beyond Ambiguity and Aporia

To place Marion in the discussion so far: while advancing the discussion through the concept of givenness, he shares similar contentions to Mauss and Derrida. For example, he aligns with Mauss that there is gift-giving, and with Derrida, that Mauss's conditions for the gift render the gift baseless.<sup>130</sup> Also, he accepts Derrida's contention that givers and receivers must not receive or understand an object or gesture received as a gift. For instance, Marion contends that the social offering of donation, which Mauss presented, is not a gift but *an aporia because* it restores economic exchange. It "buys back" (so to speak) poverty and need by providing them with the means for paying, buying, and exchanging anew."<sup>131</sup> Every donation takes the form of exchange the moment it is received as a gift because givers impose responsibility on receivers to reciprocate. However, he departs from Derrida when he shows that absolute gift is possible, and it resides in givenness. Marion, therefore, insists that givenness helps us discern absolute gifts and escape the *aporia* of the gift. The three levels of givenness are strong statements about the possibility of the gift. They point out that there are conditions that make the gift possible. They counteract Derrida's point that the conditions of the gift generate its impossibility. Thus, Marion's effort to defend his idea of givenness resides in avoiding Derrida's concept of *aporia* and Mauss's reciprocity, exchange, and obligation. In other words, Marion tries to buttress his claims that a perfect gift means giving without consciousness of the ego and obligation. Only givenness can guarantee such an understanding of the gift.

Ultimately, he equates God in Jesus Christ with the final gift.<sup>132</sup> Gifts are always a return to their origin, unconditional and unconscious giving. The givenness that makes sense of gift

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<sup>130</sup> Marion and Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift*, 78-79.

<sup>131</sup> Marion, "The Reason of the Gift," in *Givenness and God: Questions for Jean-Luc Marion*, 111.

<sup>132</sup> Marion maintains that "phenomenon shows itself in itself and through itself only as much as it gives itself in and through itself...The demand of Christian theology here takes on the entirety of its immense claim. Only the one (Christ) who loved his own until the end, *eis telos*, to the point of saying in truth, 'it is finished, telesthan' (John 19:30), manifested, uncovered *the phenomenon in itself and from itself*. This phenomenon *shows itself absolutely* because he, and he alone, gives himself absolutely." This phenomenon is givenness and absolute gift, God in Jesus Christ. See Marion, *Givenness & Revelation*, 76 -77.

is an open-ended concept since he calls death, hate and even the human person a gift, as did Abraham of his son Isaac.<sup>133</sup> While Marion dialogues with many disciplines, there is a distinctly theological take on the question of the gift.<sup>134</sup> While writing about the gift, Marion appeals to the concept of God and other theological themes, including forgiveness and love.<sup>135</sup> His novel approach to the gift pushes him beyond his phenomenology towards theology. John O'Donohue writes: "His (Marion's) thinking has the urgency of a blade that wants to cut the divine free from the metaphysical netting of conditional reflective thought."<sup>136</sup> Similarly, Saarinen points out: "If God is presented primarily as a gift or *summum bonum*, then God is reduced either to an ontic cause or an important Neoplatonic one...The category of givenness (Marion's) is no shortcut to an adequate theology of revelation."<sup>137</sup> Among the three theorists we have addressed so far, it is precisely this that breaks new ground in terms of providing theological insights.

Overall, we contend that the gift in Marion advances beyond Mauss' ambiguity and Derrida's *aporia*. At the same time, the difficulty remains: the gift may have both positive and negative outcomes, that is, bring about peace and social cohesion or violence and social breakdown. We turn now to our final thinker, who further develops theological themes and directly addresses the question of violence.

## 1.5 Rene Girard

The French thinker René Girard, who lived between 1923 and 2015, wrote in many academic disciplines, such as theology, economics, mythology, and social sciences. His most remarkable contributions were made in theology, philosophy, and anthropology. Girard's primary contribution and research interest in his almost thirty works was the theory of desire. Anthony J. Kelly argues that his analysis of desire "throws considerable light on the meaning and purpose of the gift."<sup>138</sup>

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<sup>133</sup> Marion and Lewis, *The Reason of the Gift*, 87.

<sup>134</sup> Prevot, "The Gift of Prayer: Towards a Theological Reading of Jean-Luc Marion," 273.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 88; Marion, *God without Being*, 177-182.

<sup>136</sup> John O'Donohue, "The Absent Threshold: An Eckhartian Afterword," in *Givenness and God: Questions of Jean-Luc Marion*, 195.

<sup>137</sup> Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*, 31.

<sup>138</sup> Anthony J. Kelly, "Beyond Locked Doors: The Breath of the Risen One," in *Violence, Desire, and the Sacred Vol. 1: Mimetic Theory Across Disciplines*, ed., Scott Cowdell, Chris Fleming, and Joel Hodge (New York: Bloomsbury Academic and Professional, 2014), 80. Accessed on March 8, 2022. ProQuest Ebook Central.

Girard takes a different path from the previous theorists. He addresses the question of the gift by way of his model of desire.<sup>139</sup> Known as the *mimetic theory*, it refers to “the tendency of human beings to imitate the gestures, behaviours, intentions, and desires of other persons.”<sup>140</sup> It highlights the idea of “imitation and representation,”<sup>141</sup> holding that human desire functions imitatively. Girard uses it in two senses: one, to show how people imitate desires in cultures and personal encounters,<sup>142</sup> and two, to illustrate how primitive societies use violence to regulate people’s imitative desires.<sup>143</sup> Concerning the first sense, mimetic desire arises from desiring what another desires. This desire can lead to cooperation or competition. Regarding the second, Girard writes:

After all, human relations disintegrate in the process (the process of explaining social and moral causes cause of calamity), and the subjects of those relations cannot be utterly innocent of this phenomenon. But, rather than blame themselves, people inevitably blame either society as a whole, which cost them nothing, or other people who seem particularly harmful for easily identifiable reasons. The suspects are accused of a particular category of crimes.<sup>144</sup>

In other words, the suspect becomes a scapegoat. This mechanism – called the scapegoat mechanism – is a violence that regulates violence.<sup>145</sup>

Society employs this dynamic to build social relationships. However, this means building social relationships, or the dynamic of the mimetic theory, is based on violence. To illustrate, he argues that the killing of Jesus was aimed at restoring order and peace in society.

They (humans) are incapable of seeing that all of Christ’s words and deeds - from the offer of the kingdom to the passion, not excepting the explicit disclosure of the founding murder - are determined by his will to save humanity, unable to see that all the old sacrificial solutions are now bankrupt and completely empty.<sup>146</sup>

In short, Girard insists that Jesus’ death was a trick on the devil as Jesus was a gift to humanity and not a sacrifice. He writes: “If God allowed Satan (mimetic contagion or desire)

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<sup>139</sup> René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans., Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1972), 1-27.

<sup>140</sup> Scott R. Garrels, “Imitation Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire: Convergence Between the Mimetic Theory of Rene Gerard and Empirical Research on Imitation,” *Journal of Violence, Mimesis, and Culture* 12, no. 13 (2006), 48.

<sup>141</sup> Scott Thomas M, Culture, “Religion and Violence: Rene Girard’s Mimetic Theory,” *Journal of International Studies* 43 Issue 1 (2014): 309.

<sup>142</sup> Garrels, “Imitation Mirror Neurons, and Mimetic Desire: Convergence Between the Mimetic Theory of Rene Gerard and Empirical Research on Imitation,” 48

<sup>143</sup> *Ibid.*, 47-48.

<sup>144</sup> René Girard, *The Scapegoat*, trans., Yvonne Freccero (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986), 14.

<sup>145</sup> Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, 39-40.

<sup>146</sup> René Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, trans. Stephen Bann and Michael Meteer (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1987), 241.

to reign for a certain period over humankind, it is because God knew beforehand that at the right time, Christ (the gift) would overcome his adversary by dying on the cross.”<sup>147</sup> The outcome of the death of Jesus is different from all the other killings prior. Girard draws from this theory to offer his perspective of the gift, describing the term as the Holy Spirit.

### 1.5.1 The Gift as Holy Spirit

Important points arise from Girard’s interest in the gift. For instance, he is critical of the traditional Christian idea that Jesus’s death was a sacrifice to save humanity. Riso Saarinen points out that Girard is a significant figure in the gift’s discourse because of his treatment of sacrifice as a part of the gift’s dynamics. Saarinen states: “Getting rid of sacrifice is as difficult as giving a free gift. When we renounce the logic of sacrifice, we already start to employ it.”<sup>148</sup>

The killers of Jesus assumed that by killing Jesus, peace would return. Girard clarifies that the death of Jesus is not the same as the usual act of scapegoating. Rather, this killing was designed to offer the gift of the Holy Spirit. For Girard, the scapegoating of Jesus has become an avenue to illustrate that God in Jesus Christ is a giver. Saarinen gets Girard’s point better: “God would thus not be violent, but he would send his son and in so doing occupy the position of the giver.”<sup>149</sup>

Girard used the example of King Solomon’s judgement in the First Book of Kings. (1 Kings 3: 16 -28) to explain that God disapproved of killing but allowed it in the case of Jesus in order to offer the gift of the Holy Spirit. Girard writes:

The good harlot agrees to substitute herself for the sacrificial victim, not because she feels a morbid attraction to the role but because she has an answer to the tragic alternative: kill or be killed. The answer is: be killed, not as a result of masochism, or the death instinct, but so that the child will live. Christ himself – reaching the situation that reveals the ultimate basis of human community – also adopts an attitude that will necessarily expose him to the violence of a community unanimously bent on retaining sacrifice and repressing the radical significance of what is being put to it, *namely the gift of the Holy Spirit that saves*.<sup>150</sup>

The passion of Jesus eventually offers to humanity the Holy Spirit.<sup>151</sup> In other words, Girard implies that God sent Jesus Christ (the gift) to humanity to combat evil through non-violent means, but humans deployed violence on Jesus without any idea that God had already planned to restore order in society through the same means. Girard would say that for us to have a good

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<sup>147</sup> René Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, ed., James G. Williams (New York: Orbis Books, 2001),151.

<sup>148</sup> Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*, 93.

<sup>149</sup> *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>150</sup> René Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, 242 (Italics are mine).

<sup>151</sup> Girard, *I See Satan Fall Like Lightning*, 150.

concept of the Holy Spirit as a gift, there is a need to renounce an interpretation of sacrifice that involves violence or the view that Jesus' death on the cross was a sacrifice. The Holy Spirit sent after the resurrection was to retain this intention of peace and non-violence. The point here is that although Jesus is one of the victims of mimetic desire, the result of his death on the cross escapes its clutches.

### 1.5.2 The Significance and Concerns About Girard's Understanding of the Gift

While Girard's work has theological implications, he is not formally a theologian nor dwells significantly on the gift.<sup>152</sup> However, his model of mimetic theory leads to two important theological points. One, he makes a case for a divine gift, arguing that the Holy Spirit is that gift. Therefore, the gift involves theological and not only secular themes. Two, sacrifice in mimetic theory is a violent act and cannot be regarded as a gift. While the first point is consistent with traditional Christian theology, the latter is a radical departure.

This leaves Girard in tension with much of the tradition. For instance, Saarinen asks: "How can Girard, who nevertheless tries to be a Roman Catholic, cope with the Anselmian view of satisfaction brought about through Jesus' death?"<sup>153</sup> Also, how do we reconcile a situation where God rejects sacrifice but accepts it as a stepping stone towards achieving an end, the sending of the Holy Spirit?

Furthermore, Girard focuses primarily on the divine gift and not on gift-giving by humans. For instance, in the previous example from the Judgement of King Solomon, Girard fails to point out that the woman he describes as the "good harlot" called for peace and unity through non-violence by allowing the other woman to have her child. Based on this observation, one could agree with Godbout, who argues that Girard was biased in his view of human society. He notices:

With Girard, violence is primary. The fundamental relationship is the relationship to an object or to an objectified person. There is only hatred and desire...But there are other issues: domination, endured or accepted and the gift...Girard recognises this part of the logic of the gift. But he situates its origin outside of the society...He overlooks all situations where elements opposed to the logic of violence might appear and favours only those secondary elements that support his cynical hypothesis.<sup>154</sup>

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<sup>152</sup> Thomas Pletsch, "Rene Girard's Anthropology of the Cross," *Lutheran Theological Journal* 51, no. 2 (2017), 130. Accessed on March 4, 2022. <https://login.jproxy.nuim.ie/login?url>

<sup>153</sup> Saarinen, *God and the Gift: An Ecumenical Theology of Giving*, 90.

<sup>154</sup> Jacques Godbout, *The World of the Gift*, trans., Donald Winkler (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), 209.



It could also be said that Girard ignored areas where the logic of love seems evident because he focuses on the evil aspect of human society.

However, Girard reveals to us that there is a divine gift, namely God, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit. Overall, he would say that the gift is ultimately a prerogative of God. For Girard, we can avoid the ambiguity of the gift and its *aporia* when the discussion is detached from human activities and focuses on divine gifts.

## 1.6 An Overview

Our survey of these significant theorists discloses similarities and differences. Importantly, they all argue that there is a gift – but that it is complex. The relationships it promotes goes beyond imagination, creating a virtuous circle. At the same time, gift-giving leads to violence because givers compete with one another. In addition, there is the suspicion that the gift can be a poison; givers can control their receivers or beneficiaries. Accordingly, people may be afraid to receive gifts.

Mauss, who opens the discussion on gifts, argues that in archaic societies, the gift is an exchange that involves generosity, reimbursement, rivalry, and competition, leading to violence.<sup>155</sup> He describes it as an everyday activity that is grounded in reciprocity and obligation. Complex rules and practices, return, exchange, and competition guide it. In other words, people donate to compete and enhance social relationships, but it also generates competition and rivalry. There are two sides: “kindness and confrontation, solidarity and agonistic struggle.”<sup>156</sup> For him, even though there is a gift, the gift is not altogether free. This claim poses a significant concern on the subject for philosophers, sociologists, anthropologists, ethicists, and theologians.

Derrida responded to Mauss. He thinks that if gift-giving is about self-interest and reimbursements, it cancels itself; it is an *aporia* or in theological terms, a mystery.<sup>157</sup> For him, it makes sense to say Mauss did not discuss the gift since his explanation speaks of exchange and compensation. Derrida argues that what Mauss refers to as the gift is only a condition or a platform that allows the gift to thrive. For him, the gift is unconditional hospitality and nature,

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<sup>155</sup> Mauss, *The Gift: Forms and Functions of Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Ian Cunnison, 1; Mauss, *The Gift the Form and Reason for Exchange in Archaic Societies*, trans., Bibliothek Press, 5-9; Saarinen, *God and the Gift*, 17.

<sup>156</sup> Jane I Guyer, “The True Gift: Thoughts on *L’Anne Sociologique* 1925,” *Journal of Classical Sociology* 14, no. 1 (2014), 20. Accessed on March 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2022. Doi: 10.1177/1468795x13494714.

<sup>157</sup> Derrida, *Given Time I. Counterfeit Money*, 12

but it is impossible in ordinary life experience. This chapter argues that the ambiguity of Mauss becomes an *aporia* to Derrida.

Marion agrees with Derrida that utility gift-giving is no gift. To defend the possibility of a ‘free gift’ – absolute gifts – he deploys the concept of givenness, which is a gift without a condition. Marion, too, accepts that gift-giving could lead to violence. However, he argues that understanding the gift from the perspective of givenness will not lead to competition or violence but rather social cohesion. What leads to violence and killing, Marion thinks, is ignorance of or lack of proper understanding of the dynamics of the gift. Givers and receivers have critical roles and responsibilities when the gift is a significant contributor to human relationships, such as solidarity and hospitality.

We placed Girard alongside these theorists because he explicitly discusses the subject from the perspective of the divine gift, which is the Holy Spirit.<sup>158</sup> Despite this insight, we saw that he missed the opportunity to point out that the gift can operate in human society because he was engrossed in the thinking that violence characterises society.

It suffices to say that these theories differ in their discussion of the gift. Mauss argues that the gift is an economic exchange; it is reciprocity that is not entirely voluntary. Derrida thinks that the conditions that Mauss provided for the gift are not possible. Hence, the gift cancels itself. Marion argues that there is a gift even in ordinary experience because of the horizon of givenness. For Girard, there is only a divine gift.

Furthermore, while Derrida says that recipients must not read what they received as a gift, Marion argues that they may be aware of what they receive as a gift but must interpret it as gratuity. Lastly, for Marion, givenness explains how and why we can offer gifts in ordinary experience. For Derrida, all the conditions cannot explain the possibility of the gift because they continually contradict themselves. Girard does not speak of gift-giving in the ordinary and common sense. For him, there is only a divine gift.

At the same time, common strands connect their views. Firstly, they are adamant that there is a gift. Secondly, they agreed that the gift enhances social relationships and leads to violence. Therefore, and thirdly, the discussion of the gift by these theorists ended in deep complexity: the gift for one person may be experienced by another as an obligation, a poison, or a call for competition. For these theorists, the gift can be positive and negative – positive because it reveals the structural relations within any society, and negative in that it leads to violence. The discussion can be criticised for being overly abstract. It can raise the question of

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<sup>158</sup> Girard, *Things Hidden Since the Foundation of the World*, 217.

a normative deficit in a moral language in helping people to navigate through practical life experience issues, such as freedom to receive a gift and distribution of resources. Fourthly, the human person is the context in which the theorists discuss the gift.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

Considering the ambiguities of the gift this study revealed, one could regard gift-giving as irrelevant. For example, the French professor Jacques T Godbout writes: “Gifts are seen as, at best, irrelevant frills.”<sup>159</sup> This thesis argues otherwise. The discussion so far sets out the challenges to considering the gift. The following section considers how Joseph Ratzinger unpacked the logic of the gift in his theology in light of these challenges.

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<sup>159</sup> Godbout, *The World of the Gift*, i.

## CHAPTER TWO

### The Logic of the Gift in the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger

#### 2.1 Introduction

Having examined the wider discourse on the gift, this section of the study turns to Joseph Ratzinger's distinctive approach to the topic. Ratzinger is one of the most authoritative voices of Roman Catholic theology of the twentieth century. His importance is undeniable: a theological expert at the Second Vatican Council (1962–65), a widely known professor in Munich, Bonn, Münster, and Regensburg (1957–77), archbishop of Munich (1977–81) and cardinal, then prefect, of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1981–2005). His emphasis on the human person as a gift runs through his theology of creation, the Trinity, salvation, nature, and grace. For instance, he writes: “We receive our life not only at the moment of birth but every day from without.”<sup>1</sup>

This chapter addresses the question: prior to becoming Pope Benedict XVI, how did Joseph Ratzinger discuss the logic of the gift? It outlines the hallmark of his theological understanding of major themes, including God, creation, human existence, freedom, sin, and salvation. These interrelated theological themes are intended to present a complete vision of the human person as made for giving and receiving or encounters with God and others.

The chapter addresses the question by using Ratzinger's earlier books, *Introduction to Christianity* (1971) and *'In the Beginning...': A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall* (1990).<sup>2</sup> Both books offer his deep handling of the gift. For instance, in

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<sup>1</sup> Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning...': A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall*, trans., Boniface Ramsey (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990), 72.

<sup>2</sup> Joseph Ratzinger release *Introduction to Christianity* to answer the questions of God, the Christian life, theology, theologian, and invariable human existence. For instance, writing about God, Ratzinger asks: “What in fact is ‘God’ really?...“What can this word ‘God’ signify? What really does it express, and how does the reality concerned

*Introduction to Christianity*, he states: “It is only because we have received that we can also make.”<sup>3</sup> In addition to these sources, references are made to later works, including *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration* (2007).

This chapter is divided into five sections. Section one deals with Ratzinger’s theological methods. This section helps us to understand how he builds his argument in discussing theological theories. Section two introduces Ratzinger’s theological discussion of the gift through the concepts of God, creation/human existence, sin, salvation, and freedom. This part of the chapter provides an opportunity to understand how he gradually builds his theology around giving and receiving. Section three considers two phrases, “producing” and “receiving,” to differentiate between the gift, gift-giving, and their opposites. Section four concerns his concept of the gift. This leads us to the final section, which juxtaposes Ratzinger’s notion of the gift with the previously named theorists.

## 2.2 Joseph Ratzinger’s Theology

In *Introduction to Christianity*, Ratzinger urges theologians “to break through accepted patterns of thoughts and speech and make people recognize the subject matter of theology as a serious aspect of human life.”<sup>4</sup> In addition to God, the human person is also the subject of theology. Theology is essentially about the claim that human beings receive the image of God at creation and must sustain a relationship with Him through constant encounters. He writes: “In the human being God enters into his creation; the human being is directly related to God.”<sup>5</sup> The human self is a gift of love, not an achievement or merit. His theology is simply about encounters – between God and humanity, and between all humans – which is best described as receiving and giving.<sup>6</sup>

Based on the above, Ratzinger contends that human righteousness leads nowhere if God is not conceived as the giver of all we are and have. He writes:

To the Bible, the limits of human righteousness, of human power as a whole, become an indication of the way in which man is thrown back upon the unquestioning gift of love, a

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make contact with men?” Precisely, it is the answer he provided to these questions that he speaks of gift-giving. See Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, trans. J.R. Foster (London: Search Press, 1971), 67.

The book was first published in German Language, titled *Einführung in das Christentum* (1968). The second book, *In the Beginning: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall*, trans., Boniface Ramsey (Edingbur: T & T Clark, 1990), was a collection of Ratzinger’s homilies that were first published by Erichewel Verlag in 1986, entitled *Im Anfang Schuf Gott*.

<sup>3</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 43.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 16

<sup>5</sup> Ratzinger, *‘In the Beginning...’: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall*, 45.

<sup>6</sup> For more information, see Joseph Ratzinger, *The Milestones: The Memoirs 1927 -1977* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997).

gift which unexpectedly opens itself to him and thereby opens up man himself, and without which man would remain shut up in all his 'righteousness.'<sup>7</sup>

The person is transformed and so duty-bound by the relationship with God. Katherine Sonderegger captures this point, saying: "Ratzinger places at the very centre of his theology the 'new subject,' a human life transformed by the encounter with the risen Christ."<sup>8</sup> Conversion, which is better described as receiving, holds prime place in Ratzinger's theology, which, in what follows, can be explained in three subheadings: Christian anthropology, nature and grace, and use of scripture.

### 2.2.1 Theological Anthropology

Three presuppositions underpin Ratzinger's Christian anthropology. Firstly, Conversion. Ratzinger departs from thinkers like Rene Descartes, who argue that we can understand reality even when we renounce God and an objective and external reality. Such an image of the person poses a problem for Christian anthropology. Humans are to move from the inner reality to the outside and universal. They are meant to encounter another subject, that is, God and others. Ratzinger writes: "Being a man means being a fellow man in every aspect, not just in the respective present but in such a way that every man also contains the past and future of mankind."<sup>9</sup> Against the argument posited by Descartes – I think, therefore I am – Ratzinger contends that fellowship with God and the rest of humanity through a relationship of encounters is the purpose of human existence. It means that one does not live solely for oneself. The mark of his theology, then, is a Christian vision of the person, rooted in an experience articulated by St Paul: "It is no longer I who live but Christ who lives in me" (Gal 2: 20). The human mind can grasp this understanding of the person only when it constantly encounters God.<sup>10</sup>

The experience of such an encounter counters the self-enclosed person of Descartes. Instead, the person must transcend himself or herself to be fully human. Ratzinger writes: "It is openness to the whole, to the infinite, that makes man complete. Man is man by reaching out infinitely beyond himself and he is consequently more of a man the less enclosed he is in himself, the less 'limited' he is."<sup>11</sup> The phrase "openness to the whole and infinite" points to

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<sup>7</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 195-196.

<sup>8</sup> Katherine Sonderegger, "Writing Theology in a Secular Age: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Method," in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, ed., Tim Perry (Bellingham: Lexham Press, 2019), 36.

<sup>9</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 185.

<sup>10</sup> James Corkery maintains that for Ratzinger, "Man as he is," "cannot trust life- and is not himself to be trusted until he turned around or repent." See *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Idea: Wise Cautions and Legitimate Hopes*, (Dublin: Dominican Publication, 2009), 50.

<sup>11</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 167.

conversion. It is a relationship with God and becoming Him, as Ratzinger himself further states: “To be in the image of God implies relationality. It is the dynamic that sets the human being in motion towards the totality of others. Hence it means the capacity for relationship; it is the human capacity for God.”<sup>12</sup> Again, he states:

Man does not find salvation in the reflective finding of himself but in the being-taken-out-of-himself that goes beyond reflection – not in continuing to be himself, but by going out from himself. It means that the liberation of man consists in his being free from himself and, in relinquishing himself, truly from himself. It means by accepting the other, the particular, he is apparently not necessary and free, he finds what is the whole and real.<sup>13</sup>

A complete return to God makes us true human beings, and real existence is predicated on that return. In Corkery’s words, a person, in Ratzinger’s view, “cannot be affirmed until he or she is turned around, converted and reverse.”<sup>14</sup> Tracy Rowland concurs: “[Ratzinger] argued that Christianity is not a moral system; it is an encounter with the person of Christ, indeed with the whole of the Trinity.”<sup>15</sup> To rephrase again, Ratzinger refers to an encounter with God in the risen Christ and humans as conversion, which is the proper vocation of every person. It is, in other words, the soul of his theology.<sup>16</sup>

The second presupposition is communion or unity. When Ratzinger uses the pronoun “we,” he interprets it as “the principle of for” to highlight the goal of human existence.<sup>17</sup> He states: “The believer is as such never alone. To become a believer means stepping out of one’s isolation to become part of the ‘we’ of the children of God.”<sup>18</sup> Elsewhere, he writes: “It is the surrender of the old isolated objectivity of the ‘I’ in order to find oneself within the unity of a new subject, which burst the limits of the ‘I,’ thus making possible contact with the ground of all reality.”<sup>19</sup> Ratzinger holds that a person cannot speak of individual existence without reference to the collective. He states: “In short, the one, whole Man – is deeply marked by his

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<sup>12</sup> Ratzinger, *In the Beginning...: A Catholic Understanding of the Story of Creation and the Fall*, 47.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *The Principle of Catholic Theology: Building stones for a Fundamental Theology* trans. Mary Francis McCarthy (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1987), 171. See also Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* (2007), nos. 2 and 3. He continues with his remarks on conversion to God during one of his general audiences as a pope. See Benedict XVI, *General Audience*, October 17, 2012.

<sup>14</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s Theological ideas*, 50.

<sup>15</sup> Tracy Rowland, *Ratzinger’s Faith: The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 147.

<sup>16</sup> Sonderegger, “Writing Theology in a Secular Age: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Method,” in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, 36.

<sup>17</sup> The principle of for means we exist not just for ourselves but for another, and Jesus Christ has shown humans how to live this category life while hanging on the Cross. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 189.

<sup>18</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Church Ecumenism and Politics*, ed., Robert Nowell (New York: St. Paul’s Publications, 1998), 30.

<sup>19</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Nature, and Mission of Theology: Understanding its Role in the Light of the Present Controversy*, trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 51.

membership of the whole of mankind ... Man is a being that can only 'be' by virtue of others," by giving and receiving from others.<sup>20</sup> The "we" which is the community, the Church, as well as God, is guaranteed through the unity of different individuals. Such a move toward the 'we' allows for a better understanding of reality. Vitaly, the ground of all reality is named gift-giving: "The ground on which our existence as a totality can stand and live, cannot be made but only received."<sup>21</sup>

However, there is a warning: being in the community does not mean losing one's identity; instead, that community is the centre of human life. Community is the milieu of human conversion or encounter with God and other humans. He writes: "Certainly, conversion is above all, a supremely personal act ... But true personalisation is always also a new and more profound socialisation."<sup>22</sup> Communion is closely linked to the previous point of conversion. It is the result of turning around oneself beyond the self-enclosed self. The highest 'I,' the community, and at best, God, are the grounds on which reality is accepted. Rather than saying the 'I' loses its character when it moves towards another subject, Ratzinger would argue that it takes a radical conversion to fully discover itself. "Being a Christian is essentially changing over from being for oneself to being for one another."<sup>23</sup> While every virtue proceeds from the individual, the same individual must be understood from the perspective of being in a community. Humans, he argues, in encountering others and the divine, must move from being self-enclosed to being a self for others if they are to realise themselves fully.<sup>24</sup>

The third presupposition is faith and righteousness. Ratzinger explains these two themes in light of the gift. On faith, he writes: "Faith can wish to understand because it is moved by love for the One upon whom it has bestowed its consent."<sup>25</sup> It is, therefore, offered without merit. It is not a conclusion to theoretical thought or an achievement of great effort.<sup>26</sup> Rachel A. Ameri and Mary M. Keys observe: "To say that faith is a gift means that it is something that the human person, individually or together with others, cannot produce, even by great intellectual effort."<sup>27</sup> Similarly, Blancosator Pablo notices: "So faith – both rational and

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<sup>20</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* 184.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>22</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, "New Evangelisation," *Communio* 44, no 2 (2017), 359.

<sup>23</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 190.

<sup>24</sup> *Ibid.*, 188-189.

<sup>25</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Nature and Mission of Theology: Essays to Orient Theology in today's debates*, trans., Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 27.

<sup>26</sup> Sonderegger, "Writing Theology in a Secular Age: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Method," in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, 48.

<sup>27</sup> Amiri Rachel and Keys Mary, "Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity's Need for the 'Theological Virtues' of Faith, Hope and Love," *Perspectives on Political Science* 41, no 1 (2012), 14.



relational – is also at the same time ‘theological’ (given from God) and ecclesial, as an answer to the act of giving and revelation that comes from God, which is expressed materially in the sacrament of baptism.”<sup>28</sup> The fact that it is something beyond our reach, something we cannot achieve, suggests that it is something that we receive or accept. Although it is beyond our effort, the responsibility to discover it lies in us. Ratzinger writes

Faith in him goes beyond the social and political realm, but, precisely in this, it is a faith in social responsibility. The social dimension is excluded in faith – not in the form of ready-made party program or a ready-made order of structure of the world. It is contained in faith precisely in the mode of responsibility. And this means it requires mediation of through reason and will. Reason and will must attempt to make concrete and to put into practice the criterion of God’s *mishpat*, set up by faith, in changing historical situations.<sup>29</sup>

Faith is a gift and responsibility. Only reason and will guide humans to clarify the hypothesis faith is a gift. This explains the close link between faith and reason. The insight goes further in that reason and faith are fundamental characteristics of human creatures and gifts of God.<sup>30</sup>

Regarding righteousness, Ratzinger states:

Human righteousness can only be attained by abandoning one’s own claims and being generous to man and to God. It is the righteousness of ‘forgive, as we have been forgiven’...It consists in continuing to forgive, since man himself lives essentially on the forgiveness he has received himself.<sup>31</sup>

Righteousness places the human person in the context of receiving and giving. It opens the door to understanding every being, his or her power and strength, as solely given by God. Such a vision of the person describes the reality of our being, namely, giving and receiving. He contends: “The limits of human righteousness, of human power as a whole, become an indication of the way in which man is thrown back upon the unquestioning gift of love, a gift which exceedingly opens itself to him and thereby opens up man himself.”<sup>32</sup>

Corkery speaks of Ratzinger’s thinking in the following way: we are like “beggars before God, stretching out our hands to receive what only God can give.”<sup>33</sup> Thus, Ratzinger’s vision of the person is captured in his idea of the gift. Simply put, the gift explains the human

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<sup>28</sup> Blancosarto Pablo, “Logos and Dia-logos: Faith, Reason (and Love) According to Ratzinger,” *Anglican Theological Review* 92, no. 3 (June 2010), 507, accessed on August 24<sup>th</sup>, 2021, ProQuest Centra.

<sup>29</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *A Turning Point for Europe*, trans. Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 82-83.

<sup>30</sup> Ratzinger maintains that the relationship between the Church and God is sacramental, social, and rational; it is between members of the Church and those outside of it. In these relationships, giving and receiving take place, especially the gift of faith. See Pablo, “Logos and Dia-logos: Faith, Reason (and Love) According to Ratzinger,” 507. For more information on the Church as sacramental and social, see Tracey, *Ratzinger’s Faith*, 84-104.

<sup>31</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>33</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s Theological ideas*, 39.

person's social, spiritual, and moral aspects. Theologically, it makes sense to say that to understand human beings is to view them from the context of giving and receiving.

### 2.2.2 Nature and Grace

The relationship between nature and grace sets the context for explaining how humankind and God relate. The discussion holds a central place in the theology of Ratzinger. There has always been the stance in the Catholic tradition that nature is open to grace, and grace is indelibly grounded in nature. Neo-Scholastics hold that the work of grace is mainly to perfect nature and that grace is extrinsic to nature.<sup>34</sup> This means that nature and grace exist apart from each other or independently.

Ratzinger develops two hypotheses to respond to this view of nature and grace. First, he holds that grace is intrinsic to nature. There is no pure nature and pure grace. It means that even in its fallen state, nature can cooperate or relate with grace. Nature is weakened by original sin but not dead. Equally, the human person is neither purely nature nor purely grace. He writes: "Each one bears God's breath in himself or herself. Each one is God's image. The deepest reason for the inviolability of human dignity, and upon it is founded ultimately every civilization."<sup>35</sup> The breath of God in us is grace, and it is a part of human dignity. "Humanity is declared to be one creation of God from his one earth."<sup>36</sup>

The second hypothesis comes from the first. It is that all humans are graced in nature. Every person receives God's grace, and nature is the most incredible gift of God at creation, a gift many humans do not realise. Here, Ratzinger underscores Henri De Lubac's view of grace and nature. According to de Lubac:

Nature never sets itself any problems it cannot resolve ... To sum up, in order to gain a coherent and simple picture of our subject, the intelligence must free itself of two errors of imagination: thinking of God in the same way as man and thinking of man in the same way as a natural being.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Neo-scholastics are theologians and philosophers who proffer a new interpretation of Saint Thomas Aquinas' theology of nature and grace. They read Aquinas as saying there is a thing such as pure nature and that the work of grace is mainly to perfect this pure nature. Their reason for making this claim stems from Aquinas' and Augustine's claim that human beings, by nature, desire God. Above nature, these thinkers argue, is the supernatural, the order of the divine. In their reasoning, we see the dichotomy between the divine and nature, natural and supernatural. Some of these thinkers are Martin Grabmann (1875-1949), Amato Masnovo (1880-1955) and Francesco Olgiati (188 – 1962). For more information, see Lawrence Feingold, *The Natural Desire to See God According to Thomas Aquinas and His Interpreters* (Rome: Apollinare Studi, 2001); Romanus Cessario, "Neo-Neo-Thomism," [Review of Ralph McInerny, *Praecambula fidei: Thomism and the God of the Philosophers*] *First Things* (2007): 51.

<sup>35</sup> Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning...'*, 45.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 46.

<sup>37</sup> Henri de Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural* (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 1998), 162 & 163.

De Lubac is emphatic that nature does not need something to qualify it. He is described as a thinker who speaks on the gratuity of Jesus Christ in relation to creation.<sup>38</sup> Ratzinger holds the same view. For him, nature and grace are interlinked since we receive both at creation. This explanation implies that our nature is grace-giving and grace-receiving. Like grace, nature is a gift of God.<sup>39</sup>

It could be said that nature and grace are gifts closely linked to each other. Both have the human person as their meeting point. Ratzinger writes: “In the human being heaven and earth touch one another...Each human being is known and loved by God.”<sup>40</sup> Additionally, God himself made nature his dwelling place. He let his presence known in the cosmic order. According to Ratzinger:

One could cite in this connection the series Earth-Israel-Nazareth-Cross-Church, in which God seems to keep disappearing more and more, and precisely in this way becomes more and more manifest as himself. First, there is the earth, a mere nothing in the cosmos...Then comes Israel, a cipher among the powers...Then comes Nazareth, again, a cipher within Israel, which was to be the point of his definitive arrival. Then at the end, there was the Cross, on which a man was to hang, a man whose life had been a failure; yet this was to be the point at which one can touch God. Finally, there is the Church, the questionable creation of human history, which claims to be the abiding site of his revelation.<sup>41</sup>

Nature is not entirely external to grace. History is also a dwelling of grace since it is the place where the revealed word, “God’s double modes of appearing”, resides.<sup>42</sup> This link between nature and grace makes God’s presence visible on the cross for people to touch and in the divine word and sacrament for humans to encounter Him.

However, Ratzinger pointed out that sin is the break of the link between the two. For example, Corkery writes:

His (Ratzinger’s theology) will be a theology less inclined to seek for ‘seeds of the word’ or for grace hidden in the human mess of things and more inclined to identify the pollutants that distort and seduce a humanity that is constantly in need of healing and conversion. It will, on the whole, be a theology more attuned to the tensions between what is godly and what is worldly rather than to the harmonies between the two.<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>38</sup> On the one hand, theologians like Ratzinger aligns with de Lubac on the topic of creation, arguing that humans receive grace and can cooperate with it. On the other hand, adherents of Thomism argue that he compromises the gratuity of grace. See Joseph Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927–1977*, 98; Joseph Kononchack, “Theology and Culture at Mid-Century: The Example of Henry de Lubac,” in *Theological Studies* 51 (1990): 579-202; David Briane, “The Debate Between Henri de Lubac and His Critics,” in *Nova et Verata* 6 (2008): 543-590.

<sup>39</sup> Ratzinger, *In the Beginning...*, 44-49.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 44 and 45.

<sup>41</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 193.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>43</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s Theological Ideas*, 26.

Whilst Thomists conceive of nature as something that constantly requires grace for perfection, Ratzinger understands grace and nature as perfect entities that are intrinsically related. Nature and grace are interlinked such that Ratzinger compared them with the human body and soul, stating: “Neither the spirit nor the body alone that loves: it is the man, the person, a unified creature, composed of body and soul that loves.”<sup>44</sup> However, sin distorts that mutual interconnection time after time. In other words, while encounters with God or conversion keep that relationship, sin collapses the relationship. Here is where the central argument of Ratzinger – that theology must remind the human person of his or her vocation, which is encounter – becomes relevant. This approach to understanding nature and grace points out that human creatures have a capacity for God despite sin, and that grace which already lies in nature in different ways, opens humans towards God.

Ratzinger’s view of nature and grace encompasses his discussion on creation, sin, and salvation. On the one hand, the person receives the gift of grace and nature at creation. Sin is the refusal of these gifts, and, as said previously, it is the destruction of the relationship between the two; it is a “rejection of this relationship because it wants to make the human being a god.”<sup>45</sup> As R Lukas Stamps writes: “The lack of grace is not merely some external environmental factor but reaches into the human moral constitution as well, and especially into our relatedness to God and our fellow human beings.”<sup>46</sup> On the other hand, conversion restores the inherent relationship between the human person and God or nature and grace. The doctrines of creation, sin and salvation are, therefore, mutually interlinked.

In conclusion, we argue that the gift is central to the theology of Joseph Ratzinger. Grace, as intrinsic to nature, implies that all are gifted. In turn, grace means God’s self-gift, which is at the heart of the Christian understanding of the encounter with the divine, that is, revelation. Furthermore, it fits an understanding of the human person who desires encounter and sees encounter as the dynamic of conversion, that is, his or her salvation. In sum, we encounter God, the giver. The logic of the gift then colours how Ratzinger views the theological sources, such as the sacred scriptures, to which we now turn.

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<sup>44</sup> R Lukas Stamps, “‘Behold the Man’: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology,” in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, 92.

<sup>45</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald*, trans., Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 89.

<sup>46</sup> Stamps, “‘Behold the Man’: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology,” 99.

### 2.2.3 The Use of Scripture

On the use of scripture, St John Henry Newman writes:

We must consider, not only what the sacred writer says, but in what manner they say it. If they worded those statements which are of a cosmological or ethnological nature in a different tone from that which they convey what is of faith and morals, an opening would be made for a distinction between the two as regards their inspiration...The Divine Authority of the scriptures would have guarded its writers against leaving on the reader the impression (that they were,) there were aspects or relations in which the sacred volume was not to be considered inspired.<sup>47</sup>

Newman is justifying the Christian belief that the scripture is inspired in all matters of faith and morals. However, there is a continual challenge for careful readers of the scriptures. Certain statements appear erroneous, so challenge what it means to call it inspired. For example, it contains acts that are widely condemned, such as slavery. St. Paul's letter to the Colossians speaks of slavery (Col 3: 22). This cannot be taken as a contemporary guide for faith and morals. The Second Vatican Council rightly describes it as shameful and disgraceful (GS, 27). Indeed, Pope St John Paul II calls it evil (VS, 80).

This tension between infallibility (inerrancy) and contingency (historicity) of the scriptures is an important consideration for Ratzinger. A long quotation from him is worth citing:

What has just been said casts light on the topic of Holy Scripture's inerrancy and historicity ... God is supreme truth and cannot err; but God dictated the Scripture; therefore, the Scripture is precisely just as free of error as is God himself- «in qualibet re religiosa vel profane» [in every religious or profane matter]. Here however the dictation theory that is assumed, as just indicated, expresses no single thought that is specifically Christian. Thus, it is not surprising that according to a practically irrefutable consensus of historians there definitely are mistakes and errors in the Bible in profane matters of no relevance for what Scripture properly intends to affirm. One can point out small matters, like the fact that Mark speaks of the High Priest Abiathar (Mk 2:26) instead of his father, Achimelech, an error that Matthew and Luke correct in their accounts.<sup>48</sup>

Ratzinger rejects a reductionist approach to the scriptures, especially the dictation theory, whereby the author's role is a purely mechanical one. Ratzinger, therefore, takes seriously the historical-critical method that roots the scripture in its concrete situation. However, this method also has its limitations. He writes:

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<sup>47</sup> John Henry Newman, *The Theological Papers of John Henry Newman on Biblical inspiration and on infallibility*, ed., J. Derek Holmes (London: Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1979), 8.

<sup>48</sup> Ratzinger in Jared Wicks, "Six Texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger as Peritus before and during Vatican Council II," in *Gregorianum* 89, no.2 (2008): 233-311, 280.

The historical-critical method – let me repeat – is an indispensable tool, given the structure of the Christian faith. Nevertheless, we need to add two points. This method is a fundamental dimension of exegesis, but it does not exhaust the interpretative task for someone who sees the biblical writings as a single corpus of the Holy Scripture inspired by God.<sup>49</sup>

The interpretative principle of accepting the body of scriptures as a whole and being inspired is held by the community and tradition, ‘the pilgrim people of God’. He continues:

We get a glimmer, even on the historical level, of what inspiration means: the author does not speak in private, self-contained subjects. He speaks in a living community, that is to say, in a living historical movement, not created by him, not even by the collective, but which is led forward by a greater power that is at work. The scripture emerged from within the heart of a living subject – the pilgrim people of God – and lives within this same subject.<sup>50</sup>

His methodological concerns are central to emphasising the scriptures in encountering God. Therefore, he is critical of methods that are insufficient to this end. Methods are important because they serve as guides to theologians to place every text within its context, sustaining the intrinsic links between theology and faith.<sup>51</sup> However, they are insufficient because they cannot fully serve the ultimate purpose of scripture, which is a personal encounter with the revealed person.

For Ratzinger, there are errors and shameful events in the scripture, but these are limited and do not render the scripture less than what it is: an inspired word of God. Ratzinger writes: “The inerrancy of Scripture has to be limited to its *vere enuntiata* [what is really affirmed]. Otherwise, historical reason will be led into what is really an inescapable conflict.”<sup>52</sup> The Bible is truly the word of God, but it must affirm what it says. In other words, its content must be looked at diligently, taking into account its unity, the whole Catholic tradition, and the human person. Vatican II would later consider the inerrancy of the Bible from such a perspective (DV, 12).<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>49</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the transfiguration*, trans. Adrian J. Walker (London: Bloomsbury, 2007), xvi. See also Ratzinger, “Biblical Interpretation in Crisis: The 1988 Erasmus Lecture,” in *First Things* (April 2008), accessed on October 14, 2023, available on [Working in the Lord's Vineyard: Biblical Interpretation in Crisis: The 1988 Erasmus Lecture \(josephcardinalratzinger.blogspot.com\)](http://josephcardinalratzinger.blogspot.com)

<sup>50</sup> Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the transfiguration*, xx-xxi

<sup>51</sup> Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ*, xv, xviii and xiv.

<sup>52</sup> Ratzinger in Jared Wicks, “Six Texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger as Peritus before and during Vatican Council II,” *Gregorianum* 89, no.2 (2008), 280.

<sup>53</sup> Dei Verbum states: “But since Holy Scripture must be read and interpreted in the sacred spirit in which it was written, (9) no less serious attention must be given to the content and unity of the whole of Scripture if the meaning of the sacred texts is to be correctly worked out. The living tradition of the whole Church must be taken into account, along with the harmony between elements of the faith. Exegetes’ task is to work according to these rules toward a better understanding and explanation of the meaning of Sacred Scripture, so that through preparatory study, the judgment of the Church may mature” (DV, 12).

His interest is fundamentally about encounters with the mystery of God's mercies. It could be said, "Inspiration means to let the mystery of God draw near to humans by using truly human expressions."<sup>54</sup> This thesis does not argue that authors and interpreters are irrelevant. They are significant but must be referred to as co-authors because it is God that works in them. Put differently, inspirational text is a milieu for encounters between God and humans, including the authors.<sup>55</sup> For Ratzinger, revelation is an act of receiving God's words, a personal encounter with the living word or receiving God's words through listening.<sup>56</sup>

The central argument put forward is that the hallmark of Ratzinger's theology – encounters with God and others – is his unpronounced but salient attempt to develop a theology of the gift. On the one hand, God is regarded as the giver of human existence, nature and grace, and the scripture. On the other hand, humans are considered receivers of such gifts and co-givers. Attention will be turned to his vision of the gift.

### **2.3 Early Discussion on The Logic of the Gift**

It has been noted that in Ratzinger's theology of the human person, 'receiving is primary'. He stresses this view, positing that humans easily forget it or sometimes find it challenging to accept. In his words:

We forget that life also was given to us without our being asked any questions, and that with life we were given many other things. When a human being is born, not only is biological existence given to him or her but also language and a period in history with its way of thinking and its value judgements. No life is possible without a gift in advance.<sup>57</sup>

We are receivers of our existence and other things, including divine words and salvation. The source of this reality, according to Ratzinger, is beyond our comprehension. It is a Christian and Catholic view of the person. For instance, Henry De Lubac writes:

We are creatures and have been given the promise that we shall see God. The desire to see him is in us, it constitutes us, and yet it comes to us as a completely free gift. Such paradox should not surprise us, for they arise in every mystery; they are the hallmark of a truth that is beyond our depth.<sup>58</sup>

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<sup>54</sup> Jared Wicks, "Six Texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger as Peritus before and during Vatican Council II," *Gregorianum* 89, no.2 (2008), 280.

<sup>55</sup> Stawomir Zatwardinicki, "One Source of the Revelation and Two Currents of the Revelation Transmission and Cognition: The Apologetic Dimension of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," *Wroclaw Theological Review* 28, no.2 (2020), 66.

<sup>56</sup> Kevin J. Vanhoover, "Expounding the Word of the Lord: Joseph Ratzinger on Revelation, Tradition, and Biblical Interpretation," in *Theology of Joseph Ratzinger: A Protestant Appreciation*, 68 & 69.

<sup>57</sup> Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ: Meditation on God in the Trinity*, trans., Robert J. Cunningham (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1979), 29.

<sup>58</sup> De Lubac, *The Mystery of the Supernatural*, 167.

In reiterating that we are receivers, participants, or co-givers, Ratzinger contrasts the view that humans are fundamentally makers, manufacturers, and producers of whatever we have or achieve. In this, he is aligning himself with the Christian tradition. The starting point of his theology, as narrated in the previous section of this chapter, is identified as an invitation to humans to understand life as a gift of Christ.<sup>59</sup> The sacred scripture facilitates an encounter as revelation and a gift.<sup>60</sup> Ratzinger insists that it is also part of the moral life and discipleship. According to him:

Being a Christian does not mean duly making a certain obligatory contribution and perhaps, as a especially perfect person, even going a little further than is required for the fulfilment of the obligation. On the contrary, a Christian is someone who knows that apart from all this he lives first and foremost as the beneficiary of a bounty; and that consequently, all righteousness can only consist in being himself a donor, like the beggar who is grateful for what he receives and generously passes part of it on to others.<sup>61</sup>

He places the logic of the gift at the level of reciprocity and love towards others, so much so that the act of rejecting gifts could be interpreted as sin. As Stamps observes: “Sin is a rejection of [the person’s] relationality because it wants to make the human person God.”<sup>62</sup> Tracy stresses that Ratzinger “often makes the point that the refusal to accept the gift of Christianity has a tragic consequence for the prospect of love.”<sup>63</sup> For Ratzinger, therefore, love solidifies the gift; it refers to creative love, the gift of love; it is love in truth, not sentimental love. Ratzinger’s idea of the gift is founded on Christian tradition, which holds that God’s nature is a metaphor for a lover who gives without counting or calculating.<sup>64</sup>

While the human person is a receiver, Ratzinger does not accept that this leads to ‘passivity’ or ‘inactivity’, a phrase he calls “idle waiting”.<sup>65</sup> He is neither advocating a passive wait on the gift of God nor making a case that human efforts such as virtue, negotiation, and creating a just and caring society are futile endeavours. Ratzinger asks a rhetorical question: “Is he (human person), therefore, to sit quietly with his hands in his lap? On the contrary, because

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<sup>59</sup> Cyril O’Regan, “Benedict the Augustinian,” in *Explorations in the Theology of Benedict XVI*, ed., John C. Cavadini (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2012), 24.

<sup>60</sup> St. Paul asked a rhetorical question: “Didn’t God give you everything you have?” (1 Cor 4: 7). “I received from the Lord the teaching that I passed on to you” (1 Cor 11: 23).

<sup>61</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196; Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s Theological Ideas*, 29.

<sup>62</sup> Stamps, “Behold the Man: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology,” 98.

<sup>63</sup> Rowland, *Ratzinger’s Faith*, 147.

<sup>64</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 197-198.

<sup>65</sup> Rachel A. Amiri and Mary M. Keys maintain that Ratzinger invites people to work rather than waiting to receive: “leads not to indifference to the world, but rather to moderately hopeful and intensely loving action on behalf of the goods of persons and communities in the world.” See their “Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity’s Need for the ‘Theological Virtues’ of Faith, Hope and Love,” *Perspective in Political Science* 41, no. 1 (2012), 14, accessed on October 27, 2021. <https://dor.org/10.1080/10457097.2021.641444>



he knows there is such a thing as meaning, he can and must cheerfully, and undismayed do the work of history.”<sup>66</sup> Thirty-eight years after asking such a question, he writes:

Even when we are fully aware that Heaven far exceeds what we can merit, it will always be true that our behaviour is not indifferent before God and therefore is not indifferent to the unfolding of history. We can open ourselves and the world and allow God to enter: we can open ourselves to truth, love, and what is good.<sup>67</sup>

There is an important balance here. While condemning passivity, Ratzinger is always cautious of temptation to place our efforts at the centre of what is possible. Corkery re-echoes this point: “While Ratzinger does not advise inactivity, he is ever mindful that activity does not produce the Kingdom of God in any area. Salvation is never the product of human works.”<sup>68</sup> The pivotal point Ratzinger stresses is that although humans solely depend on God, individual and communal effort can be a reward that adds value to human work and makes receiving complete. In other words, receiving comes with responsibility. Thus, Ratzinger stresses that the gift is about receiving and the consequent human response.

It may also be said that the gift includes taking responsibility, caring, participating, and appreciating all that one receives as not solely an effort. He explains: “It is because we have received that we can also ‘make’.”<sup>69</sup> This Christian view of life offers a sort of encouragement – an invitation to work hard, to carry on with worldly tasks to improve the world. Relying and waiting on God’s gift goes with working and trying. We will now turn attention to some of Ratzinger’s theological themes that serve as contexts for which he addresses the question of the gift in depth.

### **2.3.1 God and the Gift**

Ratzinger names thinkers like Joseph Sudbrak, Horst Burkle, Martin Buber and Emmanuel Levinas, as influential in his systematic reflection on God.<sup>70</sup> He proposes two arguments for understanding God. The first is the primacy of love. Aligning himself with Levinas, he contends that the unity of love supersedes a formless identity that cannot get to the bottom of all realities. He writes:

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<sup>66</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 278.

<sup>67</sup> Benedict, *Spe Salvi*, no. 35. Although this chapter focuses on Ratzinger, it also includes Benedict XVI to highlight an important part of his theology in the said document.

<sup>68</sup> James Corkery, “Reflection on the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger (Pope Benedict XVI),” *Acta Theologica* 32, no. 2 (2012), 31.

<sup>69</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 43.

<sup>70</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Truth, and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 46-48

In reality, however, true eternity is only experienced in trustfully putting one's hope in the freedom of the other to remain other. Over against the unity of merging, with its tendency to eliminate identity, should be set personal experience: unity of love is higher than formless identity.<sup>71</sup>

In his view, love provides an accurate picture of a real and generous God since personal identity comes from ultimate love, namely God. The second argument is the primacy of the dignity of the human person. For Ratzinger, the value and dignity of the human person are sacrosanct to the understanding of God because we cannot base human value on a foundation that is not God.

Arguing in the same line as Burkle, and even referring to him, Ratzinger writes:

H. Burkle has shown again from another angle, that of actual practice in the life of society, how the idea of a person is irreplaceable, an ultimate value...It would not be difficult to show, however, that the concept of the individual as a person, and the defence of the individual value and dignity of each person, cannot in the end itself be maintained without its foundation in the idea of God.<sup>72</sup>

Through the lens of human dignity, Ratzinger draws out the implication that we can understand God as a Giver and the gift. David Kirchhoffer shed light on this point. He argues that Ratzinger's notion of the dignity of the human person is grounded in his idea of the gift. According to Kirchhoffer: "Human dignity is constituted by the givenness of human existence, the capacity inherent in human being."<sup>73</sup> Commonly, this is understood as "createdness" in the image and likeness of God. This chapter shall elaborate further on human dignity while exploring human existence and the gift.

Ratzinger's two key phrases regarding God are 'transcendence' and 'relational'. While the former informs us that we do not see God, the latter tells us that we can see, feel and communicate with God because he, the metaphysical, made himself physical and tangible. These are not two gods but different ways of understanding the one God. He observes that some authors can categorise God into the metaphysical and Biblical God (Jesus Christ, the incarnate God). Instead, he maintains that there is but one God, the source of all things (philosophical God) and the one who reaches out to us in love (relational, incarnate word God).<sup>74</sup> Ratzinger maintains that the God he discusses is the absolute being, the being with a face, the Christian God, the Trinitarian God, the source of all beings.<sup>75</sup> Ratzinger uses the descriptions of

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<sup>71</sup> Ibid., 47.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.; See also Anton Emil, "Two Ways, Two Steps: On Joseph Ratzinger's Theology of Religions," *Studia Theologica* 73, no 1 (2019), 29.

<sup>73</sup> David G. Kirchhoffer, "Benedict XVI, Human Dignity, and Absolute Norms," *Blackfriars* 91, no. 1035 (2010), 586.

<sup>74</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 100-101.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 124-125.

transcendental and relational God interchangeably to explain one God. For instance, he states: “God does not show himself in a way which he is not. On this assertion rest the Christian relations with God: in it is grounded the doctrine of the Trinity.”<sup>76</sup>

Whichever way God communicates himself to us, it may be asked: How does he communicate and what does communication imply? Ratzinger would say that God is a gift-giver whose nature is *love*, *logos*, and *reason*. Precisely, God expresses and offers his nature to humanity by communicating with humans. God gives himself and relates to us through love and reason. In Ratzinger’s words:

God affirms his presence first of all, of course, in the cosmic power. Its greatness, the *logos* of the world that exceeds all our thinking and yet embraces it, points to him whose thought this world is; to whom, before whom the peoples are like ‘drops from a bucket’, ‘like dust on the scales’ (Is. 40.15).<sup>77</sup>

God shows himself as a giver and gift by presenting himself as the word that exceeds and yet embraces all realities. Along these lines, Ratzinger is describing God as the gift and the giver, and humans as receivers and beneficiaries of God’s gifts of creation. This gift is called the “heavenly character and destiny.”<sup>78</sup> Humans can only benefit from it when they relate to him by accepting him as the foundation of everything.

For Ratzinger, we cannot discuss God without mentioning the gift because He comes to us in history and historical events. He reveals or gives himself to us through various means. Among these means is the sacred scripture. He writes: “All through the Bible one can find again and again the notion of God’s double mode of appearing in the world. God affirms his presence first of all of course in the cosmic power ... The other sign which he has adopted and which, by concealing him more, shows more truly his intrinsic nature, is the sign of the lowly, which, measured cosmically, quantitatively, is completely insignificant, actually a pure nothing.”<sup>79</sup> Elsewhere, Ratzinger states: “Even if we are not capable of breaking *out* of the narrow bounds of our consciousness, God can nevertheless break *into* this consciousness and show himself in it.”<sup>80</sup> While his presence is sometimes noticed, the human person ignores and neglects it. Even so, God does not appear to be less than a gift.

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<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 117.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 192.

<sup>78</sup> Stamps, “Behold the Man: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology,” 89.

<sup>79</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 192 - 193.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 118.

The love of God is better understood from the perspective of reason. Unlike Emmanuel Kant, who offered an idea of pure reason, a measured and bodily reason devoid of faith,<sup>81</sup> Ratzinger speaks of reason as *logos*, a creative reason, the reason that allows for imagination and relationality. Corkery recounts this idea of reason, stating: “creator-God, this creative, loving intelligence which stands at the origin of all that is, bringing it to be in love, emerges the assurance for us that we are not the product of a blind chance but the creations of a love that wanted us.”<sup>82</sup> This understanding of reason helps him elaborate on God and human relationships to Him, thereby further defending the importance of faith and reason as requirements of Christian and human life.<sup>83</sup> Therefore, as Ben Myers writes: “Ratzinger’s message to secular modernity is not that it needs more faith but that it needs more reason.”<sup>84</sup> Of course, this is not to suggest that Ratzinger prioritises reason over faith. Rather, reason, if it is to be genuine reason, breaks free of Kant’s limited notion and opens to enlightenment through faith and love for God and others.

Ratzinger’s most recognised discussion about God and reason is in his controversial lecture, *The Regensburg Address* (12th September 2006).<sup>85</sup> In this lecture, the then Benedict XVI explains how God is synonymous with reason. In a pithy line that might summarise the address, he states: “Not to act with *logos* is contrary to God’s nature.”<sup>86</sup> The lecture underscores the significance of reason to faith and reason to relationality, pointing out that any religion or culture that separates God and reason loses its identity and the human person’s identity.<sup>87</sup> Both reason and *logos* are the same. In this explanation of reason, two points could be considered necessary for human life. The first is that one needs reason to understand God. The second is that God plunges us into the dynamic of God’s self-giving through reason.<sup>88</sup> The insight is that God, reason, love and *logos* are one and are a gift.

Ratzinger’s description of God in Jesus Christ further depends on his idea of God and the gift. He understands Jesus as God-man, Divine-man, the descended from God, the creator-made

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<sup>81</sup> Ratzinger described Kant’s notion of reason as a “crisis of reason”. See Joseph Ratzinger, *A Turning Point for Europe?: The Church in the Modern World*, trans., Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1991), 122.

<sup>82</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s Theological Ideas*, 32.

<sup>83</sup> Ben Myers, “Truth, not Custom”: Joseph Ratzinger on Faith and Reason,” in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, 12.

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 20.

<sup>85</sup> While this chapter focuses on the work of Joseph Ratzinger prior to becoming Pope, there are important insights from his papacy that can be usefully referred to at this point.

<sup>86</sup> Benedict XVI, “The Regensburg Address,” in Tracey Roland, *Ratzinger’s Faith: The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 169.

<sup>87</sup> Ben Myers, “Truth, not Custom”: Joseph Ratzinger on Faith and Reason,” 16.

<sup>88</sup> Benedict, XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, no 12.

creature reaching out to humanity and offering them the gift of relationship and salvation.<sup>89</sup> In his words: “Only if he was really a man like us can he be our mediator, and only if he is really God, like God, does the mediation reach its goal.”<sup>90</sup> Jesus Christ, in this framework, as both human and divine, is also the gift and the giver. Jesus Christ becomes a disclosure of the nature of God and the pattern to follow in discipleship, in other words, to imitate God in gift-giving.<sup>91</sup> In short, it is in Christ that God reveals the gift of redemption.<sup>92</sup>

God is both the object and subject of the gift. He is a unique giver in relation to the quantity and quality of his gift. According to Ratzinger:

Excess is God’s trademark in his creation; as the Fathers put it, ‘God does not reckon the gift by the measure’. At the same time, excess is also the real foundation and form of the history of salvation, which in the last analysis is nothing other than the truly breathtaking fact that God, in an incredible outpouring of himself, expends not only a universe but his own self in order to lead man, a speck of dust, to salvation.<sup>93</sup>

God gives unreservedly, gratuitously, superfluously, and to use the words of Marion, “without counting”. It could be said that there is not enough or sufficient giving and receiving. Therefore, to consider a sufficient gift is to limit God’s gratuity.

This study submits that Ratzinger utilises describing the gift as a fundamental key in his discussion on God’s nature (transcendence, invincible, absolute, love, logos, reasons, relational). It results in his invitation to maximise God’s gift of creation/human existence, and freedom. The following section continues this reflection.

### **2.3.2 Creation/Human Existence and the Gift**

This chapter already argued that, according to Ratzinger, the value of the dignity of the human person is predicated upon the givenness of human existence. Writing about the gift invariably means recounting the story of human creation. The narrative of creation in the Book of Genesis highlights two senses of the gift. Firstly, humans are givers, founded on re-enacting God’s creation, which is the first gift. Ratzinger writes:

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<sup>89</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* 158 and 159. Stamps also argues that for Ratzinger, “Humanity’s true identity is only disclosed in Jesus, the archetypal human being. God’s assumption of humanity in Christ reveals not only the worth and dignity of every human being in the eyes of God but also the gift and calling of redemption that gives humanity its purpose.” See Stamps, “Behold the Man: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology,” 103.

<sup>90</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 117.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 189; Andrew T.J Kaethler, “I Become a Thousand Men and Yet Remain Myself: Self Love in Joseph Ratzinger and Georges Bernanos,” *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 19, no. 2 (2016), 154. Accessed on November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021. <https://link.gale.com/apps/doc/A4485689/AONE?u=nuim&sidsummon&xid=8460919a>

<sup>92</sup> Stamps, “Behold the Man: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology,” 103

<sup>93</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 197.

The creator's directive to humankind means that it is supposed to look after the world as God's creation and to do so in accordance with the rhythm and logic of creation. The sense and directive is described in the next chapter of Genesis with the words 'to till it and keep it (Genesis 2: 15).<sup>94</sup>

The creation story challenges humans to take the responsibility of being co-creators or co-givers, particularly by showing love and care towards others and the environment.<sup>95</sup> In his view:

It is humanity that must produce the real creation, and it is that which will count for something. This is the source of the change in humanity's fundamental directive vis-à-vis the world; it was at this point that progress became the real truth and matter became the material out of which human beings would create a world that was worth being lived in.<sup>96</sup>

God gave humans what belongs to him, his image – *imago dei* – and directed them to also give to others what belongs to Him. The creation narrative interprets the person as a true receiver. However, as a co-giver, the person's capacity to give is limited. Only God can be the absolute giver.

Secondly, humans are receivers. Ratzinger asks: what is the implication of this account of creation and the human person?

You [the human person] are not God, you did not make yourself, and you do not rule the universe; you are limited. You are a being destined for death, as are all things living; you are only earth. But something consoling too, because we are told: The human being is not a demon or an evil spirit, as might occasionally appear. The human being has not been found from a negative force, but has been fashioned from God's good earth.<sup>97</sup>

Ratzinger's presentation of the creatureliness of the human person implies a fundamental lack of self-sufficiency. The person does not have all that he or she needs already. For Christians, this is not a reason for despair but hope because, in faith, we realise our source, and so our destiny, is beyond ourselves. This implies an understanding of the human person within the dynamic of the gift. He writes:

It must once again be stressed that no human being is closed in upon himself or herself and that no one can live of himself or herself alone. We receive our life not only at the moment of birth but every day from without – from others who are not ourselves but who nonetheless somehow pertain to us.<sup>98</sup>

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<sup>94</sup> Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning...'*, 34

<sup>95</sup> Kaethler, "I Become a Thousand Men and Yet Remain Myself: Self Love in Joseph Ratzinger and Georges Bernanos," 152.

<sup>96</sup> Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning...'*, 35-36.

<sup>97</sup> *Ibid.*, 42-43.

<sup>98</sup> *Ibid.*, 72.

Ratzinger explicitly pointed out that the person represents “the beggar who is grateful for what he receives.”<sup>99</sup> One can only come to the proper knowledge of the person when he or she understands reality as received and given.

Drawing from these two senses of the creation narrative, Ratzinger describes how the composition of the human body speaks of the gift. Every person is a combination of body and soul, created not only of dust but also of God’s spirit. He writes:

But in order for the human beings to exist, there must be a second element as well. The basic material is earth; from this, the human being comes into existence after God has breathed his breath into the nostrils of the body that was formed from it. The divine reality enters in here.”<sup>100</sup>

By breathing His breath into the human body, God offered humanity the gift of life, a life that resembles Him. It is His image that humans bear both in body and soul.<sup>101</sup>

This view of human existence mirrors the Christian humanism of the early fathers and medieval Christian thought, a perspective of human existence Ratzinger admires in de Lubac. It is a social and faith-based humanism.<sup>102</sup> A humanism that considers the general “we” but lives according to its nature, a composite of body and soul. Therefore, human existence entails living out the attributes of God, such as loving the other person but at the same time being human. The key is loving the other person while connecting with God and the whole of history.

It is argued, therefore, that loving the “other person” is an essential aspect of human existence. It explains the social, moral, and spiritual aspects of the person. For example, elsewhere, Ratzinger maintains: “Every morality needs its ‘we,’ with its pre-rational and supernatural experiences, in which not only the analysis of the present moment speaks but also the wisdom of the generations converges.”<sup>103</sup> The other person represents Ratzinger’s notion of “we,” as related earlier. The ‘we’ is pivotal to the description of human existence since it perfects the ‘I.’

The relatedness between the ‘I’ and ‘we’ explains loving the other person and the reality of “personness,” which Ratzinger calls receiving and giving. In his words:

He who only wants to give and is not ready to receive, he who only wants to exist for others and is unwilling to recognise that he for his part too lives on the unexpected, unprovokable gift of others ‘for’, fails to recognise the basic mode of human existence

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<sup>99</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196.

<sup>100</sup> Ratzinger, *In the Beginning...*, 44.

<sup>101</sup> Amiri and Keys, “Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity’s Need for the ‘Theological Virtues’ of Faith, Hope and Love,” 13.

<sup>102</sup> Ratzinger, *The Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977*, 97-98.

<sup>103</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *On Conscience* (San Francisco, Ignatius Press, 2007), 53.

and is thus bound to destroy the true meaning of living ‘for one another’. To be faithful, all self-sacrifices demand acceptance by others.<sup>104</sup>

The “I” is responsible for giving and receiving from anyone, including the “we.” He states: “The Christian looks at this ‘we,’ whose customs constitute the proximate source of moral knowledge, not simply in terms of his local society but in terms of a new society.”<sup>105</sup> The Christian that includes others transcends his or her local domain, receives and gives, and lives for self and the other.

Such an understanding of human existence can help humans realise or re-discover who they are, namely, made for social ties.<sup>106</sup> One gives self to the other because the self belongs to the “other.” In this way, we see Ratzinger conceptualising gift-giving as offering self to others in freedom rather than obligation.<sup>107</sup> It is a gift of oneself or a return of what belongs to other people.<sup>108</sup> Following this view of the person, gift-giving brings people together and improves social and moral bonds.<sup>109</sup>

From this perspective, existence means to give other people different services without considering whether they can return or repay.<sup>110</sup> It uncovers the human relation to God and the rest of humanity. Here, the gift reveals the social and moral dimensions of the human person. In keeping with this explanation, the person can cooperate with reality that reaches into human moral enterprising. Ratzinger writes: “Their [human persons] purpose is to save history as history and to break through or transform the collective grid that forms the site of human existence.”<sup>111</sup> The primary purpose of existence, then, is to offer something, to relate to God, and to love the other. The extent to which the human person can destroy such a relationship shall be the next focus.

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<sup>104</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 191.

<sup>105</sup> Ratzinger, *On Conscience*, 55.

<sup>106</sup> Andrew T.J Kaethler, “I Become a Thousand Men and Yet Remain Myself: Self Love in Joseph Ratzinger and Georges Bernanos,” *Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture* 19, no. 2 (Spring 2016), 153.

<sup>107</sup> Writing about the gift and human rights in the understanding of Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI, Damian Fedoryka maintains that the right of freedom depends on “a capacity of self-possession that is metaphysically justified in terms of a gift of self to and for the sake of another.” See “The Foundation of Rights in Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI from the Perspective of the Gift,” *Ave Maria Review* 11, no 1 (2012), 81.

<sup>108</sup> Fedoryka observes, “The Pope [Benedict XVI] notes that before I can give in charity what is ‘mine,’ justice demands that I give the other what is ‘his’.” *Ibid.*, 91.

<sup>109</sup> Fedoryka explains, from the perspectives of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI, how the gift presupposes a social bond without referencing the principle of causality. *Ibid.*, 87.

<sup>110</sup> Amiri and Keys state: “If only the bodily or theoretical-intellectual dimensions of human life are taken account of, then development, materiality and technologically impressive as it well may be, falls sadly, short of the ideal ‘integral development’ and may in important ways obstruct the path of this noble ideal.” See Amiri and Keys, “Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity’s Need for the ‘Theological Virtues’ of Faith, Hope and Love,” 14 and 12.

<sup>111</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 186.



### 2.3.3 Sin and the Gift

Drawing on Christian understanding, Ratzinger reasserts that sin is, first and foremost, the sin inherited from Adam and Eve.<sup>112</sup> He brings to bear the relational understanding of the person and his defence of the person as the image of God in his reflections on sin. For instance, he writes: “At the very heart of sin lies human beings’ denial of their creatureliness, in as much as they refused to accept the standard and limitations that are implicit in it...do not want to be dependent.”<sup>113</sup> He adds that sin is a “rejection of our relationality” and “a loss of relationship.”<sup>114</sup> It is described as the rejection of God as the giver of existence and community life and a neglect of the truth of one’s being.<sup>115</sup> In other words, he acknowledges that isolating oneself from the whole, rather than merely an act, is a sin.

In Ratzinger’s view, the sin that dominates modern society is the act of rejecting God. Citing Karl Marx as an example, he stresses:

The logical outcome of modern thinking is unquestionably reached: it looks as if a successful effort has been made to absorb the meaning of man completely into the practicable, to equate one with the other. However, if one looks more closely it becomes clear that not even Marxism has succeeded in squaring the circle.<sup>116</sup>

Ratzinger points out that modern society conflates answering the question of the meaning of life with action or practical solutions. Marxism is a clear example. It claims to offer human flourishing through human effort alone. This theory, however, highlights the self-sufficiency of the person to the point of denying the fundamental dynamic of giving and receiving. To prioritise the self in this way is a failure of the logic of gift. Sin, which turns in on the self (“*homo incurvatus in se*”), can therefore be interpreted through the prism of the gift.

Having pointed out that sin is a rejection of a relationship with God and others, Ratzinger reasserts his prime theological contention, namely conversion. This thesis maintains that sin is a rejection of the inherent presence of the gift and that conversion leads to its proper understanding. One could say that Ratzinger is adopting what he thinks is the principle of human and Christian life or Christian theology to explain sin.

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<sup>112</sup> Ratzinger, *In the Beginning...*, 71.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*, 70.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 73. For more information, see Stamps, “Behold the Man,” 98.

<sup>115</sup> Tracey writes of Ratzinger’s sin, stating: “The guilt would then lie on a deeper level, not in the act itself, not in the specific judgement pronounced by conscience, but in the neglect of my own being that has dulled me to the voice of the truth and made me deaf to what it says within me.” See Tracey, Ratzinger’s *Faith*, 82; Ratzinger, *Values in a time of Upheaval*, 76

<sup>116</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 42; Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s theological Ideas*, 53.

Some may argue that Ratzinger's approach is quite stark. For instance, Corkery observes that we do not necessarily have to repent from sin before realising the gift in our daily activities.

In his view:

I incline away from the starkness of Ratzinger's anthropological approach. This may reflect a failure in spiritual insight on my part, not least about the seriousness of human sinfulness and the depth of our need for repentance. Yet, an excessive concentration on the need to be changed can miss other things.<sup>117</sup>

Corkery makes two valid points. The first is that sin is not a sufficient reason for our lack of knowledge of the gift. The fact that we are sinners does not mean we cannot consciously offer gifts. The second is that conversion may not automatically translate to the knowledge that our dignity is essentially constituted by giving and receiving. We will return to these points in the evaluation in the final chapter.

### **2.3.4 Salvation and the Gift**

Ratzinger's discussion on sin leads him to speak of salvation as a gift. Insisting that only God can save, he argues that conversion or encounter with God is the remedy for sin. He writes:

We can be saved only when he from whom we have cut ourselves off takes the initiative with us and stretches out his hand to us. Only being loved is being saved, and only God's love can purify damaged human love and radically re-establish the network of relationships that have suffered from alienation.<sup>118</sup>

Precisely, only the creator can offer the love that saves. He is the principal agent of salvation. The God-man, the God in Jesus Christ, can redeem, restore, and save the human person from the failure of the gift.<sup>119</sup> As Stamps states: "Since the problem of sin has severely damaged the matrix of human relationships, the solution to sin cannot arise from within humanity."<sup>120</sup> We need something beyond our self-sufficiency to be received.

At the same time, Ratzinger is not dismissive of human responsibility. He encourages active participation in the whole dynamic of salvation, describing humans as participants and co-agents of salvation. Humans participate in the redemptive work of God through encounters with other creatures. As Corkery writes: "Realising divinisation in history is the carrying out of

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<sup>117</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological ideas*, 50.

<sup>118</sup> Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning...'*, 74.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

<sup>120</sup> Stamps, "Behold the Man: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology," 98.

God's will, and it is an activity that we at once received as a gift (*Gabe*), yet exercise as a task."<sup>121</sup> Salvation is primarily a gift with a corresponding responsibility.<sup>122</sup>

Unlike Karl Rahner, who understands humans as constantly oriented toward salvation, Ratzinger argues that humans need conversion or constant encounters with God for them to be saved. Corkery provides a clear distinction between the two theologians on the matter:

In Rahner's anthropology, 'man as he is' can be affirmed, as long as he or she is truly 'open', entering wholeheartedly upon existence with a courageous, unconditional acceptance. In Ratzinger's anthropology, 'man as he is' cannot be affirmed until he or she is tuned round, converted, and reversed.<sup>123</sup>

There are implications for soteriology from this foundational anthropology. For Rahner, salvation is a gift already offered and achieved for everyone (including non-Christians). In contrast, for Ratzinger, while humans are oriented towards God, for them to be affirmed as such, they need to encounter Him. On this point, Anton Emil explains: "In contradistinction to Karl Rahner's approach, which had focused exclusively on the salvation of non-Christians, Ratzinger wished to seek to identify basic alternatives in the world of religion, which could then be subjected to theological verdict."<sup>124</sup> By extension, Ratzinger roots salvation in the concreteness of Christian and theological anthropology. In other words, salvation is a gift but with correspondent responsibility.

Ratzinger dismisses some of the views of social theories and political theologies, given that he understands salvation as a gift. He probes the ideas promoted by Marxism and, by extension, Liberation Theology. He condemns Marxism and fears the extremes of Liberation Theology that try to replace God with mere political and social activity of the human person.<sup>125</sup> According to him, these lack the credibility to offer the exact content of salvation because they

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<sup>121</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 62.

<sup>122</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *God and our World: Believing and Living in Our Time: A Conversation with Peter Seewald*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 220-221. See Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological ideas*, 60.

<sup>123</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 50.

<sup>124</sup> Anton Emil, "Two Ways, Two Steps: On Joseph Ratzinger's Theology of Religions," *Studia Theologica* 73, no 1 (2019), 24.

<sup>125</sup> For Ratzinger, Marxism eliminated God and replaced it with political activity of the human person to speak of hope. See Stamps, 'Behold the Man,' Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology, 102. Also argues that Liberation theology followed the same pattern to speak of salvation. As Cardinal in charge of *The Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith* (1981-2004), he feared that this theology could cost the faith of the faithful. He offered instruction of this theology under the headings *Libertatis Nuntius* (1984) and *Libertatis Conscientia* (1986). Also, in 1986, he published a critique of the book of the leading figure of this branch of theology, Gustavo Gutierrez, titled *A Theology of Liberation*. For more information, see Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological ideas*, 75-80.

do not identify salvation with the gift.<sup>126</sup> They value, above all, practical knowledge.<sup>127</sup> In the final analyses, Ratzinger maintains that these theories promised to deliver a perfect society by challenging political structure rather than emphasising ethical behaviour and individual conversion.<sup>128</sup> He is sensitive to the problems of this approach because of his view that salvation as a gift.<sup>129</sup> Instead, all human tasks are acts of participation in the gift of God.

However, doubts as to whether Ratzinger's presentation of salvation as a gift is consistent have emerged in response. For instance, Corkery observes: "When he (Ratzinger) enters the social framework, the preferred space of Gutiérrez and the theologians of liberation, he allows the finding of salvation, even fragmentarily, in liberations that are achieved. But why exactly? Is he not being somewhat inconsistent here?"<sup>130</sup> It is the contention of this thesis that he is not. His emphasis on the gift derives from his consistent worry that these theories consider salvation as "makable" and *techne* rather than receiving. He states:

If one looks more closely it becomes clear that not even Marxism can turn the idea of the makable as the purpose of life into something that can be known; it can only promise that such is the case and live the decision to belief. What makes this Marxist belief so attractive today and so immediately accessible is the impression it evokes of harmony with practical knowledge.<sup>131</sup>

Ratzinger reasons that such an idea of salvation cannot lead people to their goal. He submitted that political theologies followed a similar pattern of argument. At best, these theologies can only make promises since salvation is not an achievement or power struggle but a gift.<sup>132</sup> In short, Ratzinger describes salvation as the climax of the meaning of the gift, writing: "So excess or superfluity [the gift] – let us repeat – is the real definition of or mark of the history of salvation."<sup>133</sup> Salvation must be understood from the perspective of gift and responsibility.

### 2.3.5 Freedom and the Gift

Ratzinger's discussion on salvation occasioned the question of freedom and the gift. Freedom is one of the essential topics in Ratzinger's theology. As commonly held by the Christian

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<sup>126</sup> Ratzinger describes the mentality of his age in relation to salvation as "producing" and "making" rather than the gift. Life and successes "cannot be made but only received." Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 43. See also Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Idea*, 53.

<sup>127</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 42.

<sup>128</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism and Politics: New Essays in Ecclesiology* (New York: St. Paul Publication, 1988), 207; Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance*, 116; Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 55.

<sup>129</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 43.

<sup>130</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 67.

<sup>131</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 42.

<sup>132</sup> Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi*, 25.

<sup>133</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 197.

tradition, Ratzinger reaffirms that God created humanity with a dignity that is affirmed by the freedom to choose for themselves whatever is good. He writes:

Just as we have already recognised that the believer does not live immune to doubt but is always threatened by the plunge into the void, so now we can discern the entangled nature of human destinies and say that even the non-believer does not represent a rounded and closed existence.<sup>134</sup>

Accordingly, in their freedom, human beings are not self-enclosed individuals. Rather, they are always already embedded in a network of relationships. In this context, freedom finds its purpose and gives dignity – or value – to human living.

Considering freedom as purely doing whatever one wishes or desires has a tragic consequence on human existence. Ratzinger explains this point further, stating:

However well-ordered and civilised states may have been, in some way or other they resembled robber bands, because they only thought from the point of their own good, and not from that of good in itself. Freedom guaranteed in that way does have something of the freedom of robbers about it. It is not true, genuine freedom.<sup>135</sup>

Ratzinger would refer to this idea of freedom as a destruction of love and the truth of human existence: “Human beings who consider dependence on the highest love as slavery and who try to deny the truth about their creatureliness, do not free themselves; they destroy truth and love.”<sup>136</sup> Turning away from such a view, Ratzinger continues his probe of what he thinks is absolute freedom. He asserts:

Christian belief in God means that things are the being-thought of a creative consciousness, of a creative freedom, and that the creative consciousness that bears up all things has released what has been thought into the freedom of its own, independent existence.<sup>137</sup>

In his view, freedom must be based on the Christian concept of God, creative freedom, that is, freedom that recognises the whole of creation. Instead of an individualistic freedom, it is a freedom that is social, conceived and lived in the context of the ‘we’ and not just the ‘I’.<sup>138</sup> It is described as a ‘we’ freedom. He warns against individualistic freedom and calls it freedom founded on mere idealism by modern society.<sup>139</sup> Such a modern approach contrasts with a Thomistic and Christian view of freedom. It is freedom without responsibility.

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<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 20.

<sup>135</sup> Ratzinger, *Truth and Tolerance*, 250.

<sup>136</sup> Ratzinger, ‘*In the Beginning...*’, 70-71.

<sup>137</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 110.

<sup>138</sup> Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977*, 98.

<sup>139</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2003), 110.

Here, Ratzinger refers to de Lubac and the early and medieval Christian philosophy of freedom. This framework predicates freedom on social and moral backgrounds, a freedom that is purely an initiative or gift of God and lived within the context of the whole of history.<sup>140</sup> Precisely, it is a relational freedom and not one that “is not self-sufficient or autonomous.”<sup>141</sup> Matthew O. Dinan and Michael Pallotto observe: “This structural freedom means that the world is incalculable and can never be reduced to mathematical logic. Rather, it is an arena of love, a playground of freedom, which also incurs the risk of evil.”<sup>142</sup> This is an expansive notion, where Ratzinger is asserting that true freedom “is guided by a comprehensive vision of man: it sees man in a historical perspective that simultaneously transcends all history.”<sup>143</sup>

This study argues that he presents a social and morally based freedom that can potentially guide one to the complete vision of the person. He says:

According to our reflection so far it should be sorted perhaps in the direction of self-possession, as a possibility of self-realisation, of realising one’s own essential nature and one’s potentialities. It means that man is the bearer of rights; the more completely he or she possesses his or her rights and can observe them the more does freedom become a reality.<sup>144</sup>

This notion of freedom explains how the human person is the subject of the right to freedom. It could be said that human beings realise themselves better and achieve their potential when freedom is conceived from social and moral backgrounds. This vision of freedom comes close to the one presented by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum: freedom as a right and capability.<sup>145</sup> The dissertation will return to these authors in a later chapter.

His understanding of freedom has implications for understanding Christianity. He writes:

Christianity, unlike the mystery cult, is wholly free from a desire to form some self-sufficient esoteric group. Rather, the separating off of some has its ultimate significance

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<sup>140</sup> Reflecting on one of De Lubac’s book, titled *Catholicism*, Ratzinger states: “De Lubac was leading his readers out of a narrowly individualistic and moralistic mode of faith and into the freedom of an essentially social faith, conceived and lived as a we—a faith that, precisely as such and according to its nature, was also hope, affecting history as a whole”. See Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927–1977*, 98.

<sup>141</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *Church, ecumenism & Politics*, trans., Robert Nowell (New York: St Paul Publications, 1988), 274.

<sup>142</sup> Matthew D. Dinan and Michael Pallotto, “Joseph Ratzinger’s ‘Kierkegaardian option’ in Introduction to Christianity,” *International Journal of Philosophy and Theology* 80 Issue 4-5 (2019), 396. Accessed on October 26, 2021. <https://doi-org.jproxy.nuim.ie/10.1080/21692327.2018.1542612>

<sup>143</sup> Ratzinger, *Church, Ecumenism & Politics*, 275.

<sup>144</sup> *Ibid.*, 192.

<sup>145</sup> Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum discussed freedom as a right and capability that guides people to achieve their potential or evaluate social progress. See Martha Nussbaum, “Beyond the Social Contract: Capabilities and Global Justice: An Olaf Palme Lecture, Delivered in Oxford on 19 June 2003,” *Oxford Development Studies* 32, no. 1 (2004): 3-18. For more information, see Nussbaum, “Capabilities as Fundamental Social Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice,” *Feminist Economics* 9, no. 2-3 (2003): 33-59.

only in the service it fulfils for the others who are, at the bottom, the ‘other brother’ and whose fate is in the hands of the first brother.<sup>146</sup>

It also reflects his concerns about the development of Catholic tradition, the church, and theology. In a short story about a man he calls Lucky Jack, Ratzinger explains how humans separate responsibility from freedom and end up in idealistic freedom.<sup>147</sup> According to the story, Jack had a piece of gold but felt burdensome. He decided to replace it with a whetstone, assuming he had the gift of freedom to do whatever he wished. Comparing Jack with modern Christians, he writes:

The worried Christian of today is often bothered by questions like this: has our theology in the last few years not taken in many ways a similar path? Has it not gradually watered down the demands of faith, which had been found all too demanding, always only so little that nothing important seemed to be lost, yet always so much that it was soon possible to venture to the next step? And will poor Jack, a Christian who trustfully let himself be led from exchange to exchange, from interpretation to interpretation, not really soon hold in his hand, instead of the gold with which he began, only a whetstone which he can be confidently recommended to throw away?<sup>148</sup>

In conclusion, Ratzinger’s discussion on theological themes – including God, human existence, sin, salvation, and freedom – functions in service of the gift or explains the logic of the gift. For instance, his notion of human existence shows the lack of proper knowledge of who the person is – an indivisible body and soul, a social, moral and spiritual being whom God constantly calls to a dialogue of love with Him and other human creatures – hinders our correct view of human existence. The human person discovers himself or herself fully within the general context of human life, which is receiving and giving.<sup>149</sup> The human person provides a context for Ratzinger to treat the gift. This study maintains that Ratzinger’s theology leaves us with two crucial points: one, human existence, salvation, and freedom are gifts of God, and two, human beings can also offer gifts, but in a limited manner. What follows explains how restricted a person can receive and offer gifts.

#### **2.4 Distinguishing “Receiving” and “Makability”/“Producing.”**

Key terms in Ratzinger's exploration of the notion of the gift are “receiving” and “makability” or “producing.” He makes much of the contrast. The latter means thinking only about what can be made or what is practicable. It “is much rather an essentially kind of intellectual attitude,

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<sup>146</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1966), 80-81.

<sup>147</sup> Ratzinger, “Preface,” in *Introduction to Christianity*, 11

<sup>148</sup> Ibid.

<sup>149</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 186.

which stands alongside practical knowledge as something independent. The former is a belief. Belief does not belong to the realm of what can be, or has been made.”<sup>150</sup>

“Producing” means that human efforts or tasks have nothing to do with receiving something from God. It is the view that everything we do or achieve comes from mere human intellect and physical effort. This approach ultimately means practical knowledge that alienates itself from the basic dynamic of being human.

Instead, he contends that a Christian vision of the human person is based on receiving rather than mere making or producing. He writes: “Christian belief is the opinion for the view that receiving precedes the making.”<sup>151</sup> It, that is, belief, combines practical knowledge with an act of trust that is predicated on a foundation beyond one’s reach or achievement. Receiving is described as a belief since it is about entering into the attitude that existence “cannot be made but only received.”<sup>152</sup> It is not a series of mere intellectual abstractions but the proclamation that it is only because we have received that we can participate in any intellectual or practical work at all.

By extension, “receiving” captures the idea that human tasks or human giving illustrate that we are co-workers and co-givers, respectively. As noted already, for Ratzinger, “receiving” is a call to take up responsibility rather than idle waiting. It is about considering human effort as God’s grace; it is doing something yet believing that we cannot stand without God. By deploying the term receiving, he shares the theological conviction that there is no mere “making” or “producing” and that we do not make or produce anything.

This is not to say that making is less important for Ratzinger. It is a dynamic of the logic of the gift. For this reason, he warns Christians against understanding earthly tasks as futile responsibilities but as a part of the reality of gift-giving.<sup>153</sup> Put in this way, he sees earthly tasks as an act of participating in the work of the actual giver, God. James Corkery observes that Ratzinger prefers “co-doers” to “doers” and “co-workers” to “workers” in his explanation of responsibility and the logic of the gift.<sup>154</sup> He would say we are only co-builders of peace in carrying out peacebuilding activities. One could say that God is the giver of peace. In this analysis of human responsibility – prioritising receiving over making – Ratzinger sustains the

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<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 41.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 42.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>154</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger’s Theological Ideas*, 31.



primacy of God in human or Christian life.<sup>155</sup> It is an effort to highlight the pivotal place of God and faith in Christian anthropology.

Even though he accorded a special place for receiving, “receiving” and “producing” are intricately intertwined. One cannot be without the other. However, he still insists that “producing” must attach itself to its unlimited foundation, the absolute giver. It must not trust in itself. He writes: “...waiting and putting its trust in doing workability, which – indispensable as it is – can never fill the void which threatens man when he does not find the absolute love.”<sup>156</sup> There is neither pure “receiving” nor mere “makability or “producing”. Both are important to the understanding of the person. Receiving is complete owing to making. The relationship between the two is vital.

Ratzinger utilises this framework, human task and receiving, to explain perfect gift-giving, that is, the gift of God. He maintains that nothing creates self, nor does anything exist for itself. There is a foundation that sustains and orientates humans beyond passivity. He writes:

For in Christ, the man, we meet God; but in him, we also meet the community of those others whose path to God runs through him and so towards one another. The orientation towards God is in him at the same time towards the community of mankind, and only the acceptance of this community is a movement towards God, who does not exist apart from Christ and thus not apart either from the context of the whole history of humanity and its common task.<sup>157</sup>

Carrying human tasks is pivotal to receiving everything. Receiving is best understood when human activities are geared towards the general good. Precisely, in this task, we meet and relate with our original foundation, God. Receiving precedes producing because it comes first. Like every child, every human creature first and foremost receives before engaging in any occupation. The initiative to move towards God begins with receiving.<sup>158</sup> Despite their importance, human efforts do not determine God’s gift because giving without counting is in His nature.<sup>159</sup> Ratzinger states:

Responsible reception, it is true, in which what is learnt never becomes my own property entirely, and the lead held by what is received can never be completely wiped out, but in which the goal must be to make what is received more and more by own, by handing myself over to it as the greater.<sup>160</sup>

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<sup>155</sup> The Winner of the Nobel Peace Prize, Desmond Tutu, wrote extensively about the primacy of God in human and Christian life, arguing that the Christian tradition places God’s grace above every human work and effort. See Desmond Tutu, *Made for God* (London: Rider, 2010).

<sup>156</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 213.

<sup>157</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>158</sup> Benedict, and Joseph Ratzinger. *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*. Vol. 1., trans. Sheila Beatty (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), xxi.

<sup>159</sup> This chapter has already mentioned that God’s Nature is giving gifts without ceasing. See section 2.3.1.

<sup>160</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 58.

That which humans do and give must be seen as an act of passing on what has been received.

Co-producers work hard and believe that their effort will be baseless without receiving gratuitously. This category of people agrees that they live not for themselves only but freely for others, making human efforts to improve people's living conditions. Corkery explains, with unambiguous clarity, their characteristics: "They are first, a community person; second, a constant and firmly believing, yet unremittingly flexible person; and third, a person who is finding freedom."<sup>161</sup> In contrast to "producers," these believe that their intelligence and energy alone do not deliver success. Whilst the co-producer knows that receiving and giving is central to every social work, the one who thinks of himself as a producer would argue that success is achievable even without receiving.

Ratzinger uses Mary, the Blessed Mother of God, to elaborate on the significance of carrying out human tasks or becoming a co-giver. He maintains that Mary's *fiat* "yes" to the angel in the Gospel of Luke (Lk 1: 26-38) is an act of receiving. Receiving the gift of bearing Jesus in her womb is grace.<sup>162</sup> What seems impossible becomes real for Mary because she resigned to the belief that her life is founded on God, a solid foundation. We could say that she trusts the angel because she believes that human life is a gift, as Ratzinger himself elaborates:

'Everything is grace' – a saying in which a life which seemed to be only weakness and futility can see itself as full of riches and fulfilment – truly becomes in Mary, 'full of grace' (Luke 1:28), a concrete reality. She does not contest or endanger the exclusiveness of salvation through Christ.<sup>163</sup>

The keyword here is Mary's "disposition" to say yes. Ratzinger argues that she symbolises humanity, and her "yes" changed what appears impossible into possible. Given that in Ratzinger's theology, salvation is a gift, Mary's "yes," her full participation in the mystery of salvation, suggests that receiving becomes an act of participation in the life of Christ. As the study pointed out, to receive is not to be passive. Rather, to receive is to be taken up into a relationship, incorporated, or subsumed.

In conclusion, the relationship between "receiving" and "making" or "producing," is the framework for understanding Ratzinger's theology of the gift. We receive faith, the word of God, and indeed existence from our creator (ontological gift) by participating in everyday life

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<sup>161</sup> Corkery, "The Relationship between Human Existence and Christian Salvation in the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger," *PhD dissertation., Catholic University of America, Washington D.C.* Pdf, 363. Accessed January 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. ProQuest Dissertations and Thesis.

<sup>162</sup> Ratzinger, *Daughter of Zion: Meditation on the Church's Marian Belief*, trans., John McDermott (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983), 28.

<sup>163</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 213.

experiences (historical gift). Jesus Christ is God-man who reveals this truth to us. He shows himself as the highest gift because he relates perfectly to God and humans.<sup>164</sup> Our response to what we receive is what Ratzinger describes as gift-giving in human terms.<sup>165</sup>

## 2.5 The Gift Is Grace and Responsibility

The previous sections focused on human existence as freely given and received and on God in Jesus Christ as the highest gift and giver, in which human beings are participants. Ratzinger submits that although humans make efforts to upbuild society, they are not solely characterised by our achievements but rather as gifted. The one merit, if there is one, is the responsible effort one puts into receiving God's grace. For example, Ratzinger states:

[The human person] can only come to salvation and to himself through the gift of love – through grace ... waiting and putting its trust in doing workability, which – indispensable as it is – can never fill the void which threatens man when he does not find the absolute love which gives him meaning, salvation, all that life really needs.<sup>166</sup>

The insight is that while human tasks are necessary to progress and flourish, everything is grace. Human's disposition to receive reveals God's grace. Our disposition or responsibility prepares the ground for the grace/gift of God to take effect in our lives. God does not hide his gifts because He always provides for everyone. He writes: "Grace can be granted to whomever God wills."<sup>167</sup>

To receive God's grace is to be responsible or carry out human tasks. As Stamps writes of Ratzinger's approach: "Art and technology, for example, can provide positive opportunities for humans to enjoy and deploy God's good gift."<sup>168</sup> Everything received calls for further action, that is, passing that "thing" onto others as if everything does not belong to one. For instance, he writes: "Being a Christian means being like the son, becoming a son; that is, not something of one's own and in oneself, but living completely open in the 'from' and 'towards'."<sup>169</sup> The appropriate attitude, then, is to live as if everything is received from God and to be a free giver towards others.

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<sup>164</sup> Amiri and Keys, "Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity's Need for the 'Theological Virtues' of Faith, Hope and Love," 13.

<sup>165</sup> Writing about Ratzinger's understanding of the virtue of love as a gift, Amiri and Keys maintain that our "highest task is to respond to this love by which" we were created. See "Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity's Need for the 'Theological Virtues' of Faith, Hope and Love," 13.

<sup>166</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 213.

<sup>167</sup> Amiri and Keys, "Benedict XVI on Liberal Modernity's Need for the 'Theological Virtues' of Faith, Hope and Love," 13.

<sup>168</sup> Stamps, "Behold the Man: Joseph Ratzinger on Theological Anthropology," 97.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

For Ratzinger, such a responsibility involves a convoy of acts and donations, coupled with correspondent rules. A long quotation that explains responsibility is worth citing:

Giving can never mean primarily giving money, that goes without saying. Of course, money is also often most necessary. But when money is the only thing that is given, that is often hurtful for the other person. I have seen that again and again in the Third World. If you send us nothing but money, people tell me, then you often do more harm than good. Money is very easily misused in some way and then makes things worse. You must give more than this (money). You must come yourself; you must give yourselves; and you must help, so that the material things you bring are used appropriately, so that they are not just something you pull out of a bag in order to buy your way out of the difficulty we represent, the problem we are for you.<sup>170</sup>

As Mauss informed us, donations, which are a responsibility, need not be made anonymously. Ratzinger is not concerned whether a giver hides himself or herself or his or her identity. Responsibility is the moral action taken to keep giving and receiving gifts alive, and these gifts could be material or non-material, including money, intelligence, presence, love, time, knowledge, and truth-telling. It is argued here that it is the capacity to give and receive gifts freely that is important in different ways and forms, that the act of self-giving, donation, the assurance that the goal of every gift is achieved and that every gift is used accordingly. Responsibility also means sharing love in the context of self-giving. Love becomes a gift when we give and receive it. It becomes real when it is for the sake of love. In other words, love is both the means and the end of the gift. It is described as “the gift of love” or creative love rather than “the law of love” or conditional love when we give and receive freely.<sup>171</sup>

Ratzinger tends to remain at an abstract level when discussing the logic of giving and receiving. He rarely offers examples of people who have carried out this task. Instead, Ratzinger discusses and celebrates God as the giver rather than highlighting examples of people and celebrating people who have received and shared grace with others. James Corkery also revealed this challenge by comparing him with John Henry Newman. Newman used many practical examples of those who received grace, such as the story of Jacob in the Book of Genesis (Gen 32:13-21). However, they are quite absent from Ratzinger's work.<sup>172</sup> Corkery concludes that Ratzinger, as a theologian, missed the opportunity to link the theology of grace with practical human experience. In his words:

Its absence (practical example of those who received grace and celebrated it) seems to me to be a missed opportunity: a missed opportunity to connect with the contemporary

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<sup>170</sup> Ratzinger, *God and our World: Believing and Living in Our Time*, 194.

<sup>171</sup> The law of love here means showing love not for the sake of love but because of an existing law to love.

<sup>172</sup> Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 51.

anthropologies that work with stories; with identity-shaping narratives of self-over-time that can shed light on God's graced engagement with men and women today.<sup>173</sup>

It is certainly the case that Ratzinger's theology of the gift would have benefited from further reflection on particular people or persons who have received and experienced the gift of God's grace. The thesis will return to this point in the next chapter.

## 2.6 Juxtaposing Joseph Ratzinger with Theorists of the Gift

This section considers him alongside the theorists identified in the first chapter, identifying convergences and divergences.

To recall, each theorist deploys a different framework to explain their perspective of the gift. For Mauss, although freedom, reciprocity, obligation, and competition make the gift, the discussion ended in a complex manner. Derrida argues that gift is nature and unconditional hospitality, marked by an *aporia*. Marion named it the horizon of givenness, and Girard says it is the Holy Spirit. And finally, Ratzinger describes the gift as grace from God and responsibility expressed in human encounters.

To begin with commonalities: Firstly, theorists of the gift and Ratzinger discussed the logic of the gift within the domain of human existence, that is, our being. Secondly, they all emphasised, to some degree, the gift's significance to social cohesion, which helps explain the moral character of the gift. Thirdly, all accept that the logic of the gift exists and operates in different forms. Even Derrida, whose argument tends to flag up a denial of the existence of the gift, eventually maintains that he did not say so.<sup>174</sup> Additionally, similar to Mauss and Marion, Ratzinger contends that the gift is about donation and passing on what one has to others: "All righteousness can only consist in being himself a donor, like a beggar who is grateful for what he receives and generously passes part of it on to others."<sup>175</sup> Finally, Ratzinger's understanding of the gift resembles Marion's. A long quotation from him deserves our attention. He states:

He (Jesus Christ) is the righteousness of God, which goes far beyond what need be, which does not calculate, which really overflows; the 'notwithstanding' of his greater love, in which he infinitely surpasses the failing efforts of Man...Nevertheless, it would be a complete misunderstanding of the whole to deduce from this a devaluation of man and to feel inclined to say: 'then without this it is all one and any attempt to attain righteousness or esteem in God's eyes is pointless.' To this we must reply 'Not at all.' It means, in short, he who is always calculating how much he must do to be just adequate and to be able to

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<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Jacques Derrida and Jean-Luc Marion, "On the Gift: A Discussion between Jacques Derrida and Jean Luc Marion, Moderated by Richard Kearney," in *God, the Gift, and Post Modernism*, eds., John D. Caputo and Michael J. Scanlon (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 60.

<sup>175</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196; Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 29.

regard himself, after a few casuistical flicks, as a man with a nice, white shirt-front is still no Christian...Human righteousness as Christians understood in the Christian sense: it consists in continuing to forgive, since man himself lives essentially on the forgiveness he has received himself.”<sup>176</sup>

This understanding of the gift comes close to Marion’s “givenness,” “ceaseless re-given” or saturated phenomenon. Marion also points out that everyone should give without calculating and continuously since Jesus Christ, the model of Christian life, is himself to the end.

At the same time, there are differences. Firstly, it is about the nature, meaning, and function of the gift. Derrida and Marion argue that how an object is perceived determines whether or not it is a gift. On the contrary, while accepting that this can sometimes happen, Ratzinger also maintains that how receivers interpret what they receive cannot be a standard for justifying a true gift. The gift will always stand for what it is. In addition, Marion bracketed the giver, gift, and receiver, arguing for an anonymous giver, to avoid how one interprets the gift. Ratzinger argues that the givers must fully participate in the giving, giving with intent and assuring its purpose is achieved. To fill out an earlier citation, Ratzinger remarks:

Giving can never be primarily giving of money, that goes without saying... You must give more than this. You must come yourself; you must give yourselves; and you must help, so that the material things you bring are used appropriately, so that they not just something you pull out of a bag in order to buy your way out of the difficulty we represent, the problem we are for you.<sup>177</sup>

Secondly, while Mauss reports conditional reciprocity, Derrida doubts the gift’s reality because of conditionality. Ratzinger agrees with Girard and Marion on the possibility of unconditional gifts. Importantly, he also shares with Girard and Marion the role of the divine transcendent in guaranteeing the reality of the gift. Although Marion and Girard used theological terms to build their arguments on the matter, Ratzinger’s approach differs. His discussion of the gift arises basically from the theology of creation, the Trinity, nature, and grace.

Thirdly, a difference can be discerned in the positive or negative function of the gift. Ultimately, the four theorists hold a negative framework, which is ultimately defined by the inevitability that the gift is linked to violence. This can be contrasted to the view of the central figure of this dissertation, Joseph Ratzinger. He provides a positive hermeneutic on the gift. While he is not blind to the possibility that the gift may lead to violent outcomes because of sin,

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<sup>176</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196-197.

<sup>177</sup> Ratzinger, *God and our World: Believing and Living in Our Time: A Conversation with Peter Seewald*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 194.

he emphasises the positive reality of the gift, demonstrating how important the gift of grace and responsibility is to the human person and society.

Fourthly, and following from the previous point, the key to such a positive hermeneutic is a theological anthropology – somewhat different from Marion and Girard – that sees the gift as an expression and fulfilment of a person open to the transcendent, the other and the whole of history (including creation). A negative hermeneutic presupposes a self-sufficient individual who exchanges out of self-interest and social benefit under the constant fear of violence. In other words, a closed person. For example, when Ratzinger speaks of the gift within the context of God, he considers human beings as basically receivers and co-givers. On the other hand, in analysing how archaic societies organise ceremonies to offer gifts, Mauss suggests that social cohesion is made possible by a straight-jacketed obligation.

## 2.7 Conclusion

This chapter explored Ratzinger's theology and claimed that the gift is central to his Christian anthropology: human existence as encounters with God and humans. While there is no specific reflection on the gift, as he focused on concepts such as the nature of God, creation narrative, soteriology, sin, and freedom, he articulated a notion of the gift in a positive perspective. Unrestricted and mutual giving is at the core of his theology. For instance, Ratzinger states:

He who is always calculating how much he must do to be just adequate and to be able to regard himself, after a few casuistical flicks, as a man with a nice, white shirt-front, is still no Christian. And similarly, he who tries to reckon where duty ends and where he can gain a little merit by *an opus supererogatorium* (work of supererogation) is a Pharisee, not a Christian.<sup>178</sup>

He is inviting us to carry on the gift activity without self-interest or condition attached to it, that is, to conceive of the gift as grace and responsibility. For instance, while God gives gratuitously and only He can save humanity, human gift-giving is an act of participation in God's grace. As Tracey Roland pointed out, Ratzinger unpacks the idea of mutual giving in his theology.<sup>179</sup>

The chapter noted two criticisms. Ratzinger almost and rarely articulated the theology of grace or the theology of the gift without invoking individual stories of the impact of grace. Also, he insisted that a conversion or a return to God provides the possibility to realise the dynamic of the gift. These are significant observations because his discussion on the gift can create an overly idealistic presentation of gift-giving. Furthermore, and importantly, there may be a

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<sup>178</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196.

<sup>179</sup> Tracey rephrases Ratzinger, writing that even the Ten Commandments of God are not to be understood as "first of all as Law, but rather as a divine gift." See Tracey *Ratzinger's Faith*, 70.

normative deficit in his concept of the gift when helping people navigate practical moral issues such as peacebuilding efforts. In conclusion, this thesis submits that Ratzinger is a legitimate contributor to understanding the gift – especially for theology – even if it is potentially idealistic or abstract. The next chapter will turn to how Ratzinger himself tried to apply this logic to the concrete realities when he became Pope Benedict XVI.



## CHAPTER THREE

### Analysing Benedict XVI's Logic of the Gift in *Caritas in Veritate*

#### 3.1 Introduction

Joseph Ratzinger ascended to the Papacy on 19<sup>th</sup> April 2005. Traditionally, a first encyclical is recognised as putting forward the vision of the new pope. *Deus Caritas Est* (DCE, 2005) was published six months into his pontificate. The now Benedict XVI mentioned the gift nine times to highlight the prime place of charity in Christian faith and human life. For instance, he states: “If my gift is not to prove a source of humiliation, I must give to others not only something that is my own but my very self; I must be personally present in my gift” (DCE, 34). He equated this notion of gift-giving with active grace, a grace that implies duty and responsibility (DCE, 35). In line with his earlier writing, as discussed in the second chapter, he asserted that everything is a gift and that God gives everything without measuring.<sup>1</sup>

The last chapter ended with the observation that Joseph Ratzinger's notion of the gift could be quite idealistic or abstract. As Benedict XVI, he was forced to consider global challenges, such as secularisation, climate change, war, and market crashes, as well as internal ecclesial debates. This chapter deals with how Benedict XVI's systemic discussion of the logic of the gift in *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) rises to that challenge. According to the Encyclical, the logic of the gift is the principle of gratuitousness. The chapter shows how he situated the concept within the Catholic tradition and uses it as a hermeneutical key to interpret principles of Catholic Social Teaching, such as solidarity and the common good. Therefore, this chapter addresses the question: As Pope, how does Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI articulate the logic of the gift within Catholic Social Teaching?

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<sup>1</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, trans. by J.R. Foster (London: Search Press, 1971), 197.

*Caritas in Veritate* is central for four reasons. Firstly, it is his only social encyclical.<sup>2</sup> Secondly and more importantly, there is an extended reflection on the logic of the gift by way of a dedicated chapter – Chapter Three – which outlines the newly articulated *principle of gratuitousness* (CV, 34).<sup>3</sup> Thirdly, he goes on to provide practical examples of the gift, people and societies that are already practising the principle. By explanation, Benedict XVI applies the gift to the public domain and in disciplines such as ecology, the economy, bioethics, and politics.<sup>4</sup> Finally, the document is vocal on violence and the consequent challenge of peacebuilding (CV, 72).

The chapter begins by offering an overview of the encyclical, highlighting contextual factors and a summary of each chapter. It then focuses on critical areas that Benedict XVI developed in Catholic Social Teaching (CST).<sup>5</sup> Amongst these are the methodology of the encyclical, discussions on market and business transactions, justice, and the logic of the gift. Finally, the chapter offers an in-depth discussion of Benedict’s logic of the gift.

### 3.2 *Caritas in Veritate*: An Overview

Promulgated on June 29, 2009, *Caritas in Veritate* was written to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Pope Paul VI’s *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and was the first social encyclical of the Church since *Centesimus Annus* (1991).<sup>6</sup> While the document emphasises continuity with the earlier texts, *Caritas in Veritate* brings a new style and approach. Donal Dorr, in the revised edition of *Option for the Poor and for the Earth*, observes:

A particularly valuable feature of this new encyclical is that it makes a significant advance on *Populorum Progressio* in offering a richer and more satisfying theology of human development and of social justice. The distinctively new element is that it

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<sup>2</sup> Meghan Clark, “Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth),” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed., Kenneth R. Himes (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2018), 502. Latkovic, Mark S. “*Caritas in Veritate*,” in *New Catholic Encyclopaedia Supplement Vol. 1*, ed., Fastiggi Robert L. (Michigan: Farmington Hills, 2010): 208-210; J Bryan Hehir expresses the view that the encyclical is identified as the Benedict’s first social encyclical. “*Caritas in Veritate* in Broader Context,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life: An Extension and Critique of Carita in Veritate*, ed., by Daniel K. Finn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 14. We sense that Benedict XVI did not publish another social encyclical since *Caritas in Veritate*.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate* (Dublin: Veritas, 2009), no. 34-38; Damian P. Fedoryka, “The Foundation Rights in Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI from the Perspective of the Gift,” *Journal of Ave Maria: Law Review* 11, issue 1 (September 2012), 69. Accessed on July 10th, 2021 <https://heinonline.org/HOL/Licence>.

<sup>4</sup> Benedict dedicated chapters four and five of *Caritas in Veritate* to applying the logic of the gift to human rights, justice, and ecology. In chapter five, he gives a moral analysis of ecological crises. In this and the following chapters, he explains and provides examples that all created goods are gifts.

<sup>5</sup> Hence, the study shall adopt the name Benedict unless otherwise.

<sup>6</sup> Clark, “Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth),” 484; Domenee Mele and Michael Naughton describe *Caritas in Veritate* as ‘the new social encyclical’ after *Centesimus Annus* (1991). See “The Encyclical-Letter ‘*Caritas in Veritate*’: Ethical Challenges for Business,” in *Journal of Business Ethics* 7 (2011), 2.

explicitly grounds the Christian's commitment to build a more just world in the love that God, through the Holy Spirit, has poured into our hearts. Here we have a theology that is not only profound but also realistic.<sup>7</sup>

The text comprises six chapters, including the introduction and the conclusion. The title refers to the importance of the meaning and interrelationship between truth and charity, emphasising that they depend on each other. The depth of theology is evident from the opening lines. Benedict begins:

Charity, in truth, to which Jesus Christ bore witness by his earthly life and especially by his death and resurrection, is the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity. Love – *Caritas* – is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace. It is a force that has its origin in God, Eternal Love and Absolute Truth (CV, 1)

He goes on to argue that the fullest explanation of the gift is located in truth and charity: “The truth makes charity a “gift, acceptance and communion” (CV, 3). Following from the opening remarks of the social document, one could see “the crucial importance of the “gift” in the whole area of social justice, development, and peacebuilding. It concludes by referencing the significance of hope and prayer, aspects of the gift, for authentic development and peace. He finishes: “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” (CV, 78).<sup>8</sup> The chapter begins the discussion by looking at the encyclical context.

### 3.2.1 Context

This encyclical has two central backgrounds: *Populorum Progressio* and the global financial crisis of 2008.<sup>9</sup> Of these contexts, Benedict XVI states: “More than forty years after the *Populorum Progressio*, its basic theme, namely progress, remains an open question, made all the more acute and urgent by the current economic and financial crisis” (CV, 33). Although the document was intended to mark the fortieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*, it was delayed because of the financial crisis that led to the Great Recession.<sup>10</sup>

*Caritas in Veritate* was written in response to the economic collapse of 2008 and related issues regarding poverty and development, often compared to the great depression of the

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<sup>7</sup> Donal Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth: From Leo XIII to Francis* (New York: Orbis Books, 2016), 328.

<sup>8</sup> Italics added.

<sup>9</sup> The financial crisis of 2008 delayed the publication that was to mark the exact fortieth anniversary of PP. The global recession further pushed it to 2009. See Kenneth Overberg, “Key Themes of Charity in Truth,” *St. Anthony Messenger; Cincinnati* 117, no. 2 (Nov. 2009): 12-16, 12.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

1930s.<sup>11</sup> In 2022, Ben S. Bernanke won the Nobel Prize for his ground-breaking work on banks and the financial crisis.<sup>12</sup> In 2008, he was chair of the US Federal Reserve. He later wrote about the period and other key players in the time and during the crises.<sup>13</sup> *Firefighting: The Financial Crisis and its Lessons* (2019) is worth quoting at length. To the question, “Why did this crisis happen, and why was it so damaging?” Along with his co-authors, he answers:

It was, again, a classic financial panic, run on the financial system triggered by a crisis of confidence in mortgages. It was fuelled, as crises usually are, by a credit boom in which many families, as well as financial institutions became dangerously overleveraged, financing themselves almost entirely with debt. The danger was heightened because so much risk had migrated to financial institutions that operated outside the constraints and protection of the banking system, and because so much of the leverage was in the form of unstable short-term financing that could vanish at the first hint of trouble.<sup>14</sup>

Bernanke identified the roots of the economic collapse in the conditions that facilitated the extraordinary expansion of the global financial system in the first place.<sup>15</sup> The lack of regulation allowed banks and financial institutions to aggressively pump the economy with cheap money through easily accessible loans. In particular, money flowed to where the opportunities appeared more promising. It facilitated inflation, especially within the property market, far beyond the intrinsic worth of the investments. In other words, it created a bubble. The inflation of value was so significant that traditional long-term investments seemed a poor alternative. The loans were packaged and sold to other banks and financial institutions that desired to benefit from the increasing value. This was facilitated by the creation of complex securities that permitted the extraordinary rise of the shadow banking system, which allowed other investors to enter the market in a significantly deregulated manner. The risk was calculated based on the value of the investment rather than on the ability of the borrower to repay. The bubble started deflating in the US in early 2007, with the growth of debt defaulters. It undermined the value of the investments, creating a deep downward spiral. It ended in a

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<sup>11</sup> Cristian R. Loza and Giorgio Mion, “Catholic Social Teaching Organizational Purpose, and the For-profit/Nonprofit Dichotomy: Exploring the Metaprofit,” in *Journal of Markets and Morality* 19, no. 2 (2016), 276.

<sup>12</sup> Ben S. Bernanke shared the prize with Douglas Diamond of the University of Chicago and Philip Dybvig of Washington University in St. Louis.

<sup>13</sup> Ben S. Bernanke, Timothy F. Geithner and Henry M. Paulson, *Firefighting: The Financial Crisis and Its Lessons* (London: Profile Books Ltd, 2019), 499.

<sup>14</sup> Bernanke, Geithner and Paulson, *Firefighting: The Financial Crisis and Its Lessons*, 3. An Associate Professor of Health Care Ethics, David Smith, expresses the same sentiment as Bernanke, writing: “It is now evident that the seed of current meltdown lies in the greed and deception of some managers, bankers and traders, and under-regulation by agencies set up by the government to regulate the financial services industry.” he goes on to say that economic system that caused the great depression did not recognise value system and had no “regard to accountability, whether to taxpayers, shareholders or clients.” Read David Smith, “Theological Reflections on the Current Economic Crisis,” *Doctrine and Life* 60, no. 1 (January 2010), 11 and 12.

<sup>15</sup> See Bernanke’s speech was given at Morehouse College, Atlanta, Georgia. See <http://www.federalreserve.gov/newsevents/speech/bernanke20090414a.htm> accessed 16th October 2019.

freeze of the credit markets, the near collapse of the financial system, and a knock-on effect on the economy. In the words of Bernanke, “every banker knows that if he has to prove that he is worthy of credit, however, good may be his argument, in fact his credit is gone.”<sup>16</sup>

As noted, Bernanke reflected afterwards that this was “a classic financial panic” or a run on the financial system. What marks financial panic is fear. The harsh economic downturn resulted in increased social inequality, which further undermined confidence in the economic system and related socio-political institutions, including democracy. Benedict insightfully observes:

Through the systemic increase of social inequality, both within a single country and between the populations of different countries (i.e. the massive increase in relative poverty), not only does social cohesion suffer, thereby placing democracy at risk, but so too does the economy, through the progressive erosion of “social capital”: the network of relationships of trust, dependability, and respect for rules, all of which are indispensable for any form of civil coexistence.” (CV, 32).

The antidote to fear is trust. This is one of the key proposals of *Caritas in Veritate* and is sustained by the logic of the gift. While the economic system requires trust, the true source of trust is beyond the system. It is to be found in human and divine encounters, which are expressed in moral and spiritual values and practices. He states: “The idea of a world without development indicates a lack of trust in a man and in God” (CV, 14).

The encyclical was written and issued to address some of these concerns in the following way. Firstly, Benedict turns to individuals and their consciences rather than primarily calling institutions to account.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, the encyclical sought to remind everyone of the critical role of morality and spirituality in the development process. Thirdly, he wishes to reaffirm the resources of Catholic Social Teaching. Bernard Laurent aptly writes: “Benedict XVI claims to uphold the teachings of his predecessors. He refers to Paul VI on the question of development, adding the notion of integral development” and reminding people of human responsibility towards development (CV, 17).<sup>18</sup> The development Benedict proposes is one rooted in charity and truth, that is, the theology of truth and God's redeeming love in Jesus Christ. Other factors

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<sup>16</sup> Bernanke, Timothy F. Geithner and Henry M. Paulson, *Firefighting: The Financial Crisis and Its Lessons*, 39.

<sup>17</sup> Bernard Laurent, “*Caritas in Veritate* as a Social Encyclical: A Modest Challenge to Economic, Social, and Political Institutions,” *Theological Studies* 71, no. 3 (Sept. 2010), 518 and 533.

<sup>18</sup> Clark, “Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth),” 482.

that formed the context of the encyclical include the ecclesial, social, historical, and intellectual backgrounds of *Caritas in Veritate*.<sup>19</sup>

To the ecclesial backdrop: As the prefect for the then Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith, Benedict witnessed activities of gratuitousness.<sup>20</sup> He was inspired by the activities of lay societies and organisations, such as the Focolare movement, whom he referenced (CV. 37). At that time, he reflected on current political, war and conflict issues in the Church and different regions. Church statements and resources of that time included *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004).<sup>21</sup> The opening structure of the *Compendium*, which begins with an extended reflection on the gratuitousness of God, is echoed again in *Caritas in Veritate*.<sup>22</sup> Another ecclesia influence can be gleaned through Benedict's Post Synodal Exhortation of the Second African Synod (*Africae Manus*, 2011). For instance, in the document, he pointed out the terrible situation of conflict, violence, and war in Africa, saying:

Africa's memory is painfully scarred as a result of fratricidal conflicts between ethnic groups, the slaves' trade and colonisation. Today, too, the continent has to cope with

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<sup>19</sup> The historical factor of *Caritas in Veritate* traces the discussion of integral development back to *Rerum Novarum* (1891). It explains how different times and pontiffs applied Leo's understanding of development to times and situations (CV, 8). Benedict wrote on how Paul VI contextualised Leo's view in *Populorum Progressio* (1967). Twenty years later, John Paul II in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) celebrated the encyclical and touched on similar development issues and how this view applied to the present time can make sense of Paul's integral development. *Caritas in Veritate* follows suit. It was released to mark the fortieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio*. Concerning the social context, like some German theologians, Benedict experienced the trauma of the Hitler regime and the horror of World War II (II). See James Corkery, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Ideas*, 53; For that reason, Benedict ensured that *Caritas in Veritate* was shaped by initiatives of the Post-World War II, such as the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR 1948), the formation of the United Nations (1945) and the European Union (1945). See Meghan J. Clark, "Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 484. The intellectual background of *Caritas in Veritate* can be gleaned from the influence of Saint Augustine and Josef Pieper on Benedict. Benedict XVI draws on Augustine's *City of God and Earthly City* to promote his teaching on the logic of the gift in the encyclical, especially while trying to treat the political charity. Benedict writes: "The Earthly city is promoted not merely by relationships of rights and duties but to an even greater and more fundamental extent by relationships of gratuitousness, mercy and communion" (CV, 6). Also, Pieper writes: "No individual, at any rate, no matter how great his genius, can determine and fix anything of the sort." See Joseph Pieper, *Faith, Hope and Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1984), 19. In *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict XVI gives sufficient attention to this understanding of the human person (CV, 34).

<sup>20</sup> Meghan J. Clark, "Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 486.

<sup>21</sup> Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Caritas in Veritate: Benedict Global Orientation," in *Theological Studies* 71, no 2 (2010), 304.

<sup>22</sup> The first part of the compendium of the social doctrine of the Church considers "God's gratuitousness presence". See: Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 2004), 13-17. The document draws from scriptures and the theology of creation to discuss God's gratuitous presence. Meghan J. Clark rightly says, "In continuity with the compendium, *Caritas in Veritate* will reinforce the use of doctrine and Benedict's preference for deductive principles." See: "Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth)" in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 487.

rivalries and new forms of enslavement and colonisation. The first special assembly linked it to victims of robbers, left to die by the roadside (cf Lk 10: 25-37).<sup>23</sup>

These are insecurity concerns already mentioned in *Caritas in Veritate* (CV 26 & 76.). There are significant themes in this Encyclical that cross over into *Africae Munus*.

### 3.2.2 Recalling Paul VI's Integral Development

Benedict reads Paul VI's *Populorum Progressio* in the first chapter, highlighting its central message: authentic or integral human development. The Pope recognises Paul VI's view of development and the central criteria of holding a view of the human person, including its transcendent and relational aspects. Therefore, institutions alone cannot guarantee development since development needs the transcendent vision of the person towards the divine. It is clear, thus, that Benedict would reinforce this notion of development because, as this study has shown, encounter with God and neighbour is central to his vision of the Christian life. In fact, he goes further by adding new levels of theological understanding to this insight.<sup>24</sup>

Specifically, Benedict discusses integral development in terms of the gift (CV, 15) because he assumes that the gift reveals the person's transcendental nature. For instance, he states that:

Development requires a transcendent vision of the person; it needs God, and that without him (God), development is either denied or entrusted exclusively to man who falls into the trap of thinking that he can bring about his ideas of salvation and ends up promoting a dehumanised form of development (CV, 11).

For Benedict, development is not just about economic progress and growth. It includes the proper discernment of what is good for the human person from the perspective of God utilising reason and creativity and guided by grace and faithful revelation. Here, Benedict is not condemning human capacity for development or economic success but is concerned about detaching development from moral and spiritual responsibility (CV, 14). The synthesis captured by the encyclical's title, *Charity in Truth*, describes this point better. According to

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<sup>23</sup> Benedict XVI, *Post Synodal-Apostolic Exhortation: Africae Munus* (19 November 2011), no. 9, accessed on [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va); While appreciating *Caritas in Veritate* that it captures African context, Orobator points to Africans' situation of conflict and development. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator shed more light on the African situation concerning conflicts and violence. He argues that Africa has become a theatre of internecine conflicts directly related to extraction of its natural resources. Examples include the Democratic Republic of Congo, South Africa, South Sudan, and Nigeria. See "*Caritas in Veritate* and Africans Burden of (Under)Development," *Theological Studies* 71, no 2 (2010), 325.

<sup>24</sup> Maura Ryan, "A New Shade of Green? Nature, Freedom, and Sexual Difference in *Caritas in Veritate*," *Theological Studies* 71, no 2 (Summer 2010), 336; Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth*, 327; Bernard Laurent, "*Caritas in Veritate* as a Social Encyclical: A Modest Challenge to Economic Social, and Political Institutions," 517.

Benedict, “charity in truth” should drive all development, justice and peace. He brings to bear his insight of charity in truth while interpreting Paul VI’s development in light of Catholic social teaching (CV, 11,12, and 13). He writes: “In the notion of development understood in human and Christian terms, he (Paul VI) identifies the heart of the Christian social message, and he proposed Christian charity as the principal force at the service of development” (CV, 13). The point is that Benedict is convinced that understanding development from the vantage point of charity and truth depicts the entire corpus of CST and offers a resource for restoring trust and hope and alleviating poverty.

Benedict is keen to root his reflection on integral development in the tradition. He links to the *Second Vatican Council Document* and *Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church*, as well as Paul VI’s *Humanae Vitae* (1968), *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (1975) and *Evangelium Vitae* (1995). Of Paul VI, he argues: “It is helpful to consider these texts too, the above encyclicals, concerning *Populorum Progressio*” (CV, 15). These encyclicals discuss moral issues often considered apart from issues of poverty and development. However, if we are to take the person as a whole, as integral development insists, then we must also consider issues related to sexuality (such as contraception), life (such as abortion) and death (such as euthanasia) as matters for social justice.<sup>25</sup>

Benedict describes integral development as a vocation (CV, 16,17,18, and 19). “To regard development as a vocation is to recognise, on the one hand, that it derives from a transcendent call, and on the other hand that it is incapable, on its own, of supplying its ultimate meaning” (CV,16). This means that development is not solely our efforts but a response to the call of God through responsible activity and so not just about our effort and intelligence, or as termed previously “makability”. Thus, by describing authentic development as a vocation, Benedict outlines possible ways of understanding every development from the perspective of the gift. There is a possibility of recognising development as a gift since he views it as a vocation and that at the heart of every development is receiving and giving. (CV, 19).<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>25</sup> Dorr points out that although Benedict tries to connect social ethics to bioethics, his argument needs to be more convincing. See his *Option for the Poor & for the Earth: From Pope Leo to Francis*, 330. Maura Ryan explains widely how Benedict links these topics (social and bioethics) by invoking other documents of the Church, like *Humanae Vitae* in *Caritas in Veritate*. See “A New Shade of Green? Nature, Freedom, and Sexual Difference in *Caritas in Veritate*,” 339-340; David Cloutier also highlighted that *Caritas in Veritate* makes “connection between the Church’s social ethics and the Church’s teaching on sexual life and issues.” See “Working with the Grammar of Creation: Benedict XVI, Wendell Berry, and the Unity of the Catholic Moral Vision,” *Communion: International Catholic Review* 37 (2010), 606.

<sup>26</sup> Clark explains this view of development, writing: “issuing a strong call for both personal conversion and systemic change, he (Benedict) focuses on themes of development as vocation, integral development, economic justice, and the possibility of an economic of the gift.” See Clark, “Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth),” 482.



### 3.2.3 Expanding the Scope of Integral Human Development

Chapter two focuses on delineating the scope of integral development. It highlights two points. Firstly, development has many layers or “overlapping layers” (CV, 22), of different perspectives and policies. He states:

Today, as we take to heart the lessons of the current economic crisis, which see the state’s *public authorities* directly involved in correcting errors and malfunctions, it seems more realistic to re-evaluate their role and their powers, which need to be prudently revised remodelled as to enable them, perhaps through new forms of engagement, to address the challenges of today’s world (CV, 24).

The challenges Benedict refers to here include the aforementioned lack of trust underlying the economic crisis of 2008 (CV, 22).<sup>27</sup> He goes deeper; beyond every issue, including development, lack of trust is a serious concern. For that reason, he maintains: “The real problem of *development* lies in the question about truth.”<sup>28</sup> He insists that indicators of a lack of mutual understanding, such as irregularities and imbalanced policies, affect development and social progress.

Secondly, the purpose of development is to rescue humanity from different kinds of poverty by acting according to the belief that every person’s life is a gift by which God shares God’s self with creatures (CV, 34). Its scope is identified in new forms of poverty, which the encyclical includes illiteracy, dehumanising deprivation, and inequality. Of course, material poverty remains paramount among these new forms (CV, 22).<sup>29</sup> This new scope requires novel approaches. This new or alternative approach to development considers the whole of the human person, transcendental and social. He states: “The different aspects of the crisis, its solutions, and any new development that the future may bring, are increasingly interconnected, they imply one another, they require new efforts of holistic understanding and a new humanistic synthesis” (CV, 21). There is no one way of understanding development; rather, it is viewed from many comprehensive and different angles, provided the human person is considered from a transcendental and social perspective. As Maryann O Keating and Barry P. Keating observe:

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<sup>27</sup> Clark highlights that Benedict is writing amid the global financial crisis of 2008. Ibid., 485.

<sup>28</sup> The truth here refers to the fact of Christian and human life: that we are made for the gift and are created to share our life with other creatures. It is a presentation of Christian humanism. See Joseph Ratzinger, “Preface,” in *Tolerance and Truth: Christian Belief and World Religions*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 10 (italics in the text are mine).

<sup>29</sup> The new forms of poverty that the encyclical identifies are illiteracy, dehumanising deprivation, and inequality. Orobator conceptualises these new forms of poverty as Anthropological poverty. Orobator, “*Caritas in Veritate* and Africans Burden of (Under) Development,” 325; Amartya Sen also argues that there are different forms of human poverty. He did not stop at that; Sen proposed his capability approach to society as the solution to the problem of poverty. Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Knopf, 1999).

“The hallmark of *Caritas in Veritate* (CV) is a clear emphasis on the social aspect of human existence: individuals are not self-generated. A person’s pilgrimage through history is in company with fellow human beings embedded in a particular culture (CV, 16).”<sup>30</sup>

Benedict does not explain the meaning of the logic of the gift in this chapter. At the same time, there are indicators of the latter notion of the gift, including trust, a complete view of the human person, economic progress, financial aid or generosity, and truth-telling. Rather, this chapter aims to establish the framework in which the logic of the gift operates, identifying several of the drivers of the dynamic of the gift, such as love in truth.

### **3.2.4 The Logic of the Gift as the Basis for Integral Human Development**

The logic of the gift, the subject matter of chapter three of *Caritas in Veritate*, plays a critical role in Benedict’s elaboration of integral human development. The opening sentence of the chapter is explicit that human beings are made for the logic of the gift: “Gratuitousness is present in our lives in many forms, which often go unrecognised because of a purely consumerist and utilitarian view of life. The human being is made for gifts” (C.V, 34). At this stage of the encyclical, the gift assumes a new name – the principle of gratuitousness. This thesis argues that Benedict considers the gift as such for the following reasons. Firstly, to recapture its theological terms, where the unmerited grace of God is the primary model. Secondly, it should be placed in a positive perspective to highlight its power to change and transform society (see chapter six of this thesis). Finally, calling the logic of the gift the principle of gratuitousness shows that Benedict is making explicit a new principle for the tradition, albeit an articulation of the ancient theological insight of grace is always implicit in the Catholic social tradition.

The logic of the gift is located between the other logics: the logic of obligation and exchange. These logics are forms of social relationships. The former refers to relationships that are guided by contract and law, while the latter refers to economic exchange that underpins routine market activity (CV, 36 & 37).<sup>31</sup> The study shall elaborate on these three logics later on. At this point, the logic of the gift is summarily identified as the ability “to give and receive, without one group or person making progress at the expense of the other;” it is contrary to “giving in order to acquire” or coerce (CV, 39). Instead, it is giving for the sake of “the other.”

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<sup>30</sup> Maryann O. Keating and Barry P. Keating, “Benedict XVI as Social Realist in *Caritas in Veritate*,” *Journal of Markets & Morality* 14, Number 2 (2011): 345–358, 345.

<sup>31</sup> Alan J. Kearns, “Rebuilding Trust: Ireland CSR Plan in the Light of *Caritas in Veritate*,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 146, no. 4 (2017), 849.

Benedict argues that without the logic of the gift, there is neither economic progress nor integral development: “Without internal forms of solidarity and mutual trust, the market cannot completely fulfil its proper economic function” (CV, 35). The principle of gratuitousness provides a new perspective on economic progress: the moral perspective that does not seek profit for self-interest but for solidarity and the common good. This idea of economics suggests promoting distributive justice, not merely commutative justice. In other words, excessive focus on profit leads to economic crises and underdevelopment. Indeed, he goes so far as to assert that the notion of economic progress resides in the logic of the gift.

In short, chapter three of *Caritas in Veritate* aims to proclaim the significance of the gift to integral development. For instance, after discussing the relevance of justice to development and economic plans, the encyclical invites readers to let the principle of gratuitousness penetrate every layer of development and economic process (CV, 37). In this chapter of *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict integrates the logic of the gift into public spheres and disciplines, conceptualising it as a hermeneutical key that interprets human reality, including social and bioethics.

### **3.2.5 Human Rights, Duties, and the Environment**

Chapter four is entitled “Development of Peoples, Rights and Duties, the Environment.” In this chapter, he is particular about the right to freedom, considering how people make claims without referencing responsibility. Referring to the tradition before him, Benedict writes:

A link has always been noted between claims to a ‘right to excess’, and even to transgression and vice within affluent societies... The link consists in this: individual rights, when detached from the framework of duties which grants them their full meaning, can run wild, leading to an escalation of demand (CV, 43).

The understanding of human rights in Catholic Social Teaching was always connected with corresponding responsibilities and duties. In concrete issues, he deploys this framework of rights to attend to population growth, human life, and care for the natural environment (CV, 48-52).

Benedict reflected on the environment as a gift that must be received responsibly – paving the way for the more expansive encyclical of Pope Francis in *Laudato Si* (2015). More than any Catholic social encyclical before *Caritas in Veritate*, it focuses on the imminent threats to the environment for present and future generations, using the language of gift and responsibility. It states: “The environment is God’s gift to everyone, and in our use of it, we have a responsibility towards the poor, future generations, and humanity as a whole” (CV, 48).

Here, Benedict reaffirms his clarion call for responsible stewardship towards the environment and human life in the light of the logic of the gift.<sup>32</sup>

### 3.2.6 Solidarity and the Common Good as Ethics of the Logic of the Gift

The fifth chapter of the encyclical presents international cooperation, considering the principle of gratuitousness as a solution to poverty and other social concerns. Benedict uses the traditional themes of CST, including solidarity and subsidiarity, to speak of human cooperation that addresses social concerns.<sup>33</sup> The chapter began the discussion by identifying different categories of poverty, factors that lead to and sustain it, and ways to break the cycle. He cites individualism as the major trigger of material poverty (C.V, 53). Consequently, human cooperation and interdependence will be the antidote. He stresses that religion can promote cooperation and interdependence that can potentially deal with poverty because it naturally stands against the alienation caused by poverty and encourages dialogue (CV, 55-57).

In previous chapters and the whole encyclical, Benedict presents humans as relational, stressing that encounters with God, their kind, and other cultures define their transcendental and social nature.<sup>34</sup> In CST, such encounters assume other terms, such as the common good and, recently, a culture of life.<sup>35</sup> Benedict links this notion of the relationality of the human person to speak of integral development and is reinforced by the universal brotherhood taught by other religions (C.V, 55). Therefore, the document invites other religions and cultures to maximise the relational character of the human person by engaging other faiths in dialogue that can potentially drive integral development. It may be said that this invitation foreshadows Pope Francis' *Fratelli Tutti* (2020).

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<sup>32</sup> In the book *Environmental Justice and Climate Change* (2013), different authors wrote articles on Benedict's moral evaluation of climate change and ecology crises. Some authors are Mary A. Ashley, Michael Baur, Elizabeth Groppe, David Cloutier, *et cetera*. For example, Mary A. Ashley's article teases Benedict's moral evaluation of human and environmental ecology from a Catholic personalist approach. Read Mary A. Ashley, "If You Want Responsibility, Build Relationship," in *Environmental Justice and Climate Change*, eds., Jame Schaefer and Tobias Winright (Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2013): 19-42

<sup>33</sup> Overberg, "Key Themes of Charity in Truth," 15.

<sup>34</sup> This chapter already cited how Maryann Keating and Barry P. Keating described *Caritas in Veritate* as a document that speaks of human beings as socially oriented. See "Benedict XVI as Social Realist in *Caritas in Veritate*," 345.

<sup>35</sup> The common good traditionally refers to "the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their members relatively thorough and ready access to their fulfilment" (GS 26). However, John Paul II and Francis described it in *Humanae Vitae* and *Laudato Si* as the culture of life (HV, 22 and LS, 53 and 5); See Dan Pattee, "Social Justice and Catholic Social Thought," *Catholic Social Science Review* 21 (2016), 110. Accessed on December 12, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.5840/cssp20162112>

### 3.2.7 The Limit of Technology

In the final chapter, Benedict highlights that the human person is a subject rather than an object of development in light of a complete vision of the human person. Developmental or technical progress is not about *what* we produce but *why* and *how*. He states: “True development does not consist primarily in doing” (CV, 69). It follows that development must take account of the needs of the human person, especially as spiritual beings. As spiritual beings, God is involved in the process of development. Benedict went so far as to consider prayer a critical development influencer.

The call is to reconsider and evaluate technological development. It limits the modern view of technology, placing it under the scrutiny of the principle of gratuitousness. Benedict extends his earlier argument, outlined in chapter two of this thesis, which is that “receiving” precedes “doing” or “makability.” In other words, he contends that a Christian is a beneficiary of the bounty of God.<sup>36</sup> Thus, while acknowledging the prospects of technology for development, Benedict warns that there is a limit to how one should use it. In his view, it must be used to promote the holistic vision of the human person.

The conclusion made of *Caritas in Veritate* is that Benedict invites everyone to evaluate market and business transactions, justice, development, and, indeed, social issues in the light of the logic of the gift, which he rephrases as the principle of gratuitousness. The encyclical asserts that social progress and human reality, including peacebuilding, “must be rooted in the truth and value of human life,” which is the principle of gratuitousness (CV, 72). It is precisely from this viewpoint that Benedict developed Catholic Social Teaching.

### 3.3 *Caritas in Veritate*: A Development of Catholic Social Teaching

Benedict demonstrated continuity with the previous Church’s teaching, reinforcing dialogue with the tradition on certain topics such as peacebuilding, climate change, justice, market, and business transactions.<sup>37</sup> The following section interrogates his methodology and socio-economic analysis to unpack further Benedict’s articulation of the logic of the gift.

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<sup>36</sup> Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 196.

<sup>37</sup> Cristian R. Loza and Giorgio Mion, “Catholic Social Teaching Organizational Purpose, and the For-Profit/Non-profit Dichotomy: Exploring the Meta profit,” *Journal of Markets and Morality*, 275-295.

### 3.3.1 On the Market and Business Transactions

Catholic Social Teaching assumes that market and business transactions should be geared towards promoting well-being while also considering profit and self-initiative.<sup>38</sup> John Paul II praises market activities but with a warning. He writes:

Certainly, the mechanisms of the market offer secure advantages: they help to utilize resources better; they promote the exchange of products; above all they give central place to the person's desires and preferences, which, in a contract, meet the desires and preferences of another person. Nevertheless, these mechanisms carry the risk of an 'idolatry' of the market, an idolatry which ignores the existence of goods which by their nature are not and cannot be mere commodities (CA, 40).

The market itself is important to people, but it often operates with policies that do not promote human dignity. The market itself is not the problem, but those who control it. Therefore, some human behaviours need to be called to account for the problems that arise from market and business transactions. Bernard Laurent captures this situation succinctly:

All over the world, the same policies have been implemented, assigning an increasingly important role to the free market in regulating economic activities to encourage the free circulation of capital...boosting international trade, and deregulating financial markets to promote financing of the economy via stock markets...[carried out] at the risk of encouraging speculative behaviour.<sup>39</sup>

The early encyclicals and CSDC called for sound economic policies. For instance, CST explains that a properly regulated free market is a competitive market that moderates excessive profits.<sup>40</sup> It seeks an atmosphere of healthy competition. There is a constant impression among some theologians that CST only condemns the free market rather than acknowledging its contribution to the integral development of underdeveloped countries.<sup>41</sup> Elsewhere, there were different views about the Church's understanding of free markets before the release of *Caritas in Veritate*. Laurent summarises it as follows:

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<sup>38</sup> O. Keating and P. Keating, "Benedict XVI as Social Realist in *Caritas in Veritate*," 353.

<sup>39</sup> Laurent, "*Caritas in Veritate* as a Social Encyclical: A Modest Challenge to Economic, Social, and Political Institutions," 534

<sup>40</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, (Dublin: Veritas 2005), no. 347.

<sup>41</sup> Allan Figueroa Deck highlights that the radical leftist disparages *Populorum Progressio* for its criticism of development that focuses more on the market economy. See "Commentary on *Populorum Progressio*," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentary and Interpretation*, 319; Stefano Zamagni Pointed out that modern society understands the logic of market economy as pure self-interest and profit economy. He argues that Benedict XVI proposes something different: pro-profit business that support authentic human development. See Zamagni "Reciprocity and Fraternity," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life: An Extension and Critic of Caritas in Veritate*, 74; Finn thinks that Benedict XVI's view of the market economy is better than John Paul II's idea in *Centesimus Annus*, "Economics of Charity: Pope Benedict's *Caritas in Veritate*," *Commonweal* CXXXVI, no. 14 (2009), 8.

The divergent view can be summed up as follows: for some, the Church wants neither an economy unchecked by morality, nor a society organised solely by competitive market forces, nor businesses whose sole purpose is minimum profit, nor an economy that imposes its materialist goals on all society.<sup>42</sup>

The actual tradition is more nuanced. For instance, John Paul II states:

The Church acknowledges the legitimate role of profit as an indication that business is functioning well. When a firm makes a profit, this means that productive factors have been properly employed and corresponding human needs have been duly satisfied (*Centesimus Annus*, 35).

This teaching suggests that a good economic or business model accrues profit for satisfying basic human needs. For some economists, this view of business impedes the meaning of business growth. As the business researchers Christian Loza and Giorgio Mion notice: “The use of the managerial category of profit to define organizations has obstructed the full understanding of organizational purpose in light of CST.”<sup>43</sup>

*Caritas in Veritate* follows this idea of liberal economics by identifying the merits of the market economy (CV, 48, 59, 68 and 77).<sup>44</sup> Benedict writes:

There is no reason to deny that a certain amount of capital can do good if invested abroad rather than at home. Yet the requirements of justice must be safeguarded... What should be avoided is a speculative *use of financial resources* that yields to the temptation of seeking only short-term profit, without regard for the long-term sustainability of the enterprise, its benefit to the real economy and attention to the advancement, in suitable and appropriate ways, of further economic initiatives in countries in need of development. It is true that the export of investments and skills can benefit the populations of the receiving country (CV, 40).

The encyclical does not strongly blame the market for the financial crisis of 2008. Instead, it warns and challenges the excesses of the market, particularly for short-term profit. It follows the pattern of *Rerum Novarum* (RN 1891) and *Quadragesima Anno* (QA 1931) during the industrial revolutions, challenging unjust structures while accepting the fundamental order of society.<sup>45</sup> There is more emphasis on individuals and those who operate businesses to their consciences to plan for a long-term profit that can enhance human flourishing in the encyclical.

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<sup>42</sup> Laurent, “*Caritas in Veritate* as a Social Encyclical: A Modest Challenge to Economic, Social, and Political Institutions,” 520.

<sup>43</sup> Loza and Mion, “Catholic Social Teaching Organizational Purpose, and the For-Profit/Non-profit Dichotomy: Exploring the Metaprofit,” *Journal of Markets and Morality*, 279.

<sup>44</sup> On the merits of the market, O. Keating and P. Keating write: “Society does not need to be sheltered from the market. We extend this to argue that denying the role of market competition, productive efficiency, and even profit maximisation are not preconditions for human development. *Caritas in Veritate*, however, does base its support for open trade not on the economic gains but rather on gratuitousness as an expression of human fraternity.” See “Benedict XVI as Social Realist in *Caritas in Veritate*,” 352-353.

<sup>45</sup> Laurent, “*Caritas in Veritate* as a Social Encyclical: A Modest Challenge to Economic, Social, and Political Institutions,” 518.

Benedict writes: “The worldwide diffusion of forms of prosperity should not, therefore, be held up by projects that are self-centred, protectionist or at the service of private interests” (CV, 42). One could say that *Caritas in Veritate* presents a picture of a familiar market that does not neglect profit but encourages marketers and business people to operate within the framework of justice. This attitude must diffuse the entire process of the market rather than standing alongside it.

Furthermore, as the previous encyclicals condemned financial institutions and regimes for emphasising short-term profits, *Caritas in Veritate* also challenges those who engage in it to use the profit to improve people’s well-being while upholding the view that businesses are for-profit. There is no extended query of the political structures that may have facilitated the economic failings of modern society and the 2008 economic depression. Instead, it presumes that the economic and development issues of the time were a moral crisis that required a turnaround.<sup>46</sup>

He returns to the principle of gratuitousness to treat economic issues. When talking about how economic profit should be achieved, he refers to the ethic of giving oneself to another in a reciprocal relationship. He states: “If the market is governed solely by the principle of the equivalence in value of exchange goods, it cannot produce the social cohesion that it requires to function well” (CV, 35). It is the view that an encounter is a moral duty that defines the business, making it right and just (CV, 34, 36, 37). Here, Benedict sees every person as a critical agent of human flourishing, drawing “moral energies from other subjects capable of generating them.” (CV, 35). While supporting the market and business that John Paul II outlines, he stresses that moral instruments are required in every firm and business.<sup>47</sup> It is certainly the view that Benedict continues the moral vision of economics in CST.

### **3.3.2 The Methodology of *Caritas in Veritate***

It may be said, that the two principal methodologies used by pontiffs in writing social encyclicals are theological and philosophical. The theological method is the approach to social issues using discourse on God, humanity, salvation, and the Trinity.<sup>48</sup> The Church, as expected,

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<sup>46</sup> Here, Benedict argues that “it is not the instrument (say of development; economic, finance, education, politics and so forth) that must be called to account, but the individual, their moral conscience and their personal and social responsibility” to build “a world that in which all will be able to receive and give” concerning social boundaries. (CV, 36).

<sup>47</sup> Zamagni, “Reciprocity and Fraternity,” 76

<sup>48</sup> Stephen Pope succinctly defines the theological approach to Catholic Social Teaching as appealing to divine law and how this invites every Christian to engage in social work in the Christian spirit, redemptive love of Christ. See “Natural Law in Catholic Social Teachings,” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 56.



deploys this method in writing its documents by referencing divine laws and human dignity while discussing socioeconomic and political concerns. For instance, the creation of the human person in the image of God dominates *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Centesimus Annus* (1991).

The philosophical method is divided into two significant branches – inductive and deductive. The former is a form of argument that begins from a fact acquired from a particular experience to the general. It generates general rules for argument. The latter depends on general facts for its argument. In other words, it draws from the general premise to establish its proposition. At times, such propositions could be established through induction.<sup>49</sup> The latter, which is the logic of deduction, relies on general or already established principles to build an argument. This logic could also be found in theological arguments when it is drawn from doctrines such as creation to the Trinity. One example of this approach is found in *Caritas in Veritate*.<sup>50</sup> Benedict primarily draws on general propositions to unpack the logic of the gift as a dynamic of human encounter in a metaphysical manner. However, most of his arguments draw on the doctrine of the Trinity and the understanding of the human person already laid down in Catholic Social Teaching.

Generally, papal social encyclicals and various documents of the Church before *Caritas in Veritate* deployed the inductive natural law approach to reality, building their arguments from challenges facing the world.<sup>51</sup> For instance, the Industrial Revolution and the issue of just wages led Leo XIII to argue that society is naturally endowed with natural rights and justice and teaches that leaders must rule society accordingly (RN, 13, 14 & 15).<sup>52</sup> The suggestion is that society is not an invention of the human person but a gift of God.<sup>53</sup> John XXIII sustained the approach, albeit not without articulating other principles. For instance, Matthew Shadle

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<sup>49</sup> A. A. Luce, *Logic* (London: Teach Yourself Books, 1954), 172.

<sup>50</sup> Clark shares that Benedict's preferred method in *Caritas in Veritate* and other writings is deductive. See Clark, "Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth)," 487.

<sup>51</sup> J. Bryan Hehir maintains that pontiffs in the past and recent years have drawn their argument on the problems facing the CST since its problems are global. He writes: "It is both justifiable and necessary to trace the development of papal teaching in light of the problems and challenges facing Catholic Social Teaching throughout the last centuries and in the first decade of this one." Hehir "Caritas in Veritate in Broader Context," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 12.

<sup>52</sup> Hehir writes about how Leo XIII draws his argument from the experience of the Industrial Revolution and wages to write about social issues. This suggests an inductive natural law approach. See "Caritas in Veritate in Broader Context," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 12-13. Shadle reported the similar situation on John XXIII. His and the approaches of Vatican II, Pius VI and John Paul to war and peace was the inductive natural law. He states that this tradition establishes the "basic framework for papal thought." See *The Origins of War: A Catholic Perspective* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 137.

<sup>53</sup> Matthew Shadle maintains that Leo XIII assumes that "human society and government are natural and not human invention." Accordingly, authority is a gift of God, and leaders must rule in accordance with the natural law. *Ibid.*, 137.

observes that he adopts “three principles of liberal theories.”<sup>54</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* attempted to change the style, but its discussion on war and peace relied heavily on the same pattern of argument, the inductive natural law approach (GS Part II).<sup>55</sup> John Paul II speaks of solidarity yet appeals to a similar approach (CA, 10). The emphasis on human and social solidarity focuses basically on referencing divine law based on reason rather than a fully or deep-rooted theology.<sup>56</sup>

This study argues that in *Caritas in Veritate* and other documents, Benedict favours an explicitly theological discourse. As John Coleman writes: “So it is a conspicuous achievement of *Caritas in Veritate* to have provided us with a more full-fledged and fully theological grounding of Catholic Social Thought.”<sup>57</sup> He continues, saying that it also “remains true though Benedict selected only some of a number of possible theological themes for this grounding.”<sup>58</sup> This thesis argues that in his theological discourse, the central themes or doctrines are creation, trinity, salvation and sin, and these turn on the principle of gratuitousness (or the dynamic of grace).

From the opening sentences of *Caritas in Veritate*, theological discourse and themes are present. In short, it reflects on the belief in Jesus Christ (CV, 1). As Meghan Clark states: “*Caritas in Veritate* represents an appeal to Christology.”<sup>59</sup> Bishop William F. Murphy also observes:

Benedict, however, is mining new grounds, confident that the incarnate son of God reveals that everything human has a relation to the divine, including markets, financial institutions, and globalized economic relationships. The pope speaks of the principle of

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<sup>54</sup> The three principles of liberal theories adopted by John XXIII in dealing with issues of war and peace are one, the assumption that “human society and government are natural and not human invention,” two, authority is a gift of God, and that leaders must rule in accordance with the natural law, and finally, addressing social questions cannot be divorced from religion. “That fear and partiality” are the causes of war, and finally, his insistence that their antidotes are “the establishment of international institutions.” Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> The discussion on war and peace in *Gaudium et Spes*, part two, chapter five, suggests the absence of a theological approach to CST before *Caritas in Veritate*. It was a response to modern issues facing society via the philosophical natural law approach of the earlier tradition. See *ibid.*, 150.

<sup>56</sup> Stephen Pope offers insights on how the philosophical approach to natural law enjoyed favour from Pope Leo XIII to Pope John Paul II. He writes: “Catholic social teachings are often divided into two main periods: one preceding *Gaudium et Spes* (GS) and the second following from it. Literature from the former period was primarily philosophical and its theological claims generally drew from the doctrine of creation.” See Pope, “Natural Law in Catholic Social Teachings,” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 5; Shadle reported that the inductive natural law approach to political issues, war and peace is the “basic framework for papal thought.” See *The Origins of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 137.

<sup>57</sup> John A. Coleman, “Developments in Pope Benedict’s Thinking,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 27 to 28.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>59</sup> Clark “Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate* (On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth),” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 489.

gratuitousness, the logic of the gift, solidarity, and communion, and charity in truth. He introduces God into the dynamic element in the political, economic, and social order.<sup>60</sup>

This approach paves a possible way for theologians to discuss theology in public matters without necessarily referencing natural law based on reason.<sup>61</sup> Benedict moves beyond the appeal to the natural law because he thinks that, while a part of Christian tradition, it is not unique to it.<sup>62</sup> Prior to becoming Pope, Benedict shared the possibility of a different approach in a debate with Jurgen Habermas. It is worth quoting at length:

The natural law has remained – especially in the Catholic Church – one of the elements in the arsenal of arguments in conversations with secular society and with other communities of faith, appealing to shared reason in the attempt to discern the basis of a consensus about ethical principles of laws in a pluralistic society, secular society. Unfortunately, this instrument has become blunt, and that is why I do not wish to employ it to support my arguments in this discussion (discussion on the moral foundations of free state, a discussion that dominates CST). The idea of the natural law presupposed the concept of nature in which nature and reason interlock; nature itself is rational. The victory of the theory of evolution has meant the end of this view of nature.<sup>63</sup>

While recognising the value and significance of natural law, he is very aware of its limitations, especially in the contemporary period. Coleman goes so far as to say that Benedict thinks of the natural law approach as obsolete.<sup>64</sup> It is true that he is looking to other approaches. This study saw this playing out in his contribution to Catholic Social Teaching. The logic of the gift that unpacks authentic human encounters supplements the earlier methodology. As Dorr observes:

He was putting forward a positive alternative approach – one in which Christians open themselves to the gift of God and work conscientiously to bring that gratuitousness into their everyday human relationships. And this is to take place not just at the interpersonal level but also in the sphere of economics and politics. In all this, Benedict has brought a valuable new emphasis to Catholic Social Teaching and practice.”<sup>65</sup>

This is not to say that Benedict disregards the natural law approach to human realities but to argue that his theological approach is a supplement to the natural law. According to *Caritas in Veritate*:

The universal moral law provides a sound basis for all cultural, religious and political dialogue, and it ensures that the multi-faceted pluralism of cultural diversity does not

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<sup>60</sup> William F. Murphy, “Situating Pope Benedict’s Theology,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 25.

<sup>61</sup> J. Bryan Hehir explains how Benedict deploys theological approach to social, economic, and other public issues. See “Caritas in Veritate in Broader Context,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life: An Extension and Critique of “Caritas in Veritate,”* 14. Coleman argues that Benedict expounded the theology of grace and the Trinity in CST. See “Developments in Pope Benedict’s Thinking,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 27-31.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>63</sup> Ratzinger, *Values in a Time of Upheaval*, trans. Brian McNeil (Edinburgh: Crossroad, 2005), 38-39.

<sup>64</sup> Coleman, “Developments in Pope Benedict’s Thinking,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 27.

<sup>65</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth*, 350.

detach itself from the common quest for the truth, goodness and God. Thus, the adherence to the law etched on human hearts is the precondition for all constructive social cooperation (CV, 59).

Benedict moves beyond such a traditional natural law approach, albeit without denouncing it, to focus on a phenomenological unpacking of human encounters with God, other humans, and creatures, using it as a resource and measure by which to evaluate social issues such as war and peace.

This is a novel approach to social issues or realities in Catholic Social Teaching. It is certainly the claim of this thesis that Benedict's theological approach in *Caritas in Veritate* is a significant development of the tradition of the CST. In summary, this work argues that Benedict's primary theological method in the encyclical arose out of his earlier theological study and Christian anthropology, positing that the human person is created for the gift or a relationship with God and others in the social, economic, political, and other public domains (CV, 56).<sup>66</sup>

### 3.3.3 Justice

It may be said that the Catholic social tradition is an extended treatment of justice and charity. *Caritas in Veritate* offers another approach and application of these themes. Neo-scholastics, which influenced the early tradition, proposed a model of justice that is not intrinsically linked to charity because of the distinction between the natural and supernatural (see previous chapter). As Shadle puts it: "Despite its separation of charity from justice, and therefore the supernatural realm from the natural realm of politics, this neo-scholastic position is a far cry from the total separation of the religious from the political realm in most liberal thought."<sup>67</sup> This theory argues that justice needs charity but is not intrinsically linked. Also, it holds that justice is only motivated and nourished by charity. Pontiffs like John XXIII shared the neo-scholastic view, tending to agree with the neo-scholastic on the issue of the separation between justice and charity.<sup>68</sup> He writes:

Apostolate of a Trained Laity... And yet even this must be reckoned insufficient to bring the relationships of daily life into conformity with a more human standard, based, as it

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<sup>66</sup> Hehir opines that Benedict, in *Caritas in Veritate*, brings his "extensive record of theological work," using it as a backup for analysing social realities. See Hehir, "Caritas in Veritate in Broader Context" in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 14.

<sup>67</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War*, 138-139.

<sup>68</sup> Shadle reports that "John also maintained the neo-scholastic separation of justice and charity, which was associated with the theological distinction between natural and supernatural...this separation also represents a separation of the practical realm of politics from the spiritual or theoretical realm." Ibid., 13 and 139-141.

must be, on truth, tempered by justice, motivated by mutual love, and holding fast to the practice of freedom (PT, 148-149).

He acknowledges a connection between justice and charity but insists that their function differ. One makes the other better, or charity makes justice authentic. For instance, referring to scientific competence, technical, and human achievements, the practical is reserved for justice. The motivation to be just or to love belongs to the spiritual realm.

In *Deus Caritas Est*, Benedict seems to separate justice and charity in explaining their functions. He states: “Justice is both the aim and the intrinsic criterion of all politics...The Church is one of those living forces: she is alive with the love enkindled by the Spirit of Christ. This love does not simply offer people material help, but refreshment and care for their souls” (DCS, 28 a & b). In the paragraph that follows, he makes the distinction between works of justice and charity, arguing that on the one hand, justice belongs to the state, and on the other hand, charity is the work of the Church: “We can now determine more precisely, in the life of the Church, the relationship between commitment to the just ordering of the State and society on the one hand, and organised charitable activity on the other” (DCS, 29). He went as far as saying: “Church agencies, with their transparent operation and their faithfulness to the duty of witnessing to love, are able to give a Christian quality to the civil agencies too” (DCS, 30 b).<sup>69</sup>

As chapter two notes, an older, consistent tradition based on the essential connection between nature and grace holds that justice and charity are interrelated. In *Caritas in Veritate*, his analysis of the principle of gratuitousness links justice and charity. According to the Encyclical:

While in the past it was possible to argue that justice had to come first and gratuitousness could come afterwards, as a compliment, today it is clear that without gratuitousness there can be no justice in the first place. What is needed, therefore, is a market that permits the free operation, in conditions of equal opportunities” (CV, 38).<sup>70</sup>

While Benedict admits there was a separation of charity from justice, he closes the gap through his analysis of the principle of gratuitousness. On the one hand, he argues that they are mutually constitutive, while “On the other hand, charity transcends justice and completes it in

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<sup>69</sup> Martin Oworhokwu Ejiowhor, “Pope Francis’s Culture of Encounter as a Paradigm Shift in the Magisterium’s Reception of Justice in the World: Implications for the Church’s Social Mission,” *Journal Catholic Social Thought* 18, no. 2 (Summer 2021), 198-199, accessed on December 17, 2022, <https://go.exlibris.link/9XP8SV3q>; Clark highlighted this gap that Benedict opened in DCS between justice and charity. She argues that many scholars capitalise on it to reiterate the significant work of justice. See *Commentary on “Caritas in Veritate,”* 503. D. Thomas Hughson is one of those who argue that in *Deus Caritas Est* there is a dichotomy between justice and charity. He argues that what explains the church’s mission is charity, not justice. See *Classical Christology and Public Theology* (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2013), 87.

<sup>70</sup> Benedict expanded the discussion of the relationship between charity and justice in his subsequent writings. For instance, he argues that charity inspires and sustains justice. Benedict XVI, Post Synodal Exhortation: *Apostolic Exhortation: Africae Munus*, 2011, no. 24

the logic of giving and forgiving” (CV, 6). It argues that any approach to development and other social realities should consider that charity is intrinsically linked to justice and vice versa. Benedict re-phrases this framework of justice, one that is based on the gift, while reaffirming the traditional view that justice refers to giving people their due by articulating the concept of the gift as love. He writes:

*Charity goes beyond justice* because to love is to give, to offer what is “mine” to the other; but it never lacks justice, which prompts us to give the other what is “his”, what is due to him by reason of his being or his acting. I cannot “give” what is mine to the other, without first giving him what pertains to him in justice.” (CV, 6)

Theologians received Benedict's description of justice and charity differently. Lisa Sowle-Cahill thinks that *Caritas in Veritate* repeats the sentiments presented in *Deus Caritas Est*; that is, justice differs from charity.<sup>71</sup> Charles M. Murphy aligns himself with her.<sup>72</sup> However, Donal Dorr thinks differently. He submits that there is no difference between justice and charity in *Deus Caritas Est* and *Caritas in Veritate*. He states: “I have not seen any indication in *Caritas in Veritate* or elsewhere that he had changed the view that emerges from *Deus Caritas Est*”<sup>73</sup> concerning the church’s approach to social justice.

This study holds that for Benedict, justice and charity, like nature and grace, are intrinsically connected. Their functions are the same, namely, gearing towards social goods. He writes that “it remains true that charity must animate the entire lives of the lay faithful and therefore also their political activity, lived as ‘social charity’” (DCS, 29). Here, justice becomes charity when it is carried out in social activities. While in *Deus Caritas Est*, he calls it “political life” (DCS, 28), in *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict named it the “Political part of Charity” (CV,7).

After demonstrating the connection between justice and charity, he speaks of justice in the framework of the “consistent ethics of life.” Consistent ethics of life “is a term used in social-justice circles to describe the position that those who object to taking life at one stage or in one form must object to taking life at all stages and in all forms.”<sup>74</sup> Before Benedict, there was the impression that Catholic social justice defined and discussed the ethics of social life but was silent about the life of the unborn in matters of social justice.<sup>75</sup> Indeed, the tradition discussed social justice independent of bioethics – which is currently changing. One way he

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<sup>71</sup> Cahill, “*Caritas in Veritate: Benedict’s Global Orientation*,” 304.

<sup>72</sup> Charles M. Murphy draws on Benedict’s teaching in *Deus Caritas Est* and argues that in terms of the mission of the Church, Benedict separates justice from charity. See Murphy, “Charity not Justice, as Constitutive of the Church’s Mission,” in *Theological Studies* 68, no. 2 (2007): 274-286.

<sup>73</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth*, 347-347.

<sup>74</sup> J Brian Benestad, “Three Themes in Pope Benedict’s *Caritas in Veritate*,” *Nova et Vetara* 8, no. 4 (2010), 729.

<sup>75</sup> *Ibid.*, 724.

does this is to emphasise inter-generational justice. Benedict speaks of justice and love for every generation, including unborn babies and the natural environment, writing:

It is contradictory to insist that future generations respect the natural environment when our educational systems and laws do not help them respect themselves. The book of nature is one and indivisible: it takes in not only the environment but also life, sexuality, marriage, the family, and social relations: in other words, integral human development (CV, 51).<sup>76</sup>

According to this explanation, environmental justice aims to protect the lives of every generation, not just the present one. If the response to climate issues must achieve the desired result, it must defend every life at every stage. It is a description of reality that integrates human life into social issues. In this way, justice means ethical consistency, and the principle of gratuitousness offers such consistency.

To further expand on the developments by Benedict, this study now provides a short overview of the place of the gift in the Catholic social tradition as a backdrop to our later deeper analysis.

### **3.3.4 On the Logic of the Gift in the Catholic Social Tradition**

Catholic Social Teaching regularly referred to the gift. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* points to the gift's logic while treating the term merit. It states:

With regard to God, there is no strict right to any merit on the part of man. Between God and us there is an immeasurable inequality, for we received everything from him, our creator. The merit of man before God in the Christian life arises from the fact that God has freely to associate man with the work of his grace, *the gift* (CCC, 2007).

It clarifies that everything we have is a gift from God, including our relationship with God. It is emphatic that merits, whatever we achieve, are a gift: "The merit of our good works are gifts of the divine goodness. Grace has gone before us; now we are giving what is due...Our merits are God's gift (CCC, 2009). Similar to what has been seen about Benedict and the gift, the Catechism presents a theological understanding of the gift – God is the absolute giver.

The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* does the same when it treats the logic of the gift. It states:

On the one hand, God is seen as the origin of all that exists, as the presence that guarantees to men and women organised in a society the basic condition of life...On the other hand, he appears as the measure of what should be, as the presence that challenges human actions...In every religious experience, therefore, importance attaches to the dimension of gift and gratuitousness, which is seen as an underlying element of the

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<sup>76</sup> J Brian Benestad discusses the connection between social justice and bioethics in *Caritas in Veritate*. In this exploration, he shows how Benedict brings issues of human lives into environmental justice. Ibid.,723-744.

experience that the human beings have of their existence together with others in the world.<sup>77</sup>

The gift here is described in two ways: as something of God and from God, and in the experience of human relationships with one another, including other creatures. Again, it is an understanding of the gift demonstrated earlier in the previous chapter – God is the absolute giver.

This approach is consistent with the mentions of the gift in the writings of the popes; that is, to speak of a gift is to speak of something coming from God or as exclusively belonging to God. As a term, the gift is almost constantly used as a descriptive term to support the value of what is being discussed, for example, material goods, peace, and the environment. Pope St John Paul II states: “We must see them, *material goods*, as a gift of from God and as a response to human vocation, which is fully realised in Christ” (italics added, SRS, 27). In the same document, he writes: “It falls to us, who receive the gifts of God in order to make them fruitful, to ‘sow’ and ‘reap.’ If we do not, even what we have will be taken away from us” (SRS, 30). This pattern of the gift’s discussion also finds its way into his *Evangelium Vitae* (1995).<sup>78</sup> While reflecting on the worth of the human person in the document, John Paul states:

At the same time, it is precisely this supernatural calling which highlights the relative character of each individual’s earthly life. After all, life on earth is not an ‘ultimate’ but a ‘penultimate’ reality; even so, it remains a sacred reality entrusted to us, to be preserved with a sense of responsibility and brought to perfection in love and in the gift of ourselves to God and to our brothers and sisters (EV, 2).

In his different addresses, John Paul II alluded to the gift. In 1978, he encouraged his audience during advent with these words:

Advent took shape for the first time on the horizon of man’s history when God revealed himself as the one who delights in the good, who loves and who gives. In this gift to man God did not just ‘give him’ the visible world—this is clear from the beginning—but giving man the visible world, God wants to give him Himself too, just as man is capable of giving himself, just as he ‘gives himself’ to the other man: from person to person; that is, to give Himself to him, admitting him to participation in his mysteries, and even to participation in his life. This is carried out in a tangible way in the relationships between members of a family: husband-wife, parents (and) children.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>77</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 13.

<sup>78</sup> John Paul II discusses the gift in this document predominantly, calling human life, the Holy Spirit, and love gift. He states: “The life which God offers to man is a gift by which God shares something of himself with his creatures (EV, 34, 2 and 19).

<sup>79</sup> John Paul II, *General Audience* (December 13, 1978), paragraph 3. Accessed on April 19, 2022, available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).



He presented God as calling us into existence and described human existence as a complete decision of God, to which humans are receivers and participants in the mysteries of God. In turn, as God-like, humans can give. One year later, in 1979, he writes:

‘God created man in his own image; in the image of God, he created him...’ (*Gen* 1:27). In the seven-day cycle of creation a precise graduated procedure is evident. However, man is not created according to a natural succession. The Creator seems to halt before calling him into existence, as if he were pondering within himself to make a decision: ‘Let us make man in our image, after our likeness...’ (*Gen* 1:26).<sup>80</sup>

He highlighted that God offered the human person the gift of himself at creation. In the same year, while addressing the Irish people in Drogheda, he acknowledged the tragic events taking place in Northern Ireland and admonished Irish people by saying: “Come back to Christ, whose parting gift to the world was peace.”<sup>81</sup> References to the gift also dominate his messages of *World Day for Peace*. For example, in 1997, he wrote: “Unity, after all, is a gift of the Holy Spirit. We are asked to respond to this gift responsibly, without compromising our witness to the truth.”<sup>82</sup> John Paul II uses the logic of the gift throughout his writing, especially in his reflections on love as self-gift in his *Theology of the Body*.<sup>83</sup> It would make a point for further study to compare John Paul and Benedict in terms of how they approach and utilise the concept of gift in their teaching on social matters.

Benedict capitalises on such a Christian idea of the gift, building on his Christian anthropology. In *Caritas in Veritate*, he deepens the discussion, arguing that the teaching of the Church is rooted in such teaching. He asserts:

Charity is love received and given. It is ‘grace’ (*charis*). Its source is the wellspring of the Father’s love for the Son. It is creative love through which we have our being; it is redemptive love through which we are created... This dynamic of charity received and given is what gives rise to the Catholic Social Teaching CV, 5).

Given its significance to CST, *Caritas in Veritate* raises the logic of the gift to the principle of gratuitousness. For example, Benedict maintains that love or seeking justice is a gift or that being with someone or for someone is a gift (CV, 6). Humans themselves are a divinely created gift of God; it is about the love of God and human love towards the other. It is a divine giving, human receiving (grace) and human self-giving (task).

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<sup>80</sup> Ibid., no 2.

<sup>81</sup> John Paul II, *The Pope in Ireland: Addresses and Homilies* (Dublin: Veritas, 1979), 23.

<sup>82</sup> John Paul II, “Offer Forgiveness and Receive Peace,” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 1997, accessed on December 26, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>83</sup> See John M Grondelski, *Karol Wojtyla On Humanae Vitae*,” in *Angelicum* 81, no 1 (2004), 53; Tracy, *Ratzinger’s Faith*, 73.

The gift, in this sense, takes a new depth. As Damian Fedoryka states: “Benedict accords the concept of the gift a more systemic role, devoting a third chapter of *Caritas in Veritate* to what he calls the ‘logic of the gift’ with regards to its implication to fraternity.”<sup>84</sup> It is the claim of this study that the gift is a framework for interpreting reality and not just a concept to use for backing up arguments in support of certain realities. In other words, in *Caritas in Veritate*, the gift is no longer a concept that is being deployed to support an argument or human value but is an ethic that is people-centred, dependent on the transcendence, while maintaining a social vision of the person. It follows that the gift provides both an ontological understanding of human good and a narrative of self-giving to guide ethical action.

### **3.4 *Caritas in Veritate*’s In-Depth Discussion of The Logic of the Gift**

This section turns to how Benedict utilises a theological understanding of the gift to address social realities: economics, political governance, and social inequalities. Recall that the document was written in the aftermath of the greatest economic recession since the Great Depression.

For Benedict, the logic of the gift is located between the logic of obligation and contractual exchange. These three logics refer to three modes of relationship that bind a society together. The logic of obligation is a contract guided by law, while the logic of exchange underpins financial and economic transactions. The domain for the former is the state or political authority, whilst that of the latter is the market. In turn and contrast, the sphere of the logic of the gift is civil society, that is, the community, family, social, cultural, volunteering organisations, and so on. It also includes religious organisations, such as the church.

*Caritas in Veritate* contends that the logic of the gift is the ability “to give and receive, without one group making progress at the expense of the other”; it is contrary to “giving in order to acquire” or conditional gift-giving (CV, 39). Alan Kearns calls it “the logic of unconditional giving.”<sup>85</sup> It is anything unmerited and beyond purely human effort and struggles. Indeed, it is self-gift or self-sacrifice. By extension, Benedict clarifies that a gift is a grace because we do not merit but possess it. He states:

Gift by its nature goes beyond merit. Its rule is that of superabundance. It takes first place in our souls as a sign of God’s presence in us, a sign of what he expects from us. Truth – which is itself gift, in the same way as charity – is greater than we are...likewise the truth of ourselves, our personal conscience, is first of all given to us” (CV, 34. Italics added).

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<sup>84</sup> Fedoryka, “The Foundation of Rights in Popes John Paul II and Benedict XVI: From the Perspective of Human Right,” 69.

<sup>85</sup> Kearns, “Rebuilding Trust: Ireland’s CSR Plan in the light of *Caritas in Veritate*,” 851.

In this way, he aligns himself with Aquinas and the entire teaching tradition of the Church on the gift since it considers the gift as pure grace. Building on this tradition, Benedict maintains that the dynamics of the gift is an encounter with God, humans, and the environment. In the market sphere or an organisation, for example, the logic of the gift is when one buys a commodity or employs workers and treats them with love, not because of a contract or expectations of something in return but because one loves them (CV, 38 and 39).

However, according to him, this is not a perfect encounter because of human limitations such as pride and selfishness.<sup>86</sup> In other words, sin undermines such an encounter. However, Benedict argues that because the gift is grace and is beyond merit, despite limitations, humans can still give in a manner that is more than mere exchange. In this context, the gift's logic helps us understand human nature from two perspectives: transcendental and social or divine and human. For Benedict, this constitutes the truth about the human person. This explanation of the gift chimes with Christian anthropology that humans are social and possess a transcendental mark, the image of God. This image of God comes to them as a gift.<sup>87</sup>

Benedict retains this traditional view of the person to emphasise the gift as an encounter, positing that people need constant conversation or relationships with God and neighbours to sustain this encounter. This view of the person also speaks of the Catholic anthropology that underpins every moral reflection and simultaneously captures the relational explanation of the nature of God. In this way, the gift goes beyond material giving to an expression of who we are: that is, divine and human, transcendental, and social beings. It involves moral acts such as forgiveness, reaching out to and welcoming others, truth-telling, reciprocity, and a host of notions.

As an encounter, the gift does not exclude, replace, or stand apart from justice. As was noted previously, there can be no justice without it. The encyclical states:

Today, it is clear that without gratuitousness, there can be no justice in the first place. What is needed, therefore, is a market that permits the free operation, in conditions of equal opportunity, of enterprises in pursuit of different institutional ends. Alongside profit-oriented private enterprise and the various types of public enterprise, there must be room for commercial entities based on mutualist principles and pursuing social ends.” (CV, 38).

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<sup>86</sup> This is where Benedict would argue that sometimes the human person is wrongly convinced that he/she is the author of himself/herself, his/her life and society” (CV, 34); Benedict also alluded to the situation of the modern person, saying he is the arrogant person “who is only interested in dominating the world and is no longer willing to perceive the inner logic which sets a limit to our desire to dominate.” See Ratzinger, *Truth, and Tolerance: Christian Belief and World Religions*, 159.

<sup>87</sup> Earlier before Benedict, John Paul II draws on Augustine and Aquinas to speak of the human person as the image of God. See John Paul II, *Dominum et Vivificantem*, (May 1986), no 10, 38 & 45.

In other words, the logic of the gift and justice intertwine. While the encyclical upholds the idea of contract in business transactions and profit-based business, it stresses the need for the logic of the gift to operate. This elaboration suggests that the principle of gratuitousness is expected to flourish whenever socioeconomic and political activities expand since it is built into or a part of every human activity. He writes:

In addressing this key question, we must make it clear, on the one hand, that the logic of gift does not exclude justice, nor does it merely sit alongside it as a second element added from without; on the other hand, economic, social and political development, if it is to be authentically human, needs to make room for the *principle of gratuitousness* as an expression of fraternity (CV, 34).

Thus, the dynamic of the gift is not just about doing something but expressing something. Here, something could be truth-telling, love, forgiveness, reaching out to and other material assistance. Along these lines, Benedict's view of the gift has extended to non-material objects. It is not just in economic activities and financial aid that one can experience the gift. Other activities carried out in the light of God also account for gratuitousness. Amongst these are self-giving and presence.<sup>88</sup> It follows that the gift is an encounter; we discover, experience, and communicate the gift when we love and offer our presence or material objects.

Accordingly, the logic of the gift is not an entity but a process and an authentic encounter with God and other creatures. Benedict's aim here is to explore something inherently built into human relationships.

### **3.4.1 The Logic of the Gift as an Actual Human Encounter**

Benedict offers categories of encounters while discussing the logic of the gift. The threefold logic marks out a threefold division of mutually supporting spheres – the market, state, and civil society (CV, 37-39).<sup>89</sup> Each is a standard sphere for a human encounter, whether directly or indirectly.

The first two are the market and the state. As relationships of exchange and obligation, they are conditional encounters. The first is encounters through the exchange of commodities and services, and the second is encounters through duty or obligation. The economic exchange mediates the former, and obligation mediates the latter. Exchange is conditional on profit or

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<sup>88</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *God and the World: A Conversation with Peter Seewald*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 194.

<sup>89</sup> We are to note that John Paul already marked out these divisions of mutually setting of human encounters. See John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, no 32.

advantage; the obligation is conditional obedience to law and punishment. The mediating systems – exchange and obedience – of every encounter can reshape both the market and state, hiding their internal logic. For instance, the encounter of exchange can become dominated by *giving to acquire* (the logic of exchange) and encounters of duty can be dominated by giving through obligation (the logic of obligation). Equally, the mediating system can jeopardise the internal logic. For instance, giving out of fear of punishment (logic of obligation) can undermine the willingness to give, thereby undercutting the law itself. At the same time, they both serve human flourishing, providing security and prosperity. However, they are not the ends that make for human flourishing. They may be called thin encounters. Thin because it does not say much of the people involved in the encounter, except that it is based on giving to acquire and giving through duty or law.<sup>90</sup> Calling them thin does not mean that they are insignificant, as shall be outlined. They can also help foster a more substantial account of human flourishing but in a minimal manner. Benedict claims that these encounters can be authentic when serving humans flourishing or inauthentic when serving their own internal logic. The logic of the gift provides a criterion for measuring their authenticity and a means by which they can become more authentic.

The third sphere is the civil society. It is the sphere in which close human encounters are fostered and facilitated, and it can be made up of a myriad of organisations: community, culture, family, religion, civil associations, and so on. This sphere contrasts with the market and the state because the relationships involved are marked by self-giving and receiving. Indeed, the logic of the gift is an unconditional encounter. It is a self-governing encounter, serving as both a means and an end to human flourishing.

The basic assumption is that the three spheres should be in harmony or order. However, even though civil society is the natural setting for this third sphere, it can be tempered by the market and state, dominating and reducing it to a powerless entity. Benedict writes:

When both the logic of the market and the logic of the state come to an agreement that each will continue to exercise a monopoly over its respective area of influence, in the long term much is lost: solidarity in relations between citizens, participation and adherence, actions of gratuitousness, all of which stand in contrast with *giving in order to acquire* (the logic of exchange) and *giving through duty* (the logic of public obligation, imposed by State law) (CV, 39).

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<sup>90</sup> First introduced by philosopher Gilbert Ryle, and developed by anthropologist Clifford Geertz in his book *The Interpretation of Cultures* (1973). The terms have gained widespread currency in the description of human social action.

Whenever the first two spheres separate themselves from the third (civil sphere), they dominate the entire system of encounters with their own logic, which is the logic of wealth and authority or profit and law. When this happens, according to Benedict, much is lost, and human dignity is threatened. Ultimately, these two spheres no longer become a domain of genuine encounters. In short, they destroy the built principle of encounter, the principle of gratuitousness, and so colonise civil society with their newly adopted logic, which is selfish, self-motivating, self-help, power-based, or money-based logic.

Benedict sees this as a severe social problem that needs urgent attention for human well-being and social cohesion. Therefore, he insists that building a society for human flourishing and true well-being cannot come from the state and market alone but necessarily requires the sphere of civil society – one that is guided by moral principles. In his words:

Economic activity cannot solve all social problems through the simple application of *commercial logic*. This needs to be *directed towards the pursuit of the common good*, for which the political community in particular must also take responsibility. Therefore, it must be borne in mind that grave imbalances are produced when economic action, conceived merely as an engine for wealth creation, is detached from political action (CV, 36).<sup>91</sup>

He is not against the state and market or profit and exchange but invites individuals in civil society to influence the market and state with an inbuilt principle of gratuitousness. He stresses that the subsequent challenge is to inform practically the systems of market and state in a manner that conforms to the principle of the gift, which is already present in society. According to him:

The different forms of economic enterprise to which they give rise find their main point of encounter in commutative justice. Economic life undoubtedly requires contracts to regulate relations of exchange between goods of equivalent value. But it also needs just laws and forms of redistribution governed by politics, and what is more, it needs works redolent of the spirit of gift (CV, 37).

Benedict reasons that the task before every person is to “civilise the economy” and the state (CV, 38). It is a suggestion that a new orientation towards the market and state should exist. According to him:

The exclusively binary model of market-plus-State is corrosive of society, while economic forms based on solidarity, which find their natural home in civil society without being restricted to it, build up society. The market of gratuitousness does not exist, and attitudes of gratuitousness cannot be established by law. Yet both the market and politics need individuals who are open to reciprocal gifts (CV, 39).

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<sup>91</sup> Benedict uses different metaphors to describe the logic of economic exchange and its setting. These are commercial logic, economic logic, logic of the market (CV, 39), and logic of the exchange of equivalent (CV, 38).

He presented the view that the state and market no longer have the moral resources to face a severe social crisis because of the loss of trust and authenticity. The source of transformation is not found simply by creating new structures (which will be prone to the same logic) but in the close relationships and the individuals that comprise them. This reflects what was noted previously, that Benedict sees social change in personal conversion rather than solely in structural change.

Therefore, he did not blame the market and regulation for the economic recession of 2008 but individuals and institutions that managed it and succumbed to the logic of exchange in its extreme form. Benedict states: “The market can be a negative force, not because it is so by nature, but because a certain ideology can make it so” (CV, 36). For this reason, the market requires moral force beyond itself. Christensen explains this point succinctly, observing:

Benedict observes that the market cannot be viewed in abstraction; it is embedded in a wider web of relations. For that reason, the commutative justice of the market ‘cannot produce the social cohesion that it requires in order to function well. Without internal forms of solidarity and mutual trust, the market cannot completely fulfil its proper economic function’ (no. 35).<sup>92</sup>

For Benedict, the market is naturally a friend of civil society, possessing moral credentials. However, the experience of the global economic recession proved the opposite. The experience justified Benedict’s view that the primacy of economics or what he previously called ‘makability’ does not consistently deliver human flourishing because such logic, the logic of pure exchange or market, can lose the run of itself, taking over the system.

The previously mentioned, Bernanke recounts such a view while referring to the leading causes of the 2008 global recession. He writes:

Unfortunately, the no-confidence virus that had infected mortgage securities, firms exposed to mortgage securities, and firms exposed to the exposed firms had also spread to the Fed and the Treasury. We were supposed to make things better, yet things kept getting worse, and markets were increasingly sceptical that we could control the contagion.<sup>93</sup>

Bernanke and others agreed that their efforts, profit, contractual exchange, and state laws or policies failed to prevent the economic recession of 2008 from occurring. They tried to mitigate

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<sup>92</sup> Drew Christiansen, “Metaphysics and Society: A Commentary in *Caritas in Veritate*,” *Theological Studies*, 71, no. 1 (2010), 9-20.

<sup>93</sup> We have already pointed out that Bernanke, Geithner, and Paulson, in the said book, explained the root cause of the 2008 financial crisis and the later global recession. They have shown that despite the rules and regulations imposed by the state to control and mitigate the impact of the crisis and restore trust, what they referred to as the “no-confidence virus” and “fire” continued to grow. See Bernanke, Geithner and Paulson, *Firefighting: The Financial Crisis and its Lessons*, 85.

the problems in the economy by further using the logic of exchange (e.g., pumping money into the system) or utilising the logic of obligation (e.g., binging in strict regulation). Benedict insists that the status quo must change. Another logic is required if humanity must achieve its goal: flourishing through trust.

With this insight, Benedict addresses his readers in *Caritas in Veritate* that society needs to rediscover the principle of gratuitousness. It grounds and scaffolds true justice and the economic exchange that every society needs to flourish. Society must restore the lost trust that the state and economy need but cannot provide. This restoration of trust can only be done by a healthy civil society. He writes:

In order to defeat underdevelopment, action is required not only on improving exchange-based transactions and implanting public welfare structures, but above all on gradually *increasing openness, in a world context, to forms of economic activity marked by quotas of gratuitousness and communion* (CV, 39).

Here, Benedict suggests that the criteria for what is required in justice and profit-based markets must be built on an explication of an authentic encounter. Interestingly, these cannot be achieved by mere contractual exchange or logic of obligation but through encounters visibly expressed in “truth in charity”, reciprocity, hope, and other tenets of the principle of gratuitousness.

Benedict encourages members of civil society to take up the responsibility to inject the logic of the gift, the logic of encounter, into every stratum of human society, including the market and state. To quote him at length:

Today that would be more difficult, given that economic activity is no longer circumscribed within territorial limits, while the authority of governments continues to be principally local. Hence the canons of justice (logic of obligation) must be respected from the outset...Space also needs to be created within the market for economic activity carried out by subjects who freely choose to act according to principles other than those of pure profit (logic of the gift), without sacrificing the production of economic value in the process...The economy in the global era seems to privilege the former logic, that of contractual exchange, but directly or indirectly it also demonstrates its need for the other two: political logic, and the logic of the unconditional gift (CV, 37).

The critical call here is that the economy and state must be informed by and directed towards the civil setting, the domain of the logic of giving freely and gratuitously. This study submits that the logic of the gift as an authentic encounter is a charity in practice within and not alongside political and social domains. As Christiansen explains:

In *Caritas in Veritate*, by contrast, Benedict speaks of the practice of charity along ‘the institutional path...the political path...of charity, no less excellent and effective than the



kind of charity which encounters our neighbour directly' (no. 7). The Pope clearly affirms the Church's social mission as dealing with structural change.<sup>94</sup>

The task of figuring out how humans may express their inbuilt principle of gratuitousness is left open.

### **3.4.2 Expressions of the Logic of the Gift**

Benedict argues that because the logic of the gift is an encounter, it is expressed in a fraternity, reciprocity, "charity in truth," hope, reciprocity, and truth-telling (CV, 36). This section considers three tenets, namely charity in truth, reciprocity, and hope, because of their close connection with the broader and scholarly discussion on the gift.

#### **3.4.2.1 Charity in Truth**

The document's first paragraph presents "charity in truth" in a theological manner and as a foundation of Benedict's argument. It goes:

Charity in Truth...*is* the principal driving force behind the authentic development of every human person and of all humanity. Love – Caritas – is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace (CV, 1).

Again, in the opening sentence of chapter three of *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict writes: "Charity in truth places man before the astonishing experience of the gift" (CV, 34). These two quotations sum up the fundamental functions of the gift in human experience, revealing the true nature of humans (transcendent and social) and emphasising human encounters. It could be said that "charity in truth" highlights the requirements that are built into human nature: paramount among these are truth, truth-telling, trust, forgiveness, and dialogue. Benedict describes 'charity in truth' as a "value rooted in human life" to highlight its importance in social interaction and, as shall be outlined later, peacebuilding (CV, 72).

Given its importance to social interaction, *Caritas in Veritate* explains how humans can encounter the truth in five ways (CV, 1-9). Firstly, humans discover truth through personal conviction. Thomas O'Brien calls it personalistic and subjective truth.<sup>95</sup> This notion of truth seems foreign to CST, but Benedict acknowledges it.<sup>96</sup> Secondly, truth is Christological. It is discovered through encounters with Jesus Christ. Thirdly, truth is dialogical. We realise it by

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<sup>94</sup> Christiansen, "Metaphysics and Society: A Commentary in *Caritas in Veritate*," 6.

<sup>95</sup> An extended explanation of truth according to *Caritas in Veritate* can be found in Thomas O. Brien's article, titled "An Analysis of Love and Truth in *Caritas in Veritate*," *Political Theology* 14, issue 5 (2013), 581-584.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid.*, 581.

dialoguing and accepting one another's views. Here, truth takes a social perspective. This also suggests an encounter with others. Fourthly, Benedict identifies truth as a synonym for fact, calling this epistemological and metaphysical truth. In other words, we can claim to realise the truth when we have facts. Fifth and finally, ecclesial truth. The church assembles the four perspectives of truth into a single body and presents it to society. Although all these five perspectives of truth are essential to Benedict, the second and third levels of truth point out that truth is a gift and an encounter that can lead to true social interaction. The principle of Gratuitousness is based on this notion of truth (CV, 1).

Furthermore, 'charity in truth' informs us that we are a gift and should offer ourselves to others regardless of our boundaries or identities. Benedict writes:

Because it is a gift received by everyone, Charity in truth is a force that builds community, it brings all people together without imposing barriers or limits. The human community that we build by ourselves can never, purely by its own strength, be a fully fraternal community, nor can it overcome every division and become a truly universal community (CV, 34).

*Deus Caritas Est*, his inaugural encyclical, provides other examples of living out 'charity in truth' including stories from the scriptures such as Good Samaritan; saints such as Mother Teresa and Saint Marin Tours (Martin of Tours); and different ministries of hospitality (DCE, 15, 18, 23, 31 and 40). In his view, they offered immediate assistance to the less privileged without challenging structural institutions.<sup>97</sup> In other words, Benedict is optimistic that humans can and are still performing acts of giving in public life because of the inbuilt force of the logic of the gift in them. He sustains this optimism, stating: "The many economic entities that draw their origin from religious and lay initiatives demonstrate that this (the gift) is concretely possible" (CV, 37).

Even without mentioning 'charity in truth' as an expression of the logic of the gift, Benedict in *Deus Caritas Est* invites individuals to infuse civil society with charity and love since, through it, we enact justice. It states: "In addition to justice, man needs and will always need love" (DCE, 29). Bearing this idea in mind, Benedict highlighted, by deploying the proposal of the *Second Vatican Council*, how charity and love can be a force, transforming society. He asserts:

We now have at our disposal numerous means for offering humanitarian assistance to our brothers and sisters in need, not least modern system of distributing food and clothing and providing housing and care. Concern for our neighbour transcends the confines of

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<sup>97</sup> Lisa Sowle Cahil, "Caritas in Veritate: Benedict's Global Orientation," *Theological Studies* 71, no. 2 (2010), 298.

national communities and has increasingly broadened its horizon to the whole world” (DCS, 30).

### 3.4.2.2 Reciprocity

The three previously mentioned tenets – charity in truth, reciprocity and hope – do not stand independently. Important concepts such as generosity, donation or financial aid, hope, and truth-telling are expressions of reciprocity that lead to an authentic encounter. He states:

The sharing of goods and resources, from which authentic development proceeds, is not guaranteed by merely technical progress and relationships of utility, but by the potential of love that overcomes evil with good (cf. Rom 12:21), opening up the path towards reciprocity of consciences and liberties.

*Caritas in Veritate*'s reciprocity suggests that one can offer a thing or anything without envisaging reimbursement. Hence, the reason for its moral force is to drive progress and defeat evil. However, sometimes, there could be an expectation that the receiver may extend the same or a different gesture to his giver. For Benedict, this category of exchange does not affect the proper goal of reciprocity. In other words, we give to another or support others unconditionally and gratuitously when there is reimbursement or not. Reflecting on this classification of reciprocity, Stephano Zamagni reveals:

In reciprocity, by contrast, neither of these two features exists [the logic of exchange and obligation] A acts freely to help B in some way based on the expectation that B will do the same, eventually, for him or, even better, for a third person, C. In reciprocity, there is no previous agreement.<sup>98</sup>

Therefore, the reciprocal gift of *Caritas in Veritate* upholds unconditional giving and rejects manipulations (CV, 37). It expects both givers and receivers to maintain their autonomy, which is possible in every sphere of human life, including economic activity, and not only outside or after it (CV, 36).

### 3.4.2.3 Hope

According to Benedict, hope is a virtue that can reveal a gift. In *Spe Salvi* (2007) he places hope alongside faith, describing it also as a gift when he writes: “The dark door of time, of the future, has been thrown open. The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life” (SS, 2). *Caritas in Veritate* takes up this view and argues that Christian hope means accepting being sustained by our hope in God and empowered to enact God’s grace towards others. In Benedict’s words: “As we contemplate the vast amount

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<sup>98</sup> Stefano Zamagni, “Reciprocity and Fraternity,” 73.

of work to be done, we are sustained by our faith that God is present alongside those who come together in his name to work for justice” (CV, 78). In this context, the concept of hope further clarifies the nature of ‘charity in truth’ by reinforcing its characteristic of being unmerited and so as a gift (CV, 2).<sup>99</sup>

Benedict’s discussion of hope as a gift laid another ground for understanding the theological foundation of the gift. The hope that *Caritas in Veritate* speaks of is not just earthly but eternal. This hope comes from Jesus Christ. In *Spe Salvi*, Benedict categorises hope into three; “lesser,” “great,” and “the great” hope. He describes the first two as earthly hopes and the third as eschatological or eternal hope (SP, nos. 31 and 32). This category of hope is always solidified in prayer (CV, 79). It is this hope that represents an authentic encounter and is theologically coded. Benedict states:

Yet our daily efforts in pursuing our own lives and in working for the world’s future either tire us or turn into fanaticism, unless we are enlightened by the radiance of the great hope that cannot be destroyed even by small-scale failures...If we cannot hope for more than is effectively attainable at any given time, or more than is promised by political or economic authorities, our lives will soon be without hope...Only the great certitude of hope that my own life and history in general, despite all failures, are held firm (SS, 35).

The great certitude of hope is based on the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. This great hope provides what market and state spheres do not offer. As Finn puts it while reflecting on the great recession of 2008: “*Caritas in Veritate* holds out hope to all of us, hope rooted in the creative love of God and the redemptive life of Jesus Christ.”<sup>100</sup> We are not purporting that Benedict XVI prefers the former type of hope to the latter. He argues that eschatological hope does not trivialise earthly hopes. Our thesis is that hope is a gift predicated on theological hope.

Benedict linked hope with prayer in *Spe Salvi*, describing prayer as the school of hope (SS, 32). In *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict turns to the prayer in the final chapter, where he alludes to prayer as a gift: “... with their arms raised towards God in prayer ... *Caritas in Veritate*... is not produced by us, but given to us.” In his view, prayer refers to total reliance on God; it goes beyond truth-telling and conventional love to raise one’s mind and heart towards the divine in supplication (CV, 79).

Hope does not mean staying idle, waiting for something to happen or assuming all is well without carrying out human tasks. He speaks of hope as an encounter with God and others. This concept of hope necessitates acting for oneself and others to prevent a calamity, predicated

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<sup>99</sup> See Gregory R. Allison, “Faith, Hope and Love: Joseph Ratzinger on the Theological Virtues,” in *The Theology of Benedict XVI: A Protestant Appreciation*, 57.

<sup>100</sup> Daniel Finn, “Introduction,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 10.

on the belief that someone is there to accompany, even in challenging times, rather than folding hands to wait for “a manna from heaven”. To return to *Spe Salvi*, Benedict writes:

Hope in a Christian sense is always hope for others. It is an active hope in which we struggle to prevent things from moving toward the perverse end; it is an active hope also in the sense that we keep the world open to God” *while making a human effort...*the one who ‘hopes has been granted the gift of new life’ (SS, 34 italics are mine).

To present a model of his understanding, he provides the example of Saint Josephine Bakhita (SS, 3), the young slave girl who, in her freedom, dedicated her life to service and hope in God.

### **3.4.3 The Theological and Ethical Foundations of the Logic of the Gift**

Thus far, this chapter has outlined the uses and connections of the gift in *Caritas in Veritate*. This section (and the next), shall unpack this dynamic even further by grounding the gift in theological and ethical frameworks.

Benedict’s methodology, as noted, is to think through reality by way of a Christian theological discourse that emphasises important dogmatic truths, such as the Trinity, salvation, and grace. They provide the ultimate source for the above-mentioned key expressions of the gift: charity in truth, reciprocity and hope.

The key dogmas of the Trinity and Christian God and understandings of human and Christian existence are explicated as giving and receiving. For instance, in different cases in which he speaks of the Trinity, he links it to the logic of the gift. Benedict contends:

The Trinity is absolute unity insofar as the three divine Persons are pure relationality...In particular, *in the light of the revealed mystery of the Trinity*, we understand that true openness does not mean loss of individual identity but profound interpenetration. This also emerges from the common human experiences of love and truth. Just as the sacramental love of spouses unites them spiritually in ‘one flesh’ (CV, 54).

The Trinity is the ground of the necessary and intrinsic connection of love and truth. *Caritas in Veritate* is explicit that God, at creation, invited every human person to live out the life of communion and truly encounter by modelling the lifestyle of the Holy Trinity, which is relationality and reciprocity. It contends:

The reciprocal transparency among the divine persons is total and the bond between each of them is complete, since they constitute a unique and absolute unity. God desires to incorporate us into this reality of communion as well: ‘that they may be one even as we are one’ (Jn 17:22). The Church is a sign and instrument of this unity. Relationships between human beings throughout history cannot but be enriched by reference to this divine model (CV, 54).

In Benedict’s view, leaving out this lifestyle (life of the Trinity) is the result of an encounter with God, and it is enriched only by God; it is an ethical call to love.

Love, which is also charity, is fundamental to morality. *Caritas in Veritate* contends that Jesus discloses the true nature of love, revealing it to be the inbuilt logic of the gift to humanity. For instance, it states: “*Feed the hungry* (cf. Mt 25: 35, 37, 42) is an ethical imperative for the universal Church, as she responds to the teachings of her founder, the Lord Jesus, concerning solidarity and the sharing of goods” (CV, 27). In this way, learning to enact the logic of the gift towards others is a social and, therefore, ethical act. Here, the encyclical stands with the traditional teaching of the Church that Christ reveals humanity’s fundamental nature, namely love. Bearing witness to this love and the truth of human nature through encounters establishes the ethical foundation of the logic of the gift. Benedict states:

[The gift] is a force that has its origin in God, Eternal Love and Absolute Truth. Each person finds his good by adherence to God’s plan for him, in order to realize it fully: in this plan, he finds his truth, and through adherence to this truth he becomes free (cf. Jn 8:32). To defend the truth, to articulate it with humility and conviction, and to bear witness to it in life are therefore exacting and indispensable forms of charity (CV, 1).

This ethical foundation of the gift is first and foremost theological since its origin is God. It becomes ethical because every human is responsible for accepting, defending, and bearing witness to it in the public domain. As Paulinus I. Odozor writes: “Only through the appreciation of our debt to God can we grasp the ethics and economics of gratuitousness that *Caritas* advocates.”<sup>101</sup> Gratuitousness is a deeper sense of love, and love in *Caritas in Veritate* is about receiving and giving both horizontally and vertically. It is from God to humans and from humans to their fellow beings. According to Benedict:

Charity is love received and given. It is “grace” (*cháris*). Its source is the wellspring of the Father’s love for the Son, in the Holy Spirit. Love comes down to us from the son. It is creative love, through which we have our being; it is redemptive love, through which we are recreated...As the objects of God’s love, men and women become subjects of charity, they are called to make themselves instruments of grace, so as to pour forth God’s charity and to weave networks of charity (CV, 5).

Love is made real in the encounters of human relationships and facilitated by appropriate social structures. Brian Johnstone states:

Love as the primal gift, expresses itself in concrete gift giving, and this entails structures in the act of giving which must be respected if it is to be indeed a gift giving. These structures provide the basis on which we can articulate moral values and norms. For example, before I give a gift to another, I must ensure that it is mine to give. Similarly,

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<sup>101</sup> Paulinus I. Odozor, A “Theology of Gratuitousness,” *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life: An Extension and Critic of Caritas in Veritate*, 29.

when the receiver has the gift as hers; structures of justice are required for the full, social realization of the gift that must be respected.<sup>102</sup>

Domenec Mele and Michael Naughton have identified three central points about Christ's redeeming love as the foundation of the gift in *Caritas in Veritate*.<sup>103</sup> The first is that gift-giving or charity means giving to others without conditions; secondly, receiving charity from God preceded giving; and thirdly, there will be no development if the gift fails to find its root in the public arena or on a practical level. David Schindler follows suit on the second point. He observes that when we first experience our being as created, as being gifted in life, this receiving enables us to see what we are doing and having as ways of giving what we have received.<sup>104</sup>

As an encounter, the logic of the gift gives itself a moral direction because it bears within itself moral directives. While the theological foundation of the gift can be traced to grace, the Trinity, and the redemptive love of Christ, an ethical foundation is provided for the anthropological and social perspectives. In other words, the moral perspective stems from the view it is an encounter that is descriptive of the social and anthropological perspective of the human person: it is about how we enact grace and love towards others or become what Benedict calls co-givers.<sup>105</sup>

### **3.4.4 Gift as Grace and Responsibility: A Morality of Encounter**

As related in chapter two of this work, the then Joseph Ratzinger conceived of the gift as grace and responsibility. As grace, humans do not merit it, and as responsibility, it is the act of receiving and enacting whatever one receives through various encounters. While its theological foundations stem from the fact that it is grace, the social and ethical grounding of the gift is predicated on responsibility. This explanation indicates that Benedict's gift is not a mere exchange as defined by Mauss, predicated on obligation, leading to a deep ambiguity or aporia. Instead, humans enact an unmerited favour towards others without seeking a return or compensation.

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<sup>102</sup> Brian Johnston, "The Ethics of the Gift: According to Aquinas, Derrida and Marion," *Australian eJournal of Theology* 3 (2004), 15.

<sup>103</sup> Domenec Mele and Michael Naughton, "The Encyclical-Letter *Caritas in Veritate*": Ethical Challenges for Business," *Journal of Business Ethics* 100 (2011): 1-7.

<sup>104</sup> Schindler David, "Christology and the Imago Dei: Interpreting *Gaudium et Spes*," *Communio* 23, issue 1 (spring 1996), 156-158.

<sup>105</sup> The Focolare movement is an organisation that Benedict cited to emphasise human gift-giving as participation in the dynamic of the gift, which is being co-givers.

Of *Caritas in Veritate*, John A. Coleman sources the already observed connection of love and truth in grace. He states:

Love and truth are closely intertwined. Charity is love received and given; it is grace (CV, 4). A Theology of grace as God's superabundant love communicated to humans suffuses the encyclical. Grace is firmly planted in the introduction to the encyclical, is reprised in the middle section (CV, 38), and is once again appealed to in the conclusion (CV, 78).<sup>106</sup>

David Hollenbach corroborates: "The encyclical repeatedly describes charity as a gift, grace and gratuitous. There can be no doubt that Benedict's social thoughts begin from and remain deeply rooted in God's creative love and redeeming love for human beings."<sup>107</sup> This work argues that Benedict's logic of the gift is grace.

The art of receiving grace forms the essence of the logic of the gift since its origin is God. Humans become instruments of grace whenever they create a space for the gift to operate. For example, they are generous to others while considering God as the source of love, as explained by Johnstone in his reflection on Aquinas' notion of the gift. According to him: "the gift is what makes possible what might be called in our terms 'agency,' the capacity to know and love in freedom. But this capacity is participation in the personal agency of the word and divine love, hence the gift originates."<sup>108</sup> As mentioned in chapter two of this work, Benedict describes this gesture, agency, as an act of becoming co-givers or instruments of grace.<sup>109</sup> Benedict exemplified this teaching when he declared himself to be a strong supporter of organ donation.<sup>110</sup> The suggestion here is that charity towards others is enacting grace, and enacting grace within the social domain presupposes the theological perspective of the gift.

The gift then is not a dependent concept, drawing on the implications from other disciplines. At the same time, the logic of the gift can be discerned independently of the theological perspective. Recall that for Benedict, every human being can discern the gift through dialogue. His words are worth repeating:

Truth, (an expression of the gift), in fact, is logos which creates dia-logos, and hence communication and communion. Truth, by enabling men and women to let go of their subjective opinions and impressions, allows them to move cultural and historical limitations (CV, 4).

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<sup>106</sup> John A. Coleman "Development in Pope Benedict's Thinking," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 26.

<sup>107</sup> David Hollenbach, "*Caritas in Veritate*: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice," *The Journal of Catholic Social Thought*, Vol. 8, no. 1 (Winter, 2011), 172-173. Accessed on 09/01/2020 DOI: 105840/jcatsoc20118112.

<sup>108</sup> Johnstone, "The Ethics of the Gift: According to Aquinas, Derrida and Marion," 13.

<sup>109</sup> This point was emphasised in chapter two, section 2.4.

<sup>110</sup> Benedict explained to John Allen his support for such a donation if it does not devalue human dignity. See John L. Allen, *The Rise of Benedict XVI: The Inside Story of How the Pope Was Elected and What it Means for The World* (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 237



Either way, the gift not only reveals but also explains ethics. Ethics, then, is not something done after activity, such as economic entrepreneurship, nor is it an abstract code. Primarily, it is an encounter.<sup>111</sup>

This study argues that Benedict's notion of the gift in *Caritas in Veritate* is a continuation of his earlier discussion on Christian anthropology. It is the claim that the gift in *Caritas in Veritate* is a development of the gift in the *Introduction to Christianity*, 'In the Beginning...', and other theological works of Benedict. For instance, as a theologian, he discusses the gift as grace and responsibility in abstraction and without sufficient stories of people enacting the gift towards others. However, Benedict XVI situated the logic of the gift in CST and presented it as an ethical standard and virtue for public life with practical examples. This implies that he carefully built the theology and ethic of the gift over time. David Cloutier succinctly explains how Benedict did this:

Thus, the Pope's vision (*in Caritas in Veritate*) is rooted in an ontology of gift and a theology of universal solidarity. These apply not simply to persons, but all creation...such themes are not merely new to this encyclical, but reflect the emphases characteristics of Benedict's theological vision. It is a vision worked out carefully over time, based fundamentally on a vision of post-Christianity lost between presumption and despair, and a Christianity only stumblingly able to identify the ontology of the gift and the eschatology of solidarity that is needed to give the world real hope. It is these twin perils of presumption and despair that overshadow not only the economy but ethical issues.<sup>112</sup>

It was shown that the principle of gratuitousness is Benedict's theology of receiving, rooted in the contra-distinction of "Making" or "Producing."<sup>113</sup> It is a belief that combines practical knowledge with an act of trust, predicated on a foundation beyond one's reach or achievement.<sup>114</sup>

Throughout his career, he emphasises grace and responsibility as the principle of gratuitousness. On the one hand, it is grace because it is favour beyond merit. On the other hand, it is a responsibility because humans enact it in human affairs through charity. Charity, in this sense, does not relegate justice but correlates with it and transcends mere justice (CV, 6). In this perspective, charity is grace received. Benedict calls it a commitment to justice. It is a giving that does not count the cost. As Paulinus Odozor states:

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<sup>111</sup> Joseph Ratzinger, *On Conscience* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 53.

<sup>112</sup> Cloutier, "Working with the Grammar of Creation: Benedict XVI, Wendell Berry, and the Unity of the Catholic Moral Vision," in *Communion: International Catholic Review*, 613.

<sup>113</sup> See section 2.4 of this study.

<sup>114</sup> This point has been explained in the previous chapter of this study. For more information read Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 41.

In the first place, it is a call for a more intense response to the love of God that is made manifest through the stunning deed of God in Jesus Christ. It, *grace*, calls every Christian to a life of generosity that borders on the prodigality, like that of the father who gives all for nothing and asks for nothing in return.”<sup>115</sup>

The logic of the gift counteracts the idea that one group or group of persons make progress at the expense of another. It contrasts with giving to improve social status (CV, 34, and 39). It is the giving that does not seek compensation or count the cost. On this point, Tracy writes: “Contrary to the Bourgeois spirit, Ratzinger argues that the Christian is a person who does not calculate.”<sup>116</sup>

By holding a dialogue between Benedict and the broader theorists of the gift in chapter two and briefly in this section, this work argues that Benedict built on the positive sides of the gift to explain the gift, naming it the principle of gratuitousness. It is better understood as a moral framework of authentic encounters.

### **3.5 An Appraisal of Benedict’s Logic of the Gift**

*Caritas in Veritate* may be viewed as a development in two ways. Firstly, it is development as the culmination of Benedict’s own earlier work in moving from an abstract consideration of the gift to its operation in social realities, as shown in chapter two. Secondly, Benedict articulates a new approach to Catholic Social Teaching without departing from his predecessors, presenting practical examples of the gift as an authentic human encounter. In *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict presents the gift as an encounter in the public domain, ensuring that it becomes a new principle for evaluating social concerns. While there are references to gifts in the earlier catholic social tradition, this is the first time it is a strong theme.

Lisa Sowle Cahill writes that Benedict fell short of exhausting the full sources of the theology of the gift. According to her:

Beyond John’s Christology of the Word or Logos, we see in the New Testament multiple titles for Jesus Christ and plural emergent Christologies...Examples are Word or Logos, Son of Man and eschatological judge, the anointed Messiah of Israel, High Priest, adopted Son of God, Jesus as Lord, a ‘divine man’ capable of mighty works, envoy of divine wisdom, and the crucified, risen, and exalted one.<sup>117</sup>

She argues that it is not Christo-centric enough, focusing too much on the Christology of John’s Gospel.

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<sup>115</sup> Odozor, A “Theology of Gratuitousness,” 30.

<sup>116</sup> Tracy, *Ratzinger’s faith*. 76.

<sup>117</sup> Cahill, “*Caritas in Veritate: Benedict Global Reorientation*,” 302.

There are other caveats about whether Benedict's logic of the gift can penetrate the public domain. As Drew Christiansen wonders:

The single most difficult test of the persuasiveness of the encyclical lies in whether its vision of society as gift and communion can penetrate economics and commerce, fields that – as the encyclical acknowledges – had sealed themselves off from outside influences and from theology in particular.<sup>118</sup>

Wolfgang Grassl, an economist, is more optimistic in his opinion. He argues that Benedict's logic of the gift can infuse market and state settings.<sup>119</sup> Despite this clarification, opinions and debates about the encyclical's presentation of the logic of the gift continued to emerge.

Others have criticised the encyclical for different reasons: for example, it neglects issues of women's equality and violence, a concern that did not receive adequate attention in CST.<sup>120</sup> As Ryan writes: "In practice, women's and men's roles within the family have typically attached to different levels of powers and authority, often resulting in inferior social status for women."<sup>121</sup> Ryan concludes that *Caritas in Veritate* succeeded in dividing roles for men and women rather than treating socioeconomic and political opportunities. Hollenbach responds to Ryan's concern. According to him: "Charity understood as gratuitous self-gift or self-sacrifice, therefore, needs to be complemented by an understanding that sees that we are called to love our neighbours with equal regards."<sup>122</sup> Both Hollenbach and Ryan argue that Benedict should have emphasised equality in his discussion of the logic of the gift.

The adequacy and efficiency of Benedict's logic of the gift concerning practical issues of justice and governance remains a question. Hollenbach observes:

His [Benedict] affirmation of the link between charity and justice is preceded by the statement that 'charity transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving' (C in V, no. 6.). The precedence granted to charity over justice risks downplaying the work of justice to a lower spiritual plane than the love-as-gift that the encyclical strongly and repeatedly stresses<sup>123</sup>

Arguably, *Caritas in Veritate* may be understood to mean that love ultimately ends in surrendering to injustice. Hollenbach fears that Benedict's teaching on the gift could even lead

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<sup>118</sup> Christiansen, "Metaphysics and Society: A Commentary on *Caritas in Veritate*," 19.

<sup>119</sup> Wolfgang Grassl, "Ethics and Economics: Towards a New Humanistic Synthesis for Business," in *Journal of Business Ethics* 99, no. 1 (2011): 37-39.

<sup>120</sup> Meghan Clark, "How Will *Amoris Laetitia* Assist the Church's Dialogue Among Women," in *Amoris Laetitia: A New Momentum for Moral Formation and Pastoral Practice*, eds., Grand Gallicho and James F. Keenan (New York: Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2018), 96.

<sup>121</sup> Ryan "A New Shade of Green? Nature, Freedom, and Sexual Difference in *Caritas in Veritate*," 346.

<sup>122</sup> Hollenbach, "*Caritas in Veritate*: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice," *The Journal of Catholic Social Thought*, 174.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*; see also Hollenbach, "The Promise and Risk of Charity," 41.

to crisis because it can undermine the role of justice, namely mitigating evil and upholding the rule of law. He thinks what is needed in many poor African countries “is not more gift-giving, but an increase of efficiency, accountability and the rule of law.”<sup>124</sup> Without justice requirements, financial aid could result in dependency on the receiver’s part. This is a valid point, and there are debates around it.<sup>125</sup> It is argued here that Benedict upholds the canons of justice because they are based on the gift and are not separated from it. As Charles Curran would say, love transcends justice but is not abreast of it.<sup>126</sup>

Other criticisms revolve around Benedict’s considering financial aid as a concrete and authentic human encounter. These have argued that many people have overlooked the reality that charity as a gift does not always work.<sup>127</sup> William Easterly pointed out that financial aid increases dependency in developing countries.<sup>128</sup> Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator has observed that the logic of the gift, as explained by Benedict, resembles a system that has led many African governments to fall into the trap of tribalism, corruption, and other social vices.<sup>129</sup> Hollenbach intensely observes:

Aid is also seen as encouraging corruption by giving corrupt leaders the resources they need to stay in power, which leads to continuing poverty and, in turn, to further aid. Because aid puts large pots of money at the disposal of the government in power, it also increases the incentive to use violent force to keep power or to seize it if one is out of power, thus making civil war more likely.<sup>130</sup>

Furthermore, he is uncomfortable with how *Caritas in Veritate* describes charity as financial aid. According to him

Aid provided purely as a gift risks reinforcing patterns of governance that can further entrench poverty rather than helping to overcome it... An ethic based on love as equal

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<sup>124</sup> Hollenbach, “*Caritas in Veritate: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice*,” 174.

<sup>125</sup> Commentators of CST draw on *DCE* to debate whether *Caritas in Veritate* separates justice from charity. Curran captures these debates in his introduction to the book entitled *Catholic Social Teaching and Pope Benedict XVI*. However, his interpretation of *DCE* is that Benedict invites the Church and state to work for justice indirectly and directly. See Charles E. Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching and Pope Benedict* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2014), 4.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>127</sup> In the year of the publication of *Caritas in Veritate*, Dambisa Moyo, presented reasons why financial assistance sometimes fails to address social concerns. See his *Dead Aid: Why Aid Is Not Working and How There is a Better Way for Africa* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Giroux, 2009). Some influential economists who worked with the World Bank corroborate his reasoning. They argued that monetary institutions were failing in reducing poverty through financial aid policies in the 90s. Read Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization, and Its Discontents* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2002); William Easterly, *The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economists’ Adventures and Misadventures in the Tropics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2001).

<sup>128</sup> William Easterly, “The Elusive Quest for Growth: Economic Possibility for Our Time (New York: Penguin Books, 2005), 74-75; William Easterly, *The White’s Man’s Burden: Why the West Effort to Aid the Rest Have Done So Much Ill and so Little Good* (New York Penguin Books, 2006),

<sup>129</sup> Read Orobator, “*Caritas in Veritate* and Africa’s Burden of (Under)development,” 327.

<sup>130</sup> Hollenbach, “*Caritas in Veritate: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice*,” 175-176.

regard expressed in justice, therefore, rather than charity as a gift, will be needed to determine whether assistance is really benefiting those it seeks to aid.<sup>131</sup>

Dorr follows the lines of these critics differently, doubting the adequacy of the logic of the gift. He mentioned three reasons why it could prove problematic for the gift to flourish in modern society.<sup>132</sup> First, companies that embrace Benedict's gratuitousness must perform better than other companies, especially in areas where workers are poorly paid and exploited. Second, it is generally understood that the interests of workers have no connection with those of entrepreneurs; hence, it is not easy to change the status quo. Third, today's business environment makes it hard to balance the spirit of entrepreneurship and a real commitment to high social values, namely, friendship and fraternal love. Thomas Reese asserts that Benedict over-relies on personal responsibilities in his reflection of gratuitousness and is not strong enough on activism and social change.<sup>133</sup> Given that the logic of the gift emphasises primarily Christian teaching and revelation, Coleman finds a window to criticise it. He asserts:

Some of the notions grounded in theology are not unique to catholic theology or could at least also be articulated in more secular humanistic language. Thus, for example, Benedict asserts that 'the Christian revelation of the unity of the human race presupposes a metaphysical interpretation of the 'humanum' in which the relationality is an essential element' (CV, 55).<sup>134</sup>

Benedict did not explicitly respond to these critics. However, some authors responded positively to his submission. Drew Christiansen seems to respond to the criticism offered by Hollenbach. He echoes:

For anyone still tempted to think that Benedict does not favour a structural approach to social justice, the encyclical's treatment of the common good is strong evidence to the contrary. Just as charity 'directly encounters the neighbour,' so also it expresses itself through institutions and their reform in a way that is essentially 'political.'<sup>135</sup>

For Dorr, the logic of the gift can be a robust tool for development and human flourishing if someone organises workshops for entrepreneurs, workers, owners, managers, and other stakeholders. Stefano Zamagni argues that one can bring solidarity and subsidiarity, equality, and reciprocity into social system policies if humans embrace the logic of the gift.<sup>136</sup>

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<sup>131</sup> Ibid.,” 177.

<sup>132</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth: From Leo XIII to Pope Francis*, 337-338.

<sup>133</sup> Thomas Reese, "Pope Benedict on Economic Justice," *Newsweek Blog*, July 2009.

<sup>134</sup> Coleman, "Development in Pope Benedict's Thinking," 28

<sup>135</sup> Christiansen, "Metaphysics and Society: A Commentary in *Caritas in Veritate*," 13.

<sup>136</sup> Zamagni, "Recovering Welfare Policies," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 132-134.

A long comparative discussion between Benedict and his dialogue partner, Jurgen Habermas, can help us tease out some points that might be regarded as Benedict's response because the former's discussion on political matters mirrors Benedict's logic of the gift.<sup>137</sup>

Informing social systems with an ethical force was a common point in a debate between the then Cardinal Ratzinger and German public philosopher and sociologist Jurgen Habermas.<sup>138</sup> Both agreed that the law and state – and, by extension, the economy – could not provide their own grounding. This central insight is one of the bases of *Caritas in Veritate*. Indeed, there are similarities between the sociological analysis offered by the document and Habermas.

Like Benedict, Habermas adopts three divisions of spheres that broadly relate to the three logics of exchange (economics), obligation (law and authority) and gift (civil society). Habermas speaks of the *lebenswelt* (lifeworld). Broadly, it could be referred to as a culture where people are socialised and have social cohesion. Developing cultures create two systems of cooperation: capitalist production (economics) and the functioning of bureaucracy (politics). But with ever-expanding consumerisation and regulation, these end up serving the power of the few.

The crisis, as Habermas sees it, is “the colonisation of the lifeworld”<sup>60</sup> (or of civil society, as the later Benedict might say). It leads to two challenges. Firstly, it will lead to the collapse of ethical economics and politics, as both would be forced to rely more and more upon profit or authority. Second, it leaves out how to readdress the situation.

Benedict and Habermas share a similar diagnosis. Equally, they agree that the moral framework can only come outside the economy or law and in a shared commitment to the common good. Reflecting on how to modify the exploitative system, Habermas states:

Such citizens (those who control the market, the law and civil society) are expected to make use of their rights to communication and to participation, not only in what they rightly take to be their own interests but also with an orientation to the common good. This demands a more costly commitment and motivation, and these cannot simply be imposed by law.<sup>139</sup>

For Habermas, this common commitment or virtue is through participation and greater democracy to facilitate encounter and social coordination: “Political virtues, even if they are only ‘levied’ in small coins, so to speak, are essential if a democracy is to exist.”<sup>140</sup>

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<sup>137</sup> Read Jurgen Habermas & Joseph Ratzinger, *The Dialectics of Secularisation: On Reason Religion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 21-52.

<sup>138</sup> The symposium took place on Jan 22<sup>nd</sup> 2004. Read Jurgen Habermas & Joseph Ratzinger, *The Dialectics of Secularisation: On Reason Religion* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 21-52.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 30

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*

Habermas and Benedict share something in common: the criteria for what is required in justice must be based on an explication of a genuine encounter. For Habermas, it is communication; for Benedict, it is a gift.

The difference between them is that whilst Habermas counts on procedural justice based on the rule of law, Benedict relies on substantive justice because of his interest in the tradition that provides an anthropological and ethical milieu that helps explain duties and rights. Habermas seems to convey the idea of mutual interaction and the rule of law in presenting what is just for society: justice as a procedure. In this idea of justice, human rights are essential.<sup>141</sup> Benedict reasons that this interaction is almost complicated. According to him:

If the only basis of human rights is to be found in the deliberations of an assembly of citizens, those rights can be changed at any time, and so the duty to respect and pursue them fades from the common consciousness. Governments and international bodies can then lose sight of the objectivity and “inviolability” of rights (CV, 43)

That was Benedict’s doubt about making human rights the bedrock of human society despite promoting its significance. On the one hand, Benedict seems to stick to authentic human encounters more than Habermas. On the other hand, Habermas seems to argue for the pivotal importance of human encounters to human rights or the interaction between the law and the state.

Despite these differences between Habermas and Benedict, they share two significant opinions, which this study argues to prove the possibility of the effectiveness of the logic of the gift in the public sphere. Firstly, they warn the public about the logic of the market or economics (contractual exchange) and the logic of the state (obligation and imposed law). Secondly, a concern for fostering civil societies as a moral response. The study notices echoes of Habermas in Benedict’s *Caritas in Veritate*. For instance, he calls for the infusion of morality into the economy (CV, 38 & 67). More significantly, Habermas also mirrors such a view when he calls for the injection of moral values in politics. What is more, in Habermas’ recent article titled *Reflections and Hypotheses on a Further Structural Transformation of the Political*

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<sup>141</sup> Habermas asserts that “system of law can be legitimate only in a self-referential manner, that is, on the basis of legal procedures born of democratic procedures.” *Ibid.*, 27.

*Public Sphere* (2022), one can identify the voice of Benedict, in which he describes Christian values as necessary for social interaction.<sup>142</sup>

Having shared what appears to be a defence of Benedict's logic of the gift by Christiansen, Dorr, Zamagni, and Habermas, this work holds that the encyclical speaks for itself. For instance, it generally calls for an ongoing moral examination of self. The logic of the gift it presented is not only a concept but a process, a belief, and an encounter involving making technical and moral decisions. It can be a resource that can support peacebuilding efforts.

### **3.6 Conclusion**

This chapter demonstrates that Benedict's logic of the gift is an encounter based on God's grace and human responsibility, best described as the principle of gratuitousness because it emphasises God's unconditional love in Jesus Christ towards humanity. It is a responsibility since humans express it through earthly tasks such as truth-telling, unconditional love, forgiveness, financial aid, reciprocity, hope and so on. It suffices to say that the logic of the gift opens possibilities for human 'agency,' a term that is described as the ability to love and reach out to others or welcome others freely. This encounter means participation in divine love, the origin of the gift. In other words, the gift is an authentic encounter that belongs to two domains: human and the divine.

Thus, Benedict XVI's logic of the gift performs two functions: informative and performative. Informative because it reveals every person's true nature, which is metaphysical and social, and invariably moral. Performative since it builds human society and relationships through encounters. As performative, the gift involves numerous topics, such as love, trust, truth-telling, hope and reciprocity. Precisely, the performative function of the gift enhances social cohesion and interprets human reality. It does so because grace is received. Benedict began the exploration of the logic of the gift in his earlier career as a theologian and brought the discussion to his magisterial writings.

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<sup>142</sup> This article deals with topical issues like the use of social media and the danger this media poses to society. In his exploration of these issues, Habermas uses three critical terms that reflect Benedict's logic of the gift as encounters. These are inclusion, regulations, and the learning process. Significantly, he speaks about the possibility of democratic self-government when citizens can forge a collective political will by changing one another's minds in public debate. The phrase speaks largely of the gift a human encounters. Read Habermas, "Reflections and Hypotheses on a Further Structural Transformation of the Political Public Sphere," in *Theory, Culture and Society* 39, no. 4 (2022): 145 -171. However, unlike Benedict, who would always provide limits to phrases such as the ones Habermas presents, Habermas is found wanting. Read Cristina Lafont, "A Democracy, if We Can Keep It: Remarks on J Habermas: A New Structural Transformation of the Public Sphere," in *Constellations* 30, no 1 (2023), 77.



Authors criticised Benedict's notion of the gift in *Caritas in Veritate*. Although Benedict did not explicitly respond to his critics, scholars such as Christiansen, Dorr, and Zamagni, suggested a strong response. The dialogue between Benedict and Habermas was also highlighted as his response to the potential impact of the logic of the gift on society and politics. Despite the criticisms, this study argues that the principle of gratuitousness is a vital and important development in CST.

Thus, the conclusion drawn is Benedict's logic of the gift is an encounter; it is theologically grounded and can be a moral framework that offers an essential way of addressing social activities and supporting those who engage in the theme. It is a morally informed means to recognise or assess social goods. Hence, there is a need to discuss its interface with peacebuilding. The next three chapters will explore peacebuilding for the interaction with Benedict's logic of the gift.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### Peacebuilding in the Documentary Heritage of Catholic Social Teaching

#### 4.1 Introduction

The focus of this dissertation now turns to peacebuilding. Citing the conflict in Colombia and various human rights abuses committed in that society since 1964, notably guerrilla kidnapping, governmental corruption, and terrorism, Richard Scott Appleby views peacebuilding as a response to human misery.<sup>1</sup> Theodora Hawksley defines peacebuilding as “an approach to transforming conflict and creating sustainable peace that encompasses a range of practices aimed at reducing direct violence, increasing justice, and healing the wounds of conflict over a long time.”<sup>2</sup> In a similar vein, Timothy Donais writes: “Peacebuilding is, or at least should be, about building consensus among the widest possible range of stakeholders concerning what kind of peace is to be built.”<sup>3</sup>

In the early 1990s, the United Nations Secretary-General, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, proposed an agenda for peacebuilding:

The sources of conflict and war are pervasive and deep. To reach them will require our utmost effort to enhance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, to promote sustainable economic and social development for wider prosperity; to alleviate distress and to curtail the existence and use of massively destructive weapons.<sup>4</sup>

These ideas on human rights and sustainable economic and social development have gained widespread currency in the field of peacebuilding. For example, in a report issued in 2018, the

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<sup>1</sup> Robert Scott Appleby has highlighted how different scholars from diverse backgrounds have contributed to the formulation of what is now called peacebuilding. Read Appleby, “Peacebuilding and Catholicism: Affinities, Convergence, Possibilities,” in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, eds., Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Maryknoll N.Y.: Orbis Books, 2010), 3, 11-12.

<sup>2</sup> Theodora Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching* (Indiana, Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2020), 7.

<sup>3</sup> Timothy Donais, *Peacebuilding and Local Ownership: Post-Conflict Consensus-Building* (London: Taylor & Francis Group, 2012), 3, accessed March 16, 2023, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>4</sup> Boutros Boutros-Ghali, “An Agenda for Peace: Preventive Diplomacy, Peace-Making and Peace-Keeping,” *International Relations* 11, no 3 (1992): 201-218, 201, Accessed on January 21, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/MGLyRPfx>

Institute of Economics and Peace, Sydney, referred to respect for human rights, sustainable development, and freedom as peacebuilding efforts or positive peace.<sup>5</sup>

The Catholic tradition has always engaged and continues to enact peacebuilding initiatives. Vatican II states:

[Peace is] not merely the absence of war; nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of a balance of power between enemies; nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice. Peace results from that order structured into human society by its divine founder, and actualised by men as they thirst after ever greater justice (GS, 78).<sup>6</sup>

The tradition states that peacebuilding is founded on a holistic understanding of the human person and requires establishing an order based on justice and charity in human society.<sup>7</sup> Responding to violence involves creating an environment that enables human well-being and flourishing.

This chapter explores peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of Catholic Social Teaching to identify significant models of peacebuilding in the tradition. The discussion addresses the question: how does the documentary heritage of Catholic Social Teaching treat violence and peace? The chapter examines peacebuilding in the writings of selected popes, ranging from Leo XIII (1810–1903) to John Paul II (1920–2005). It deliberately avoids discussing Benedict XVI and Pope Francis’ approaches to peace, as both will be referred to in chapter Six. Three significant phases in the evolution of CST documentary heritage on

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<sup>5</sup> Institute for Economics & Peace. *Positive Peace Report 2018: Sydney*, October 2018, 3, accessed on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2019, <https://visionofhumanity.org/reports>

<sup>6</sup> See also, Paul VI, Encyclical on *Populorum Progression: On the Development of People*, no. 76. Francis, *Encyclical Letter on Laudato Si: Care for Our Common Home*, 225; *Encyclical Letter on Fratelli Tutti: Fraternity and Social Friendship*, 228. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va); The Second Vatican Council defines the common good as providing conditions that allow groups and individuals to access their fulfilment and flourishing. Read *Pastoral Constitution of the Church on the Modern World: Gaudium Et Spes*, no. 26, accessed on March 25, 2020. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va). This vision of the common good is the tradition’s approach to peacebuilding. This idea of the common good resonates with the concept of positive peace, a term that is widely referred to as undertaking the responsibility of building peace rather than a mere absence of war. See Institute for Economics and Peace. *Positive Peace Report*, Sydney 2018. Also, Christopher Hrynkow and Maria Power present positive peace as “consisting of more than merely the absence of war and other forms of direct violence.” They argue that the Catholic Church vision of peace includes positive peace. Hrynkow and Power, “Are the Popes Leaving Behind Just War and Embracing JustPeace?” *Peace Review* 31, no. 2 (2019), 239 and 242, <https://doi.org/10.1080/10402659.2019.166759>.

<sup>7</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (Dublin: Veritas, 2004), no. 494; Before the release of this document, the Catechism of the Catholic Church earlier stated: “Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of power between adversaries...Peace is the work of justice and the effect of charity.” CCC, no. 2304. Read also, The Second Vatican Council, *Pastoral Constitution, Gaudium et Spes* (1965), no 78; Paul VI is vocal that the new name for peace is development (PP, 76 & 78); John Paul II concurs, teaching that peace is not the result of military victory but providing or searching for answers to the causes of conflict. Encyclical Letter: *Centesimus Annus*, nos. 18, 51, & 52; John Paul II, *The Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace* (1971).

peacebuilding are examined:<sup>8</sup> first, the earlier popes from Leo XIII (1810-1903) to Pius XI (1857-1939); second, the later popes from John XXIII (1881-1963) to the Second Vatican Council (*Gaudium Et Spes*, 1965) and third, contemporary popes from Paul VI (1897-1978) to John Paul II (1920-2005). It analyses the tradition's vision of peacebuilding and connects it with the concept of the gift.

#### 4.2 Early Texts

In this section, two encyclicals by Popes Leo XIII and Pius XI – *Rerum Novarum* (1891) and *Quadragesima annus* (1931), respectively – provide insights into how earlier tradition addressed social unrest among Catholic members in general and between state and church are discussed. In this period, there is considerable concern about the drastic changes in culture and the rise of absolute control of civil authority. For instance, David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, write:

Excessive individualism had destroyed the rich group life of the Christian era and left the ordinary people at the mercy of the absolute state and irresponsible capitalists. Catholic leaders differed on short-term strategies, but they almost all agreed that contemporary problems could be overcome by a restoration of organic unity and direction of modern life through the reconciliation of society and culture with the church.<sup>9</sup>

The message of these two popes must be interpreted within this context.

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<sup>8</sup> The Catholic Social Teaching contrasts with Catholic Social Thought in some way. Brian Matz drives home the difference between these, writing, “This phrase ‘Catholic social teaching’ refers to a set of documents that have emerged out of the Vatican and certain regional bishops’ conferences since the late nineteenth century and is not to be confused with ‘Catholic social thought.’ He continues: “this later phrase (Catholic Social Thought) refers to the official texts *plus* the unofficial activities that take place in parishes, lay institutes, and Catholic worker movements, among other places.” See Brian Matz, *Patristics and Catholic Social Thought: Hermeneutical Models for a Dialogue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2014), 194. Although without excluding the Catholic social thought for its importance, this chapter explores Catholic Social Teaching largely. In other words, these two branches of Catholic tradition are important to this thesis. The official and unofficial activities not only engage in the work of alleviating injustice and caring for the marginalised, but they also urge the hierarchy to rethink its commitment to those concerns continually. Hence, it shall be referred to as CST within the text.

<sup>9</sup> David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage* (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2006), 9-10.

#### 4.2.1 Pope Leo XIII: *Rerum Novarum*

In 1891, Leo XIII promulgated what was regarded as the first social encyclical, addressing critical issues that led to the Industrial Revolution.<sup>10</sup> These included child labour, conditions of workers, the division between employers and workers, low wages and poverty.<sup>11</sup> Two years after the promulgation of *Rerum Novarum*, the sociologist Emile Durkheim published his seminal work, *The Division of Labour in Society*, in which he explained the conditions and situation of workers at that time.<sup>12</sup> Leo criticised communist ideology for failing to treat workers with dignity. During his papacy (1878-1903), Leo witnessed how such a regime handled private property issues and the relationships among workers and employees that negatively impacted human life and dignity (RN, 1). He expressed a desire for reconciliation and peace by ending the hostility and division between capitalists and workers, which, in his view, contradict the natural rights of human beings (RN, 15, 31 and 41).<sup>13</sup>

Leo regarded society as naturally endowed by divine order, harmony, and peace rather than violence, rancour and disorder (RN, 15). He believed these benign forces should maintain law and order in the human community. However, he saw violence and revolution, which caused him concern. In the introduction to *Rerum Novarum*, he expresses this, praying:

That the spirit of revolutionary change, which has long been disturbing the nations of the world, should have passed beyond the sphere of politics and made its influence felt in the cognate sphere of practical economics is not surprising. The elements of the conflict now raging are unmistakable, are in the vast expansion of industrial pursuits and the marvellous discoveries of science; in the changed relations between masters and

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<sup>10</sup> See Joseph Gremillion, *The Gospel of Peace and Justice: Catholic Social Teaching Since John* (New York: Orbis Books, 1975), 11; read Theodora Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020), 5 and 33. In his arrangement of the entire social encyclicals of the popes according to chronological order, Kevin E. McKenna places *Rerum Novarum* on top of the table to reiterate the hypothesis that it is the first official document of the Catholic Church. See McKenna, *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching* (Notre Dame: Ave Maria Press, 2013), 154-156. Andrew Kim, *An Introduction to Catholic Ethics Since Vatican II* (Cambridge: University Press, 2015), 119; Domenec Mele' and Michael Naughton, "The Encyclical-Letter 'Caritas in Veritate': Ethical Challenges for Business," *Journal of Business Ethics*, (2011), 1. Except otherwise, hence Leo XIII will be referred to as Leo in the text.

<sup>11</sup> Laurie Johnston, "Pacem in Terris and Catholic Peacebuilding," in *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 11, no. 1 (2014), 94-95; Thomas A. Shannon, "Rerum Novarum (Condition of Labor)," *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 149-150.

<sup>12</sup> Emile Durkheim, *The Division of Labour in Society* (New York: Free Press of Glencoe, 1964).

<sup>13</sup> The nineteenth century began and ended in hostility towards the Catholic Church. The formation of movements led to conflict with the Church in many countries. O'Brien and Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*, 12.

workmen; in the enormous fortunes of some few individuals, and in the utter poverty of the masses (RN, 1).<sup>14</sup>

From the first line of Catholic Social Teaching, Leo XIII sets the tone for the Church's response to violence. Injustice, revolutions, enforcement of communism and socialism, rough treatment of labourers, and disregard for human life and dignity continued to set the context for the writings about peacebuilding in the later tradition.

He believed that restoring natural order and unity was an effective way to deal with economic unrest and create an environment where people flourish. Therefore, his first proposition on peacebuilding is that humans did not establish the state or society, contending that these are natural institutions, and their citizens must enjoy natural rights, which they naturally possess. He stresses that these rights come from God, and leaders must respect these as instruments for restoring unity and common interest. For Leo, peace is possible when leaders consider leadership and society as natural establishments or establishments of God.

Leo XIII presents this argument about leadership and society when addressing communist governments, the wealthy class, employers, and owners of industries on the issue of private property. He states:

The right to possess private property is derived from nature, not from man; and the State has the right to control its use in the interests of the public good alone, but by no means to absorb it altogether. The State would therefore be unjust and cruel if under the name of taxation, it were to deprive the private owner of more than is fair. (RN, 47).

He stresses that failure to adhere to the demands of natural rights can result in social unrest among citizens.

#### **4.2.1.1 Authority, Violence and Social Harmony**

Leo XIII did not openly speak of interstate or intercommunity violence and peace. Rather, he alluded to them when he wrote about social harmony during the industrial period that was dominated by capitalism, creating pressure on workers and tension between them and their employers. He refers to divine authority whenever he discusses the proper exercise of authority as the source of social cohesion, arguing that it should be seen as a means for delivering co-

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<sup>14</sup> Apart from Leo XIII, many other sociologists witnessed this gruesome treatment of workers and deep poverty. Ethicists have written to remind us of the situation of those workers. John J. Gilligan shows how some workers agreed and signed up to work for a small amount, which dehumanised their dignity because they had no option. See Gilligan, "The Church and the Working Poor, in *Rerum Novarum: A Symposium Celebrating 100 Years of Catholic Social Thought*," in *Symposium Series*, ed., Ronal F. Duska Vol., 29 (Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen, 1991), 64-65.

existence rather than intimidation. For him, authority draws its strength, norms, and constitution from divine laws:

The authority of the divine law adds its sanction, forbidding us in severest terms even to covet that which is another's: 'Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife; nor his house, nor his field, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is his.' (RN, 11).

Promoting moral rights means intervening wherever there is a threat to the general good or unity. In this sense, Leo XIII aligns himself with the early teaching of the tradition of the Church, like Aquinas and Augustine, who contended that natural law and rights ground the state's legitimacy to be custodians of moral duties for human flourishing. For instance, Aquinas writes: "Human law doesn't command every virtuous action, but only those which serve the general good directly, or – by contributing to civic discipline – indirectly serve the general good of preserving peace and justice."<sup>15</sup>

Leo may be seen as appealing to everyone, especially during the Industrial Revolution, that if peace is to be achieved, natural rights must be understood as imposing moral responsibility on humans. Crucially, the right to form unions and associations was a highly ranked priority (RN, 30-35), and any attempt to act against this injunction leads to violence (RN, 6, 7 and 9). Leo XIII would argue that rights with correspondent responsibility are of central importance in society since they have the potential to deliver peace or violence, depending on how one uses it. This vision of the function of rights in society is rooted in Aquinas, who stated: "Humanly enacted law can be just and unjust."<sup>16</sup> Here, Leo connects authority and morality, arguing that the former should be just towards every citizen since nature imposes such a duty or moral responsibility on it (authority). In his view, violence occurs when authority turns against such a moral responsibility. However, despite questioning the activity of those in charge of authority for administering justice and peace, aimed at peacebuilding, he respects authority as having the capacity to generate peace on the premise that it is an establishment of a natural entity or a derivative of God.

#### **4.2.1.2 Distributive Justice and Order in Society.**

For Leo, distributive justice is a guiding principle of social cohesion. His advocacy for this form of justice amidst workers' strikes during the era of the Industrial Revolution is significant,

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<sup>15</sup> Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae: A Concise Translation*, ed., Timothy McDermott (Notre Dame: Christian Classics, 1989), 291.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 291.

as earlier mentioned. He identifies charity as the principal force behind distributive justice, seeing it as another form of justice. For instance, he describes it as Christian charity. He states:

It becomes a duty to give to the indigent out of what remains. ‘Of that which remaineth, give alms.’ (14) It is a duty, not of justice (save in extreme cases), but of Christian charity – a duty not enforced by human law. But the laws and judgments of men must yield place to the laws and judgments of Christ the true God, who in many ways urges on His followers the practice of almsgiving (RN, 22).

Almsgiving, then, is a duty of witnessing justice. It is the case of applying charity to political and social matters. He believes that this gesture contradicts capitalism’s exploitation of vulnerable members of the working class and provides an answer to the injustice of capitalists, especially firms that enjoy monopolies. His campaign for this form of justice earned him popularity. For instance, people called him “the workers’ pope” owing to his constant call for fair distribution of resources.<sup>17</sup>

While Leo XIII accepts the early Church Fathers’ observation that almsgiving is an act of justice, he calls it distributive Justice (RN, 33). For instance, after inviting people to embrace non-violence during the Industrial Revolution, Leo immediately discusses ways the Church can actively address social concerns through sharing equal opportunities and respect for human rights in the context of almsgiving (RN, 27-28). For him, it is the moral responsibility of the state to safeguard the rules of sharing or distributive justice. This form of justice is rooted in the demands of natural law, and the state must protect these demands if violence is to be averted (RN, 32).

For Leo, the goal of distributive justice is promoting unity and the common good (RN, 36). This is carried out through the promotion of equity, solidarity, and efficiency. For example, writing about what he sees as the hostile activities of socialists, he observes that they forced people not to own private property with a promise to safeguard people’s interests. However, they ended up doing the opposite, forcing working-class citizens into difficult situations (RN, no. 4 and *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, nos.2-4). The common good Leo advocated while discussing private ownership contrasts with the socialist ideology, which saw division resulting in private property ownership. He desired the end of the socialist idea of private ownership because it has no universal destiny, which is unity, the common good and the promotion of justice. For him, there can be social ties and progress when people are allowed to own property.

Leo’s proposals on the disagreement between the rich and poor, peasant and landowner, revolve around his teaching on distributive justice. Citing Aquinas, he states:

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<sup>17</sup> McKennan, *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching*, 148.



that law of justice will be violated which ordains that each man shall have his due. To cite the wise words of St. Thomas Aquinas: ‘As the part and the whole are in a certain sense identical, so that which belongs to the whole in a sense belongs to the part.’ Among the many and grave duties of rulers who would do their best for the people, the first and chief is to act with strict justice - with that justice which is called *distributive* - toward each and every class alike (RN, 33).

He considers it crucial to encourage society, particularly leaders, to do what is right –observing the rule of distributive justice as ordained by God in the natural order – for stability and human flourishing. In other words, relationships with God and humans, guided by law and reason, shape people’s way of life and enhance social ties.

#### **4.2.1.3 Peacebuilding as Unity**

It could be argued that Leo is decisive in that his teaching on unity and social order in society as ordained by God and must be promoted by the authority is sufficient to lead society towards flourishing. Almost every argument he posited ended with constituted authority. For instance, he admonishes people to rely on the constituted authority, which practically draws its strength from natural law, rather than resort to violence. He also appeals to this authority to defend the rights of less privileged members of society:

If by a strike of workers or concerted interruption of work there should be imminent danger of disturbance to the public peace; or if circumstances were such as that among the working class, the ties of family life were relaxed; if religion were found to suffer through the workers not having time and opportunity afforded them to practice its duties; (according to Leo XIII) in such cases, there can be no question but that, within certain limits, it would be right to invoke the aid and authority of the law (RN, 36,37 and 38).

Here, Leo recognises the role of the state and legitimate authorities in invoking the law to aid the less privileged while writing about stability and order in society. However, it does not envisage absolute control by the state, leading to authoritarianism. Leo judges that while the wealthy class can exert influence over the state to defend themselves from encroachments of their rights, the vulnerable lower classes cannot do so. If the authority cannot protect the vulnerable, Leo XIII maintains that people should form associations in a legitimate way rather than resorting to violence to dismantle or remove such an authority from power. For example:

Associations of every kind, and especially those of working men, are now far more common than heretofore. As regards many of these there is no need at present to inquire whence they spring, what are their objects, or what the means they imply. Now, there is a good deal of evidence in favour of the opinion that many of these societies are in the hands of secret leaders, and are managed on principles ill - according to Christianity and the public well-being; and that they do their utmost to get within their grasp the whole field of labour, and force working men either to join them or to starve. Under these circumstances, Christian working men must do one of two things: either join associations

in which their religion will be exposed to peril, or form associations among themselves and unite their forces so as to shake off courageously the yoke of so unrighteous and intolerable oppression (RN, 54).

This is a call for Christians to form societies that can transmit the message of the gospel into temporal and political order. It is also a warning against joining associations bar those that can dismantle unjust laws and systems that stand in the way of peace. Certainly, it is the view that faith and social life work hand in hand and together can bring about unity, social order, and God's reign. He admonishes people "to infuse a spirit of equity into the mutual relations of employers and employed; to keep before the eyes of both classes the precepts of duty and the laws of the Gospel" (RN, 55). His view of just social order could function as the essential ingredient in what later would be named the social justice model of peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching. In his view, the promotion of social order must begin with the sovereign state or legitimate authority. Such an authority must be attuned to the worries and concerns of the less privileged. In this way, he appeals to governments in power and leaders of various associations involved in advocacy to integrate social life with faith into temporal order.

Leo's contribution to peacebuilding may, therefore, be summarised as follows. Human society and government are formed naturally and must rely on natural law for their existence and well-being. By extension, citizens and authorities have a moral responsibility to obey natural law and establish social order. He writes:

If human society is to be healed now, in no other way can it be healed and saved by a return to Christian life and Christian institutions? When a society is perishing, the wholesome advice to give to those who would restore it is to call it to the principles from which it sprang; for the purpose and perfection of an association is to aim at and to attain that for which it is formed, and its efforts should be put in motion and inspired by the end and object which originally gave it being (RN, 27).

Three key points are evident here. Firstly, Leo expresses suspicion of socialism and advocates returning to divine law as one of his preferred strategies for achieving unity, reconciliation, and peace. Secondly, he stresses that every authority vested in government derives its powers from natural law. Thirdly, he teaches that a proper ordering of society, that is, ways of leading people towards human flourishing, must have religious and moral foundations. Consequently, he calls on the government to promote and defend any act that threatens the foundation of peacebuilding, the common good, and unity. Leo XIII laid essential foundations for peacebuilding efforts for the pontiffs after him.

#### 4.2.2 Pope Pius XI: *Quadragesimo Anno*

Pius XI carries the aspirations of Leo XIII forward in his social encyclical, *Quadragesimo Anno* (QA, 1931). During Pius' pontificate (1922-1939), the Nazi Party's anger at the injustice of the Versailles settlement increased. Pius anticipated both the rise of Adolf Hitler (1933-1945) and the Second World War (1939-1945) and wrote within that increasingly fraught context.<sup>18</sup> Motivated by a strong desire to promote the reign of Christ in a troubled world, he wrote and taught about social and economic stability. This set the stage for what would be called peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching.<sup>19</sup> Dealing with issues of private property and systemic injustice was his primary concern.

Pius XI observed that people reacted to Leo XIII's teaching, especially on private property, in diverse and, in some instances, critical ways (QA, 44).<sup>20</sup> Nevertheless, Pius insists that Leo's encyclical laid a significant foundation for law and order through a strong appeal to constituted authority and that it should lead to positive peace. He writes:

With regard to civil authority, Leo XIII, boldly breaking through the confines imposed by Liberalism, fearlessly taught that government must not be thought a mere guardian of law and of good order, but rather must put forth every effort so that 'through the entire scheme of laws and institutions . . . both public and individual well-being may develop spontaneously out of the very structure and administration of the State'(QA,25).

He, therefore, made a commitment to continue his predecessor's effort to achieve unity and peace.

##### 4.2.2.1 On Private Property

As noted, Pius XI observed disagreements and conflicts amongst Catholics on property ownership. An extended quotation from him explains these divergent views on Leo's teaching:

Venerable Brethren and Beloved Children, you know that Our Predecessor of happy memory strongly defended the right of property against the tenets of the Socialists of his time by showing that its abolition would result, not to the advantage of the working class, but to their extreme harm. Yet since there are some who calumniate the Supreme Pontiff, and the Church herself, as if she had taken and were still taking the part of the rich against the non-owning workers - certainly no accusation is more unjust than that - and since Catholics are at variance with one another concerning the true and exact

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<sup>18</sup> John P. Langan, The Christmas Messages of Pius XII (1939-1945): Catholic Social Teaching in a time of Extreme Crisis," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed., Kenneth R. Himes (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 188.

<sup>19</sup> Christine Firer Hinze, "Commentary on *Quadragesimo Anno* (After Forty Years)" in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, 154.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

mind of Leo, it has seemed best to vindicate this, that is, the Catholic teaching on this matter from calumnies and safeguard it from false interpretations (QA, 44).

Such divergent understandings of Leo's position continue to generate confusion among the Christian faithful.

Pius XI is aware of this confusion and its attendant consequences.<sup>21</sup> He made a concerted effort to advance peacebuilding by addressing such division in his explanations of the meaning of private property and its goal. He writes. "It follows from what we have termed the individual and at the same time social character of ownership, that men must consider in this matter not only their own advantage but also the common good" (QA, 49. See also, no. 35). The right to own private property is inalienable but its purpose is the promotion of general good.

Therefore, Pius explains the need for unity in the face of division on the issue of private property while also emphasising the principle of the universality of created goods to ensure that leaders and citizens understand the goal of private property.<sup>22</sup> Additionally, he invites people to create an atmosphere of unity in society. He writes:

Therefore, let all men of goodwill stand united, all who under the Shepherds of the Church wish to fight this good and peaceful battle of Christ; and under the leadership and teaching guidance of the Church let all strive according to the talent, powers, and position of each to contribute something to the Christian reconstruction of human society which Leo XIII inaugurated through his immortal Encyclical (QA, 44) *On the Condition of Workers*, seeking not themselves and their own interests, but those of Jesus Christ (QA, 147).

Here, Pius XI reiterates Leo's teaching, expressing confidence that building human unity, within society rather than nations, through a proper understanding of the meaning and purpose of private property – that is, within the context of the universal destination of goods – can potentially generate unity and peace in society. This study argues that Pius's most significant contribution to Catholic Social Teaching on peacebuilding is his clarification of Leo's pivotal submission, namely the principle of the universality of created goods. He repeatedly defends and reaffirms Leo's calls for this principle in the encyclical (QA 42, 45, 57, and 58.)

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<sup>21</sup> Donal Dorr thinks that there is a lack of clarity in Leo's proposal, and that could have caused further conflict rather than resolving it. He states: "Leo XIII was well aware that insistence by workers on their rights in the economic sphere could quickly spill over into the political area and give rise to a threat to public order." See Dorr, *Option for the Poor: A Hundred Years of Vatican Social Teaching* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1992), 25.

<sup>22</sup> The principle of the universality of created goods is a principle of the social teaching of the Church. It holds that created goods, even if legitimately earned, are meant to serve the unity of humanity. See Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of the Social Teaching of the Church*, 157.

Like Leo, Pius holds that natural law has given every individual the right to own private property, thereby observing the principle of the universal destination of created goods or unity. *The Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church* (CSDC) puts this more succinctly: “The unity of the human family has always existed because its members are human beings all equal by virtue of their natural dignity.”<sup>23</sup> Pius XI charges every authority to protect natural rights and promote the common good. It could be said that Pius XI’s emphasis on private property made an important contribution to addressing the rancour and division that stemmed from a misunderstanding about the teaching of his predecessor.

#### **4.2.2.2 Peace as Justice**

Pius XI returned to the theme of justice when discussing international relations. He recognises the potential for hatred and unequal relationships between nations and states in the post-World War One era to cause renewed warfare. The low wage income that led to the Industrial Revolution at the time of Leo persisted even at the time of Pius XI. He interprets it as an injustice that places humanity in misery. He writes:

Everyone knows that an excessive lowering of wages, or their increase beyond due measure, causes unemployment. This evil, indeed, especially as we see it prolonged and injuring so many during the years of our pontificate, has plunged workers into misery and temptations, ruined the prosperity of nations, and put in jeopardy the public order, peace, and tranquillity of the whole world (QA, 74).

Certainly, he argues that revolution, hatred, and other causes of violence are the consequences of low wages and facilitated the communist system of government. It deeply affected human well-being and placed humanity in a miserable situation with economic depression (QA, 29, 112-113).

Without rejecting other forms of justice altogether, Pius XI expresses optimism about the potential for distributive justice to reverse the status quo. He writes:

Each, therefore, must be given his own share of goods, and the distribution of created goods, which, as every discerning person knows, is labouring today under the gravest evils due to the huge disparity between the few exceedingly rich and the unnumbered propertyless, must be effectively called back to and brought into conformity with the norms of the common good, that is, social justice (QA, 58).

For him, this form of justice fits well with the norms of the common good and equality and can efficiently respond to social division. He writes: “Equality in the distribution of this world’s

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 204.

goods truly conforms to the designs of the all-wise Creator” (QA, 5). Here, justice is described as the equal distribution of created goods.

Nine years before the release of *Quadragesimo Anno*, Pius XI highlighted that the promotion of this form of justice depends on how close humans and leaders are to God. In his *Ubi Arcano Dei Consilio: On the Peace of Christ in the Kingdom of Christ* (UBDC, 1922), he stresses that returning to and trusting God guarantees distributive justice and peace. He explains:

Faithful to the ministry of peace and reconciliation which has been confided to our care by God, we strove to make known far and wide the law of justice, tempered always by charity, and to obtain merited consideration for those values and interests which, because they are spiritual, are none the less grave and important (UADC, 4).

It follows that he sustains the teaching of his predecessor that social life and faith must work together. Referring to tensions and revolution that pose imminent threats to world peace, he redirects people’s attention to God, encouraging them to accept the principle of distribution as a natural aspect of human society if they desire peace (UADC, 10, 11 & 27). In doing so, he aligns himself with Leo and St. Augustine and, more generally, the Christian tradition, which teaches that peace comes from God and that without God’s grace, all human effort is doomed.

#### **4.2.3 Conclusion**

Concisely, Leo XIII and Pius XI set the tone for what would be called peacebuilding by directly appealing to citizens to form associations and unions that speak out for peaceful movements, unity and cooperation, leading to social order.<sup>24</sup> They both appealed to the natural law approach to reality. While Leo XIII opened the discussion on the Industrial Revolution and spoke about allowing private ownership and fair wages as the way forward, Pius dedicated time to clarifying the message of Leo XIII and adopting his teaching for us amidst injustice. Despite emphasising the role of sin and morality in peacebuilding, their teaching does not sufficiently capture a strong appeal to the incarnate word, passion and resurrection of Christ. Two features of their contributions are noteworthy. The first is their dependence on the neo-scholastic natural law approach to social order. The other is a particular interest in the issue of rights to property ownership. As the CST progressed, Leo XIII and Pius XI’s invitations generated considerable

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<sup>24</sup> Misner Paul not only offers an account of Leo XIII’s responses to violence and issues leading to violence, he also demonstrates the positive role of the Church and government intervention in the market. See Paul Misner, *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War* (New York: Crossroad, 1991); Stephen Pope, “Book Review: Misner, Paul *Social Catholicism in Europe: From the Onset of Industrialization to the First World War*. New York: Crossroad, 1991. 362 pp.” *The Journal of Religion* 74, issue 1 (1994): 100; Paul Misner “Social Catholicism in Nineteenth-Century Europe: A Review of Recent Historiography,” *The Catholic Historical Review* 78, no. 4 (1992): 581-600.

debates about the theology of nature and grace.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, both were instrumental in setting the tradition's framework for peacebuilding. Their contributions significantly shaped the discussion on Catholic peacebuilding later.

### 4.3 Modern Texts

Catholic Social Teaching gained wider attention between the pontificate of John XXIII and the *Second Vatican Council* (1962-1965), a period marked by its engagement with modernity, described as “historical consciousness in the modern world.”<sup>26</sup> This event marks a significant shift in the tradition; it presents a new theological anthropology, pastoral ecclesiology, and liturgical reform to address social issues.

John XIII, in *Pacem in Terris* (1963), presented a new vision of human rights as a means to addressing peace in a nuclear age, especially during the Cold War, while *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) treats war and violence, arguing that it is not only divine action that brings about peace, but God acting in humans. It states:

Though mankind is stricken with wonder at its own discoveries and its power ... giving witness and voice to the faith of the whole people of God gathered together by Christ, this council can provide no more eloquent proof of its solidarity with, as well as its respect and love for the entire human family ... with which it is bound up, than by engaging with it in conversation about these various problems (GS, 3).

The work shall consider these two documents, highlighting how they discuss violence and human misery.<sup>27</sup>

#### 4.3.1 John XXIII: *Pacem in Terris*

John XXIII released two major social encyclicals, *Mater et Magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in Terris* (1963). Here, the focus is primarily on the latter of the two because, as its title (*peace in the land*) suggests, it directly addresses peace by imploring human rights reasoning. He

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<sup>25</sup> Drawing from Joseph Komonchak, Hollenbach explains how theologians were divided on the issue of nature and grace discussed at the Second Vatican Council. While theologians like Benedict XVI were not satisfied that emphasis on grace was absent in the second part of *Gaudium et Spes*, those who follow the Thomist's approach, like Karl Rahner, view nature as enjoying some independence, that is, not in itself evil or does not require grace for its perfection. These argue that nature possesses grace; it is not entirely evil. See Hollenbach, “*Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World),” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, 297-298.

<sup>26</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 145.

<sup>27</sup> Vatican II addressed issues beyond the Church and topics such as religious freedom in *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965). Like *Pacem in Terris*, this document emphasises human liberty, freedom, and rights.

experienced violence as a soldier and military chaplain.<sup>28</sup> International diplomacy and developments also influenced his writings on peacebuilding, notably the Cold War (1945-89) and the Cuban Missile Crisis (1962).<sup>29</sup> According to Robert Gascoigne, in 1962, the world was in a state of insecurity owing to invasions, war, and nuclear exchange and “these frightful events were backgrounds to Pope John XXIII’s encyclical *Pacem in Terris*.”<sup>30</sup> Illustrating John XXIII’s passion for peacebuilding amidst such a state of insecurity, Laurie Johnston notes:

The task of promoting world peace became particularly urgent just a few days after this when the Cuban Missile Crisis began on October 15 and brought the U.S. and Soviet Union to the brink of nuclear war. In the midst of that crisis, Pope John served as a black channel of communication and issued a timely call for peace.<sup>31</sup>

Furthermore, the assassination of the President of the United States, John F. Kennedy, in 1963 gave the document urgency.<sup>32</sup> Also relevant to the encyclical was the condemnation of racial abuse that was rampant in many African and Western countries, particularly some major cities in the U.S., by Martin Luther King Jr and others in 1956.<sup>33</sup>

*Pacem in Terris* reflected these events, mainly from the vantage point of human rights. This is a significant development in the discourse or language being utilised. It brings the traditions closer to the modern notions of human rights and modern political thought.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, it is important to state that his underlying approach concerning society, peace and violence is not far from that of Leo XIII and Pius XI.

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<sup>28</sup> Like Pius XII, John XXIII had a personal experience of wars and crises even before becoming a pope. Himes thinks that it is a possibility that their experiences influenced the way they write on the subject. Read Kenneth R. Himes, “Peacebuilding and the Catholic Social Teaching,” in *Peacebuilding Catholic Social Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, 279.

<sup>29</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 51 & 67; John Howard Yoder, *When War Is Unjust: Being Honest in Just War Thinking* (Eugene: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 2001), 84; Johnston, “*Pacem in Terris* and Catholic Peacebuilding,” *Journal of Catholic Social Thought*, 94; Christiansen, “Commentary on *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth),” in *The Modern Catholic Social Teaching, Commentaries and Interpretations*, 227.

<sup>30</sup> Robert Gascoigne, “Fifty Years After *Pacem in Terris*,” *Australasian Catholic Record* 90, no. 4 (2013), 387-389. Accessed on January 11, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/SvyxKsB3>.

<sup>31</sup> Laurie Johnston, “*Pacem in Terris* and Catholic Peacebuilding,” *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 11, no. 1 (2014), 94.

<sup>32</sup> Holland, *Pacem in Terris: Summary and Commentary for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Famous Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII on World War 1*; Michael Shortall, *Human Rights and Moral Reasoning: A Comparative Study By Way of Three Theorists and Their Respective Traditions of Inquiry: John Finnis, Ronald Dworkin and Jurgen Habermas* (Roma: Editrice Pontificia Università Gregoriana, 2009), 124; McKennan, *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching*, 154.

<sup>33</sup> Marvin L. Mich, “Commentary on *Mater et Magistra* (Christianity and Social Progress)” in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed., Kenneth R. Himes, 193.

<sup>34</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 139; Dorr, *The Option for the Poor & for the Earth*, 72.



#### 4.3.1.1 Human Rights as Peace

In particular, *Pacem in Terris* speaks of peace through the lens of human rights and human cooperation.<sup>35</sup> As noted, this is a development in the tradition that engages with the language of the modern world while remaining attuned to the neo-scholastic tradition of his predecessors.<sup>36</sup> The language of human rights developed in the previous centuries and has been influenced by liberal and republican traditions since the American and French Revolutions. Joe Holland puts this development in a historical context:

John accepted the liberal human rights tradition of the French Revolution, which until this point, the Catholic Popes had rejected because it had been grounded in the erroneous atomistic-mechanical philosophy. John, however, integrated this secular human rights tradition into the Natural Law theory of society, which (as noted earlier) the Catholic Church tradition had appropriated early on from Roman stoics.<sup>37</sup>

In a similar vein, Matthew Shadle argues: “John combines the liberal assumption [with the neo-scholastic account] ... and presented a picture of the possibilities of peace that is practically indistinguishable from that of liberals.”<sup>38</sup> However, this dissertation would argue that the anthropology of social cooperation that John inherits from neo-scholastics and CST mitigates the individualism of liberalism.

*Pacem in Terris* assumes that while unjust war is a violation of human rights, promotion and protection of those rights delivers peace.<sup>39</sup> Its opening statement on peace is:

Any well-regulated and productive association of men in society demands the acceptance of one fundamental principle: that each individual man is truly a person. His is a nature, that is, endowed with intelligence and free will. As such he has rights and duties, which together flow as a direct consequence from his nature. (PT, 9)

A peaceful society protects and respects human rights. In this, John is quite optimistic about the power of social action to address violence. Indeed, rights are a platform or agenda for social action, particularly for peace, calling on every individual to collaborate. He writes:

In his association with his fellows, therefore, there is every reason why his recognition of rights, observance of duties, and many-sided collaboration with other men, should be primarily a matter of his own personal decision. Each man should act on his own initiative, conviction, and sense of responsibility, not under the constant pressure of

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<sup>35</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 140.

<sup>36</sup> Neo-scholastic’s perspective of politics is that natural or divine law is the foundation of human society and the authority that governs such society. They also believe that religion and society are inseparable. See Shadle, *The Origin of Wars: A Catholic Perspective*, 137-138.

<sup>37</sup> Joe Holland, “*Pacem in Terris*”: *Summary & Commentary for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Famous Encyclical Letter of John XXIII On the World Peace* (Pax Romana: *Pacem in Terris* Press, 2012), 13-14.

<sup>38</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 142-143.

<sup>39</sup> John XXIII, “To Urge the World to Remove from the Path of Peace the Obstacles Put there by the Malice of Men,” in *Christmas Message*, 1960, accessed on February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2020 [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

external coercion or enticement. There is nothing human about a society that is welded together by force (PT, 34).

He insists that there must be an inclusive relationship and order among human beings for peace to prevail and that these relationships should exist in every stratum of society.

While the document was well received, concerns remain. David Hollenbach reports that over eighty-five per cent of the world's population celebrated the Universal Declaration of Human Rights occasioned by *Pacem in Terris*.<sup>40</sup> Louis McRedmond also points to the joy that the encyclical elicited, noting: "When *Pacem in Terris* appeared, it refreshed and enthused us all, or those of us at least who innocently believed that a bright dawn heralded a sunny day."<sup>41</sup> In time, Catholic Social Teaching acknowledges this challenge more clearly and urges some caution on using rights that contradict anthropology rooted in human nature and the gospel of Christ.

The strategy of John XXIII, with regard to peace, is to present the teaching in a receptive language. He not only speaks in the language of his time but also reaffirms the submission of his predecessors that human rights are intrinsic to human nature and so moral standards in political and social order. As McRedmond observes: "The encyclical repeatedly draws on the teaching of Leo XIII and Pius XII."<sup>42</sup> John XXIII is convinced that because human rights are ordained by nature, they enhance human cooperation and unity, especially peacebuilding efforts.

#### **4.3.1.2 Peacebuilding: Cooperation, Pacifism and Just War**

John XXIII's discussion of human cooperation further leads him to speak about the proper nature of the human person. He regards human beings as social animals and contends that the rights they possess are alienable, as stated in the previous page. These must be promoted and respected if human cooperation is to take root in society. Human cooperation, which he also refers to as social order, relies upon the belief that the human person is free to make choices and that rights have correspondent duties.

The discussion of human cooperation in *Pacem in Terris* is informed by John XXIII's overarching desire to explain in greater depth the role of duties in the discourse on human rights. For instance, he states: "Since men are social by nature, they are meant to live with

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<sup>40</sup> Hollenbach, "Pacem in Terris and Human Rights," *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 10, no. 1 (2013), 5-6. <https://go.exlibris.link/rfmRz7Wz>

<sup>41</sup> Louis McRedmond, "Pacem in Terris: Ten Years on," *The Furrow* 24, no. 4 (1973): 195-201. Accessed on January 11, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/SvyxKsB3>

<sup>42</sup> McRedmond, "Pacem in Terris: Ten Years on," 195.

others and work for one another's welfare. A well-ordered society requires that men recognise and observe their mutual rights and duties." (PT, 34). When bound together, rights and duties deliver interdependence and human cooperation, which he understands as social order and peaceful coexistence. Rights alone cannot deliver human cooperation without duties (in this case, respect for others). Duties in human rights discourse are based on a commitment to the principle of the common good, which significantly characterises a Catholic ethos.<sup>43</sup>

Catholic Social Teaching would further interpret human cooperation as the common good, solidarity and subsidiarity, culture of life, and the basic principles of distributive justice. This may be seen in John Paul II's description of human cooperation as solidarity and when Francis calls it a culture of encounter (EG, 1, 3 & 9; FT, 216).<sup>44</sup> The Church uses these themes – solidarity and subsidiarity, and culture of life – to demonstrate its commitment to the common good that Leo speaks of during the Industrial Revolution as an important aspect of Christian ethics in political and spiritual life.

Allied to *Pacem in Terris* are discussions on pacifism. During his days as an army chaplain, John XXIII questioned the just war theory, condemning any acts of war for peace. He writes: "Thus, in this age, which boasts of its atomic power, it no longer makes sense to maintain that war is a fit instrument with which to repair the violation of justice" (PT127). As a result, Shadle concludes that John XXIII considers just war a "foolish idea."<sup>45</sup> John fears the escalation of violence beyond the restraints of just war theory because of the Cold War arms race. Indeed, he contributed immensely to a successful negotiation that ended the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962.<sup>46</sup> He certainly does not consider war a solution to violence.

There are indications of pacifism in the framework of nonviolent and just war in *Pacem in Terris*. John XXIII observes that a law of fear driving the arms race means that "Their [those who wage war] object is not aggression, so they say – and there is no reason for disbelieving them – but to deter others from aggression" At the same time, he argues that the intention behind self-defence has always been to love (PT, 128). He goes on in the next paragraph to say that "love, not fear, must dominate the relationships between individuals and between nations"

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<sup>43</sup> Hollenbach, "Pacem in Terris and Human Rights," in *Journal of Catholic Social Thoughts*, 6.

<sup>44</sup> Owhorchukwu Ejiowhor writes of Francis' culture of encounter, saying: "Culture of encounter serves as a guide to advance human coexistence. It entails leaving one's social and religious confinement to encounter others even if those others hold different views." See Martin Owhorchukwu Ejiowhor, "Pope Francis's Culture of Encounter as a Paradigm Shift in the Magisterium's Reception of Justice in the World: Implication for the Churches Social Mission" *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 18, no. 2 (2021), 201.

<sup>45</sup> Shadle, *The Origins of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 140.

<sup>46</sup> Holland, *Pacem in Terris: Summary and Commentary for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Famous Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII on World Peace*, 1.

(PT, 129). Although he does not explicitly mention just war in such a statement, he implicitly appeals to its criteria.

Opinion is divided on whether *Pacem in Terris* paragraph 128 suggests that John XXIII is a pacifist. Some contend that he was a pacifist because, for him, there was no moral justification for war anymore. This group could be right because, as the leader of all Catholics, he is expected to encourage everyone to love. However, whether he expects everyone to be a pacifist remains a question. Others argue that he cannot be identified with any single approach to war and peace.<sup>47</sup> Brian M. Kane argues that he cannot be regarded as a pacifist.<sup>48</sup> Paul Johnson agrees with this conclusion.<sup>49</sup> However, his statements in favour of no more war encouraged Catholic pacifist movements and led to a reappraisal of the Just War Theory, which has continued to this day.<sup>50</sup>

Nigel Biggar argues that legitimate war is a loving intent to restrain and reform offenders or aggressors.<sup>51</sup> John XXIII allows people to engage in legitimate defence or war for the sake of love – which is the basis for a just war theory. At the same time, John emphasises the first place of non-violence.<sup>52</sup> This thesis argues that John XXIII’s pacifist statements – which became very influential on Catholic social action – are deeply rooted in his idea of love and negotiation. He states:

Nevertheless, we are hopeful that, by establishing contact with one another and by a policy of negotiation, nations will come to a better recognition of the natural ties that bind them together as men. We are hopeful, too, that they will come to a fairer realization of one of the cardinal duties deriving from our common nature: namely, that love, not fear, must dominate the relationships between individuals and between nations. It is principally characteristic of love that it draws men together in all sorts of ways, sincerely united in the bonds of mind and matter (PT, 29).

This study claims that John XXIII developed the CST’s response to violence, emphasising non-violence and social justice rooted in the commitment to the common good. It is a positive conception of peace that could be called active nonviolence that combines various themes rooted in his view of human rights. As Christiansen states: “For John XXIII, the

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<sup>47</sup> Jenny Teichman, *Pacifism and the Just War* (Oxford: Basil Blackman, 1986), 15; James Douglas, *The Nonviolent Cross: A Theology of Revolution and Peace* (New York: Macmillan, 1966), 86-87.

<sup>48</sup> Brian M. Kane, “John XXIII and Just Cause for Modern War,” in *New Black Friars* 81, no 936 (1999), 69.

<sup>49</sup> Paul Johnson, *Pope John XXIII* (Boston: Little Brown, 1974), 145-146.

<sup>50</sup> Garry M. Simpson, *War, Peace, and God: Rethinking the Just War Theory* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 75.

<sup>51</sup> Nigel Biggar, *In Defence of War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 11, 191 & 320.

<sup>52</sup> John XXIII invites people to the knowledge that charity should bolster every kind of justice, see his “To Urge the World to Remove from the Path of Peace the Obstacles Put There by the Malice of Men,” in *Christmas Message*, 1960, accessed on March 13, 2020, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

substance of peace was the promotion, safeguarding and defence of human rights.”<sup>53</sup> His vision of peacebuilding efforts is the human effort that promotes and protects rights. Given that he focuses largely on human effort to write on peace, Hawksley observes that John XXIII misses the opportunity to sufficiently insert the teaching of Jesus: ‘My peace I give you’ into the general discourse on Catholic teaching on peacebuilding. She states: “*Pacem in Terris* leaves Catholic Social Teaching with a strongly positive sense of the possibility of peace, but it also leaves it with the question of how the ‘peace that world cannot give’ (John 14: 27) enters the frame.”<sup>54</sup>

Joe Holland writes: “John shifted the official Catholic strategic framework to the pluralistic, post-colonial, post-ideological vision of an emerging *Global Civilisation* and of an emerging *World Church*, with the latter as the humble and loving servant of the former.”<sup>55</sup> However, Donal Dorr does not accept Holland’s claim that a radical shift is evident in *Pacem in Terris*.<sup>56</sup> Instead, he describes John XXIII’s idea of rights as “a decisive move away from the right” wing.<sup>57</sup> For this study, the development in *Pacem in Terris* is located in the advocacy for orderliness, unity, and interdependence among nations rooted in the notion of human rights based on natural law. There is also an emphasis on pacifism, as opposed to passivism. Overall, John XXIII’s style of writing about peacebuilding suggests that human cooperation and techniques guided by human rights are sufficient for peacebuilding. This approach to peace, which Leo XIII and Pius XI wrote on, would find its way into the Second Vatican Council document (1962-1965) and World Day of Peace messages (1968-).

#### **4.3.2 Vatican II: *Gaudium et Spes***

According to Shadle, “John XXIII was clear that the (Vatican) council’s purpose was to present the perennial teachings of the Church in a way that the modern person could understand.”<sup>58</sup> The documents covered a wide range of topics from nature and grace, the historically conscious approach to theology, and liturgical reform to practical matters of war and violence. Other matters that affect human existence in the modern world are also discussed in the document.

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<sup>53</sup> Christiansen, “Catholic Peacemaking, 1991-2005: The Legacy of John Paul II,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (2005), 22.

<sup>54</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 56.

<sup>55</sup> Holland, *Pacem in Terris: Summary and Commentary on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Famous Encyclical Letter of Pope John XXIII on World Peace*, 56.

<sup>56</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth*, 100.

<sup>57</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>58</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 145.

The Council produced four documents that relate to peace: *Nostra Aetate* (1965) concerns dialogue with other faith traditions; *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965) turns to the question of religious freedom; *Ad gentes* (1965) concentrates on the missionary activity of the church; and finally, *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) speaks to the church's engagement with the modern world (1965). This study focuses on the fourth because it is most explicit about the threat of violence and war.

*Gaudium et Spes* advances the tradition of CST by rearticulating anthropology in a new key. While it remains within the tradition before it, *Gaudium et Spes* proposes a new articulation of the basis of social analysis of the human person. It is worth quoting in length:

According to the almost unanimous opinion of believers and unbelievers alike, all things on earth should be related to man as their centre and crown. But what is man? About himself, he has expressed and continues to express many divergent and even contradictory opinions. In these, he often exalts himself as the absolute measure of all things or debases himself to the point of despair. The result is doubt and anxiety. The Church certainly understands these problems. Endowed with light from God, she can offer solutions to them, so that man's true situation can be portrayed and his defects explained, while at the same time, his dignity and destiny are justly acknowledged. (GS, 12)

The basis of this anthropology is a reappraisal of the connection between nature and grace, which was unpacked in a previous chapter.<sup>59</sup> The document utilises a vision of the human person that coheres with the church's understanding of Jesus Christ as the criterion for evaluating the challenges of modernity. It states: "Only in the mystery of the incarnate word does the mystery of man take on light" (GS, 22).

Among the many challenges, the document names the adverse effects of World Wars One and Two, the development of the atomic bomb, and the construction of the Berlin Wall, which led to an escalation of severe tensions during the Cold War, combined with guerrilla warfare, the prospect of terrorism, multiple revolutions, and war deterrence (GS, 79 & 81) formed the context in which *Gaudium et Spes* addressed violence.<sup>60</sup> Mindful of these concerns, the council fathers maintained that society needed to restore human order. The document provides a clear vision of the Catholic notion of peace, that is, peace as well-being and human flourishing (GS 78).<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>59</sup> See Chapter 2, Section 2.2.2.

<sup>60</sup> Hollenbach, "*Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World)," *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, 67.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 147.

The document's treatment of nature and grace impacts its consideration of war and peace. *Gaudium et Spes* can address many social problems, including peacebuilding efforts because it can understand human effort as a divine gift and explicitly speaks of looking at war and peace in "an entirely new way" (GS, 80). As with John XIII in *Pacem in Terris*, peace is understood as a "divine gift and human effort."<sup>62</sup> And also, as with John XXIII, they assumed that the protection of people's fundamental rights is key.

The document is divided into two parts: part two includes in-depth discussions on peacebuilding (Part Two, Chapter Five). The first part traces the root causes of violence, followed by its response towards peace.<sup>63</sup>

#### 4.3.2.1 Peacebuilding in a Modern World

*Gaudium et Spes* adopts the definition of peace laid down by the earlier tradition, stating:

Peace is not merely the absence of war, nor can it be reduced solely to the maintenance of power between enemies, nor is it brought about by dictatorship. Instead, it is rightly and appropriately called an enterprise of justice. Peace results from that order structured into human society by its divine founder, and actualized by men as they thirst after ever greater justice...peace on earth cannot be obtained unless personal well-being is safeguarded and men freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their inner spirits and their talents. A firm determination to respect other men and people and their dignity, as well as the studied practice of brotherhood, is absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace (GS, 78).

This notion of peace suggests the establishment of justice or the pursuit of the common good and the restoration of the human order or human family. As already noted, this view of peace echoes that of John XXIII. One can identify specific triggers of violence from such a definition of peacebuilding. Violating human rights, invasion, and aggression, together with discord and crisis of confidence in authority, are the leading causes of war in modern society. Another is envy, which destroys the practice of brotherhood. The path to peace identified in *Gaudium et Spes* is human cooperation through well-organised international bodies and a new attitude towards life. Shadle observes: "The council fathers also point out that peace is not only a matter of institutions but also of personal attitudes."<sup>64</sup>

The explanation reprises the idea that development is peace. The document's engagement with the modern world opens doors for the employment of other disciplines in the discussion. This warrants this study to utilise theories and theorists of peace in other fields. To give an

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<sup>62</sup> Johnston, "Pacem in Terris and Catholic Peacebuilding," *Journal of Catholic Social Thought*, 94.

<sup>63</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & and for the Earth*, 117.

<sup>64</sup> Shadle, *The Origins of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 152.

example for now, which will be detailed later, Martha Nussbaum offers a theory of capability to explain how development can deliver peace by aligning herself with Amartya Sen, whom this study will discuss later.<sup>65</sup> She argues that capabilities are central to life with dignity and supportive of all social justice and human good. Accordingly, she lists ten capabilities that influence human development.

*Gaudium et Spes* argues that a flourishing society lies in human cooperation. It speaks of human rights, the common good, peacebuilding and other principles of social life through gospel proclamation (GS, 41). Drawing again on neo-scholastics' central idea that the human person is a social being, which was prominent in John XXIII's discussion on peace, it teaches that humans can deliver a flourishing society when cooperating with one another.<sup>66</sup> Echoing this view of *Gaudium et Spes*, Theodore R. Weber remarks: "Cooperation also is both a genuine possibility and a fact in international relationships, and its prospects should be exploited."<sup>67</sup> On this account, he encouraged churches, not just the Catholic Church, to make peaceful arrangements, including self-defence, with political powers to respond to violence owing to his conviction that "powers will act like worldly powers until the Day of Divine Judgement."<sup>68</sup> It is the case that the document speaks of the criteria of just war, which is legitimate authority.

Given the pressing dangers of terrorism before and during the council, *Gaudium et Spes* delved into the Just War Theory for this reason:

Contemplating this melancholy state of humanity, the council wishes, above all things else, to recall the permanent binding force of universal natural law and its all-embracing principles. Man's conscience itself gives ever more emphatic voice to these principles. Therefore, actions which deliberately conflict with these same principles, as well as orders commanding such actions are criminal, and blind obedience cannot excuse those who yield to them. The most infamous among these are actions designed for the methodical extermination of an entire people, nation, or ethnic minority. Such actions must be vehemently condemned as horrendous crimes. The courage of those who fearlessly and openly resist those who issue such commands merits supreme commendation (GS, 79).

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<sup>65</sup> The concept of capability comes from Sen, referring to human life that concentrates on the opportunity and ability to lead the life one desires or values freely. See Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999), 18; *Ibid.*, 15. Nussbaum follows his notion of capability, but she created ten capabilities, unlike him. They are life, bodily health, bodily integrity, sense of imagination and thought emotions, practical reason, affiliation or solidarity, other species, living in relation to others, including animals and plants, play and control over one's environment. For Martha C. Nussbaum, these capabilities are instruments of social justice. See Nussbaum, *Creating Capabilities: The Human Development Approach* (Harvard University Press, 2011).

<sup>66</sup> Shadle, *The Origins of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 145.

<sup>67</sup> Theodore Weber, "Morality and National Power," *Review of Politics* 26, issue 1 (1964), 43, accessed on January 26, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/NY06JZqk>; See also his *War, Peace, and Reconciliation: A Theological Enquiry* (Eugene, OR: Cascade, 2015).

<sup>68</sup> Weber, "Morality and National Power," *Review of Politics*, 44.



The document not only encourages self-defence, it promises rewards for those who accept it and condemns the actions of those who reject it. Passivism does not contribute to peacebuilding efforts. It is certainly the case that the council fathers lend support to the discussion about legitimate self-defence when faced with the risk of war and violence (GS, 79).

As in the case of *Pacem in Terris*, *Gaudium et Spes* relies on human cooperation and limited self-defence rather than war. It states: “The arms race is an utterly treacherous trap for humanity, and one which ensnares the poor to an intolerable degree” (GS, 81). It presents non-violent pacifism as its resource for establishing peace but alludes to the criteria of just war, particularly legitimate authority and just cause.

It goes so far as to say those who reject violence in a desire to find a way of protecting the unity and order in society ought to be protected: “Moreover, it seems right that laws make humane provisions for the case of those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms, provided, however, that they agree to serve the human community in some other way” (GS, 79).

Interestingly, *Gaudium et Spes* does not pay much attention to human rights. Donal Dorr assumes this may have been because John XXIII had already treated the subject extensively.<sup>69</sup> It does, however, consider the rights of particular groups, such as ethnic minorities and less privileged members of society, including women, by discussing how society should respect their inalienable rights (GS, 26). The document affirms women’s rights from the point of view of human dignity, inviting them to work within and beyond the contexts of cultural and family life (GS, 60). Rights remained within the neo-scholastic framework of the previous tradition.

Furthermore, *Gaudium et Spes* recognise the need to be with and accompany people if society is to achieve genuine human cooperation amidst terrorism and poverty. It states: “Therefore, to encourage and stimulate cooperation among men, the Church must be present amidst the community of nations both through her official channels and through the full and sincere collaboration of all Christians” (GS, 89). This represents the approach of ‘pastoral accompaniment’, which has always been part of the tradition and to which the thesis shall return. The term was initially coined by Hector Fabio Henao Gaviria, director of social ministry

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<sup>69</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor and for the Earth*, 125.

at Caritas Colombia.<sup>70</sup> It is the strategy that places strong emphasis on being with and encouraging those suffering the pain of terrorism, economic inequality, poverty, and other forms of injustice.

### 4.3.3 Conclusion

Like *Pacem in Terris*, *Gaudium et Spes* requires listening, dialogue, cooperation, collaboration, and commitment to unity and the common good. While both documents acknowledge individual responsibility, they emphasise the role of international institutions and assert that these bodies both shape and speak of basic human needs. They share the same optimism, an approach to peace “that could be understood by modern persons.”<sup>71</sup> John XXIII argues that people understand the meaning of human cooperation and justice when society is formed by rights and duties, which *Gaudium et Spes* extend.

Both documents reveal the responsibilities of those in charge of institutions. These include staying close to, encouraging, and listening to individuals and other small bodies that make up institutions if peacebuilding efforts must take root. The documents’ appeal for peace suggests a demand for action from rich and powerful countries and individuals. To that effect, unlike the early texts, these documents offer an explicit discussion of peacebuilding.

## 4.4 Contemporary Texts

The contemporary period’s approach to war and violence takes the form of social activism and pastoral accompaniment. Paul VI started the move by focusing his teaching on the role of the Church to actively address poverty and other social problems and, by so doing, violence. *Populorum Progressio* (1967) was a direct and personal response against poverty and underdevelopment. John Paul II continued the approach. As O’Brien and Shannon wrote: “These themes continued into the papacy of John Paul II. He has shown much concern and compassion for the needs of the poor, has spoken eloquently against war and arms race, and

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<sup>70</sup> For Gaviria, accompaniment is “walking humbly with those who suffer, especially the displaced population, among other initiatives, are part of the peacebuilding proposal, which should include the population in the process of seeking peace and reconciliation.” He continues: “listening to communities, not just occasionally but as a permanent task.” This definition of accompaniment suggests a commitment to walk, listen and suffer with those suffering. See Hector Fabio Henao Gaviria, “Lessons Learned in Peacebuilding: Reflection from the Perspective of Social Ministry/Caritas,” *Fourth Annual International Conference of the Catholic Peacebuilding Network Conference* (Bogota: Colombia, July 24-29, 2007), 12, Pdf, accessed on January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2023, [https://cpn.nd.edu/assets/243414/2008\\_hector\\_fabio\\_henao\\_lessons\\_learned\\_in\\_peacebuilding\\_in\\_colombiapdf](https://cpn.nd.edu/assets/243414/2008_hector_fabio_henao_lessons_learned_in_peacebuilding_in_colombiapdf) Drawing on Gaviria’s view of accompaniment, Hawksley submits that the term “means an active commitment to identifying with those suffering the effect of conflict.” See also Hawksley, *Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching*, 84.

<sup>71</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 145.

has addressed significant issues of international economic relations.”<sup>72</sup> Regional bishops, such as the South American and the United States Bishops’ Conference and the African bishops’ Synod of 2009, took up this approach.

#### **4.4.1 Paul VI: *Populorum Progressio***

As evidenced by his choice of name, Paul VI was keen to reach out to the world as an apostle of Christ in an effort to deal with war and violence.<sup>73</sup> As presented by the previous tradition, the discussion of peace offered a template in which he could situate his teaching. Published in 1967, *Populorum Progressio* was written after a personal visit to “Palestine and India, gaining first-hand knowledge of the difficulties that these age-old civilizations must face in their struggle for further development” (PP, 4). It reaffirmed the new appreciation among activists that development and human needs need to be addressed because it enhances social cohesion and peace. In the opening paragraph of the document, Paul VI writes:

The progressive development of people is an object of deep interest and concern to the Church. This is particularly true in the case of those people who are trying to escape the ravages of hunger, poverty, endemic disease and ignorance; of those who are seeking a larger share in the benefits of civilization and a more active improvement of their human qualities; of those who are consciously striving for fuller growth (PP, 1).

This statement signals his intent for the universal Church and for the world, placing the church alongside the ‘development of people’ and, therefore, the struggle for peace (PP, 76). Of the fifty-two times he mentions development in *Populorum Progressio*, he links it with peace five times.

Paul’s discussion of peace further develops the concept of development presented in *Gaudium et Spes*, which accepted the idea of an economic development model without paying adequate attention to other factors involved. As Donal Dorr observes: “One great danger about development in *Gaudium et Spes* is that of assuming, consciously and unconsciously, that economy is the solid core of any authentic human development.”<sup>74</sup> Here, Paul VI identified an opportunity to develop the tradition’s response to violence through his vision of development.

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<sup>72</sup> O’Brien and Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*, 163.

<sup>73</sup> McKenna, *A Concise Guide to Catholic Social Teaching*, 150.

<sup>74</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth*, 135 (Italics mine).

#### 4.4.1.1 Development and Peace

From *Rerum Novarum* to *Gaudium et Spes*, economic justice – rather than just charity alone – is a key component of addressing issues of social violence. Paul VI deepens this insight. He writes:

Extreme disparity between nations in economic, social and educational levels provokes jealousy and discord, often putting peace in jeopardy. As we told the Council Fathers on our return from the United Nations: ‘we have to devote our attention to the situation of those nations still striving to advance. What we mean, to put it in clearer words is that our charity toward the poor, of whom there are countless numbers in the world, has to become more solicitous, more effective, more generous.’ (76).

Paul’s idea of development is broader than simply nations striving to grow economically. He articulated the aspirations of people, especially those living in misery, as being: ‘to seek to do more, know more and have more in order to be more’ (PP, 6). It is then much more than economic growth: ‘In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every person and of the whole person.’ (PP, 14). Paul is following through on the theological anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes*.

In considering development in that context, he appears convinced that humans can build peace through a well-ordered society. This approach to peace is not new to the tradition. However, the new element is his deep understanding of integral development, a discussion that brings a myriad of issues together, including education, colonialism, politics, charity, and socio-economic inequality.

The central teaching in this encyclical is the call for action that promotes human flourishing. Hence, Paul argues that a society that refuses to foster unity and solidarity and an integral (or Christian) humanism invites war and violence. Paul draws out the central causes of violence and proposes ways of handling them. He states:

There are other obstacles to the creation of a more just social order and to the development of world solidarity: nationalism and racism. It is quite natural that nations recently arrived at political independence should be quite jealous of their new-found but fragile unity and make every effort to preserve it. It is also quite natural for nations with a long-standing cultural tradition to be proud of their traditional heritage. But this commendable attitude should be further ennobled by love, a love for the whole family of man. Haughty pride in one’s own nation disunites nations and poses obstacles to their true welfare (PP, 62).

Witnessing these corrosive factors at work, especially in Africa, Paul declared that “the world is sick” (PP, 66). Against the evil of racism, he invites different cultures, especially black nations to be proud of their cultures and traditions.

This idea of development as peace finds further expression in his consideration of *Rerum Novarum*, *Mater et Magistra* (MM), and *Pacem in Terris*. He proposes guidelines and instructions on solidarity, writing: “We must repeat that the superfluous goods of wealthier nations ought to be placed at the disposal of poorer nations” (PP, 49). In this context, he interprets Leo XIII’s teaching in *Rerum Novarum* as a significant effort to achieve development that serves peace (PP, 59). Thus, Paul’s holistic account of development consists of multiple topics and values based on a wide-ranging anthropology and robust Christian humanism. He does not separate development from “humanness” (PP, 14). As Allan Figueroa Deck puts it: “[Paul’s development] is a question of growing in humanity.”<sup>75</sup> It is about becoming more person, that is, social and transcendent. This methodology allows him to think about the practicalities of human flourishing within the context of teaching about God.

Paul VI strove to ensure that one could apply his message about development and peace to practical issues. He states: “A warning must be kept in mind. Peace cannot be based on a false rhetoric of words.”<sup>76</sup> After its (*Populorum Progressio*) publication, he demonstrated “his concern for the developing world by his unprecedented travels to countries such as India, Uganda, and Columbia.”<sup>77</sup> While in those places, he listened to and encouraged victims of war and poverty. He encourages professional organisations, nations, and cultural institutions to support people in need, primarily through dialogue (PP, 38). He is very aware that Western culture, the culture of colonial masters, affected emerging countries and made them poorer (PP, 7, 26 & 57). At the same time, he calls on them to make continued positive contributions to their host nations.

Given that development is Paul’s mode of writing and speaking about peace, he ranks the principle of the universal destination of goods above individual ownership rights. Commentators like Figueroa Deck interpret this principle as a “preferential option for the poor,” later articulated and affirmed at the *Latin American Conference at Medellin* in 1968.<sup>78</sup> Two considerations inform his preference for that principle. The first is the prevalence of global poverty, economic inequality, human rights abuse, and injustice he witnessed, especially in Uganda and other African countries (PP, 31 & 61).<sup>79</sup> The second is the belief that unity, through

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<sup>75</sup> Figueroa Deck, “*Populorum Progressio* (On the Development of Peoples)” in *The Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, 309.

<sup>76</sup> Paul VI, “For the Observance of a Day of Peace,” *Message of his Holiness*, 1968.

<sup>77</sup> Shadle, *The Origins of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 153.

<sup>78</sup> Deck, “Commentary on *Populorum Progressio*,” in *The Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations* 298.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*; Paul VI, *Populorum Progressio*, nos. 61-70

the principle of the common good, enhances development and peace (PP, 23). In short, from one point of view, Paul VI assumes that the lack of international collaboration between people leads to poverty, under-development, illiteracy, and war. From another point of view, development is peace. These aspects continue to inform later messages on peace and violence.

#### 4.4.1.2 Addressing Conflict

In 1965, Paul VI addressed the General Assembly of the United Nations on the topic of war. He cited the Vietnam War (1955-1975), tyrannical regimes and human rights abuse in developing countries, exclaiming: “Never again war, never again war! It is Peace, Peace that has to guide the destiny of all Mankind.”<sup>80</sup> Prior to the publication of *Populorum Progressio*, he announced the first day of January as the World Day of Peace, a tradition continued by his successors.<sup>81</sup>

While he strongly and emphatically exclaimed, ‘No War!’ he was also realistic about the defence of peace, which may require courage and self-sacrifice. In Paul’s first message for peace – and so the first of this tradition of messages – he states:

Accordingly, in conclusion, it is to be hoped that the exaltation of the ideal of Peace may not favour the cowardice of those who fear it may be their duty to give their life for the service of their own country and of their own brothers, when these are engaged in the defence of justice and liberty, and who seek only a flight from their responsibility, from the risks that are necessarily involved in the accomplishment of great duties and generous exploits. Peace is not pacifism; it does not mask a base and slothful concept of life, but it proclaims the highest and most universal values of life: truth, justice, freedom, and love.<sup>82</sup>

What one can see in him is a struggle between just war and non-violence. On the one hand, there is no commitment to pacifism, and on the other hand, there is a condemnation of a passive acceptance of war. Paul could be described as embracing a particular model of peace depending on the situation of the people. For instance, he writes:

Everyone knows, however, that revolutionary uprisings—except where there is manifest, longstanding tyranny which would do great damage to fundamental personal rights and dangerous harm to the common good of the country—engender new injustices, introduce new inequities and bring new disasters. The evil situation that exists, and it surely is evil, may not be dealt with in such a way that an even worse situation results... We want to be clearly understood on this point: The present state of affairs must be confronted boldly, and its concomitant injustices must be challenged and overcome. Continuing development calls for bold innovations that will work on profound changes. (PP, 31, 32).

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<sup>80</sup> Paul VI, “Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization,” *Visit of His Holiness to the United Nations* (October 1965). Accessed on March 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2021. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>81</sup> Paul VI was the first pontiff to declare the First of January World Day of Peace officially. See Paul VI, “For the Observance of a Day of Peace,” *Message of his Holiness*, 1968, accessed January 14, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>82</sup> Paul VI, “For the Observance of a Day of Peace,” *Message of his Holiness*, 1968.

Although he invited people in general and the United Nations' army specifically to denounce war and violence, he taught that people should make tough and bold decisions in confronting evil and so condemns passivity towards violence.

Mindful of these considerations and in an attempt to remain committed to non-violence, Paul sets down principles that, in his estimation, can achieve peace. These are the common good, unity, and participatory government. He was convinced that this form of government is achievable through the promotion of human rights, distributive justice, unity, independence, Christian charity, and democratic government (PP, 67). He interpreted these rules in light of international cooperation (PP, 34 & 78). Like his predecessors, Paul was optimistic that human institutions are designed to build and sustain practical peace.

He condemns passivism, which we can distinguish from pacifism, calling it cowardice.<sup>83</sup>

He maintains:

So long as man remains the weak, changeable, and even wicked being that he so often shows himself to be, defensive arms will, alas, be necessary. But your courage and good qualities urge you on to a study of means that can guarantee the security of international life without any recourse to arms.<sup>84</sup>

His model of peacebuilding could be called an 'active nonviolence or pacifism that allows for legitimate self-defence'. It calls for people to be vigilant about circumstances around them, studying and ensuring that the security of life and property is guaranteed. In other words, it is the promotion of Christian values and humanism as a way of securing life, that is, "the highest and most universal values of life were truth, justice, freedom and love" wherever he speaks of peacebuilding.<sup>85</sup>

To demonstrate that he is not on the side of violence, Paul condemns autocratic and military government, which he witnessed in Uganda, Nigeria, and Latin America, and upholds democratic government because he assumes that the latter form of government protects human rights and promotes, human values, development, and peace faster than the former. He calls for and supports human power that follows a democratic process. In this way, he embraced the understanding of peace and promoted *Pacem in Terris* and part two of *Gaudium et Spes*.

He continues a theme that John XXIII first articulated by calling for a governance system to help international cooperation and justice. He asks: "Who can fail to see the need

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<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Paul VI, "Address to the General Assembly of the United Nations Organization," *Visit of his Holiness to the United Nations* (October 1965).

<sup>85</sup> Paul VI, "For the Observance of a Day of Peace," *Message of his Holiness*, 1968.

and importance of those gradually coming to the establishment of a world authority capable of taking effective action on the juridical and political planes?" (PP, 78). It continued into the work of Pope Benedict and *Caritas in Veritate* (CV, 57).

Paul's grave concern with poverty and people on the margins of society attracted opposition. Michael Novak outlines the criticisms of Paul's open condemnation of capitalism, observing that while emerging countries celebrated *Populorum Progressio*, capitalists did not.<sup>86</sup> Novak reasons that Paul's view could be regarded as inciting the poor against the wealthy or economists. Dorr highlights "that in certain extreme situations, a revolution might be justified."<sup>87</sup> In different ways, both authors raise an ambiguity – while arguing for peace, the criticism of capitalism may actually lead to further violence, undermining the peacebuilding he desires.

The reading of Paul in this thesis suggests a different view: Paul VI passionately emphasises human interdependence and cooperation in his discussion on peacebuilding. Even though his vision of peace does not sufficiently speak of eschatological hope, his call for human participation and practical advocacy for peace is evident.<sup>88</sup> This thesis argues that Paul aspires to end conflict and violence by linking socioeconomic issues with peace, especially in Africa and developing countries. These regions and other regions of the world excitedly received his message and inspired considerable efforts to implement it.

In response to Vatican II and Paul VI's proposals in *Populorum Progressio* and other reflections on peacebuilding, multiple initiatives, theologies, and practical actions emerged in different regions worldwide. These included the Medellin conference in Latin America (1968), pastoral letters from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), and the Second African Synod of Bishops in Rome (2009). Attention will turn to the contributions of these three major conferences.

#### **4.4.2 The Medellin Conference**

In 1968, the Latin American bishops released the Medellin documents, which sought to apply the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes* and *Populorum Progressio* on

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<sup>86</sup> Michael Novak, *The Development of Catholic Social Thought* (New York: Harper and Row, 1984), 135-140.

<sup>87</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth*, 146.

<sup>88</sup> Cahill presented hope as an essential subject in the theology of peace, describing it as "Practical actions, steps that are taken to change situations of difficulty or despair- steps that are taken together, bear up those who lack strength and form a cooperate identity around a vision of the future in which all can share." It appears that Paul's vision of peacebuilding lacks an explanation of eschatological hope. See Cahill, "A Theology of Peacebuilding," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, 325.



poverty and inequality, so peace and violence to the Latin Americans' situation.<sup>89</sup> In the Medellin documents, they present the unjust situation of their people to the world from a moral perspective, describing their lives as "realities that constitute [a] sinful situation."<sup>90</sup> These stemmed from individual and structural injustice, including other evil activities that disrupt wellbeing. In this sense, the bishops viewed injustice as a criminal act and a sin.<sup>91</sup> They state: "We cannot ignore the phenomenon of this almost universal frustration of legitimate aspiration which creates the climate of collective anguish in which we are already living."<sup>92</sup> In this way, the Medellin document conveys a clear message to a global society that it would be unjust if the bishops of Latin America refused to come together and speak out for the voiceless peacefully amidst such social injustice and inequality.

According to the bishops, peace means inviting the global community and native Latin America to engage and protest collectively, without fear or resorting to a violent approach, against an unjust system.<sup>93</sup> Such a collective movement and education, which the bishops called conscientization, was held in high regard by the people of Latin America and attracted great attention globally. The bishops saw it as a liberating act that provided a channel of expression for the vulnerable and the poor.<sup>94</sup> Dorr describes it as their act of "solidarity with the poor."<sup>95</sup>

This movement led to the emergence of liberation theology, a school of thought that is widely regarded as calling on the Church and its members "to transform itself so that it can become an aggressive agent of social change."<sup>96</sup> It originated with the Peruvian philosopher and theologian Gustavo Gutierrez (1928-).<sup>97</sup> Gutierrez's intention in establishing this theology was to maintain fidelity to God and commitment to the dignity of human persons, especially the poor and victims of injustice, as demonstrated by the Medellin bishops. Therefore, he

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<sup>89</sup> The Second General Council of the Latin American Bishops which took place in the city of Medellin, Colombia in 1968 covers a range of topics. The work focuses on the theme of the situation of Latin America and peace, PDF. Accessed on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021. Deck says, "The encyclical gained more notice there than anywhere else." See Deck, "Populorum Progressio (on the Development of the Peoples)," in *The Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 308.

<sup>90</sup> Latin American Bishops, *Peace: Latin American Bishops Medellin, Colombia* (1968), no. 1. Accessed on March 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021. PDF.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 2-4.

<sup>92</sup> Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano, "Justice at Medellin." in *The Modern Theologians Readers*, ed., David F. Ford & Mike Highton with Simeon Zahl (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 285.

<sup>93</sup> Latin American Bishops, *Peace: Latin American Bishops Medellin, Colombia* (1968), no. 17.

<sup>94</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 18.

<sup>95</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth: From Leo XIII to Francis*, 159.

<sup>96</sup> Roberto Suro explains that liberation theology "is a school of thought that calls on the Church radically to transform itself so that it can become an aggressive agent of social change." See Suro, "The Writing of An Encyclical," in *Aspiring to Freedom*, 162.

<sup>97</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, *A Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988).

intended to indicate that an act geared towards liberation must be rooted in a belief in God. In this sense, Gutierrez's reasoning offers a theological response to the call for peace made by *Gaudium et Spes* and *Populorum Progressio*.

The contribution of the Medellin document to peace is enormous, being more specific than Paul VI on the issue of peace. Concerning the Just War Theory, the bishops state:

We address ourselves finally to those who, in the face of injustice and illegitimate resistance to change, put their hopes in violence. With Paul VI, we realize that their attitude 'frequently finds its ultimate motivation in noble impulses of justice and solidarity.'<sup>28</sup> Let us not speak here of empty words which do not imply a personal responsibility and which isolate from the fruitful nonviolent actions that are immediately possible."<sup>98</sup>

By "we address," the Latin American bishops speak directly to themselves about nonviolent action before addressing those who rely on violence to achieve peace. They also observe that standing aloof in the face of injustice or embracing passive pacifism constitutes a new form of injustice. In this way, they align themselves with the definition of peace outlined by *Gaudium et Spes*, namely that peace is not the absence of war but the work of justice. While they call for human action in the face of injustice, the bishops proclaim that true peace is only found in Christ, stating: "Human solidarity cannot truly take effect unless it is done in Christ, who gives peace that the world cannot give."<sup>99</sup>

#### 4.4.3 The US Bishops' Pastoral Letter

The American bishops' pastoral letter on nuclear war and deterrence, titled *The Challenge of Peace*, is given priority in this section due to its focus on violence and peace. Instead of following the Medellin conference's teaching style on peace, this pastoral letter began with an appreciation of the Second Vatican Council and Catholic teaching on peacebuilding. It states:

The whole human race faces a moment of supreme crisis in its advance toward maturity.' The Second Vatican Council opened its treatment of modern warfare. Since the council, the dynamic of the nuclear arms race has intensified. Apprehension about nuclear war is almost tangible and visible today.<sup>100</sup>

These issues were said to have not been "resolved to the satisfaction of many participants in the discussion" of *Gaudium et Spes*.<sup>101</sup>

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<sup>98</sup> Latin American Bishops, *Peace: Latin American Bishops Medellin, Colombia* (1968), no. 19.

<sup>99</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>100</sup> USCCB (1983), *The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace* (Summary), no. 1.

<sup>101</sup> This study agrees with Hawksley's submission that *The Challenge of Peace* develops extensively, the Second Vatican council's discussion of deterrence. See Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 73.

*The Challenge of Peace* acknowledges alarming threats and growth rates of nuclear weaponry and warfare in the United States and globally. Aware of the dangers, it discusses the issue and lays down the moral rules of war and peace.<sup>102</sup> While the document denounces offensive and unjust attacks on innocent civilians, it also supports legitimate self-defence, contending that “every nation has a right and duty to defend itself against unjust aggression.”<sup>103</sup> The United States bishops’ predictions and vision became a reality after the terrorist attacks in the United States on September 11, 2001.

Following on from the stand of the Medellin bishops, the United bishops agreed that “faith does not insulate us from the challenges of life: rather, it intensifies our desire to address them precisely in light of the good news which has come to us in the person of the risen Christ.”<sup>104</sup> Furthermore, the bishops cite Jesus as embodying the virtues of forgiveness, mercy, and love, admonishing people to model their lives on him.<sup>105</sup> Here, they corroborate the view promoted by Theodore Weber nineteen years before that every society needs a combination of “Christian theories and political powers and organization,” that is, faith and political life.<sup>106</sup> *The Challenge of Peace* proclaims that building peace demands that Americans draw from Christian doctrines to challenge the political authorities to take necessary action against injustice and violence. At the same time, the American bishops emphasise that sin is a major trigger of violence.<sup>107</sup>

It is the claim that these bishops provide a vision of peace based upon the teaching of Christ by attending to the social condition of people in need. It is the case of nonviolent peacemaking; however, the bishops added conditions for just war, that is, how to defend peace legitimately.

In 1993, the USCCB celebrated the tenth anniversary of that letter with another publication, titled *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace*. In a context of heightened fears about the danger of nuclear holocaust, rapid development and use of biological and chemical

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<sup>102</sup> USCCB (1983), *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace*, no. 1. Accessed on April 5, 2021. <https://www.usccb.org/upload/challenge-peace-gods-promise-our-response>.

<sup>103</sup> USCCB (1983), *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace (Summary)*.

<sup>104</sup> USCCB (1983), *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace*, no. 2.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 44-45.

<sup>106</sup> Weber, “Morality and National Power,” *Review of Politics*, 27.

<sup>107</sup> USCCB (1983), *The Challenge of Peace: God’s Promise and Our Response: A Pastoral Letter on War and Peace*, no. 35.

weapons, and movement towards pacifism in the U.S., the letter firmly held to the presumption against the use of force to respond to violence.<sup>108</sup>

As might be expected, their stance elicited different reactions. For instance, Charles Curran is critical of the bishops for only responding to issues leading to violence in the United States (U.S.).<sup>109</sup> He argues that the US bishops have not been vocal and committed to protecting the dignity of human beings. This study deems that they should be commended for their contributions and initiatives towards peacebuilding. In short, before Curran's comments, the United States Bishops already issued a public or official letter that contained just war reasoning to the United States government under the leadership of George Bush. In the latter, moral awareness about the war in Iraq was raised.<sup>110</sup> Again, after Curran's comment, the USCCB committee on international policy reiterated the concern of its general body, raising moral concerns and questions on the same war.<sup>111</sup>

While CST formed the basis for the *Harvest of Peace*, there is some evidence of a fresh perspective here. This pastoral letter extends the use of theological terms on social and war issues, drawing on credal beliefs such as forgiveness, sin, love, and mercy. Furthermore, in the face of wars and conflicts in the country, the bishops' insights boost the broader idea of peacebuilding. Recent Church documents like the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2009) and the proposition of the Second Assembly for the African Synod of Bishops reflect this development.

#### **4.4.4 The Synod of African Bishops**

The Second Synod of African bishops was held in Rome in 2009.<sup>112</sup> The theme of the synod was 'In Service to Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace'.<sup>113</sup> Like the Medellin document and the *Challenge of Peace*, the African bishops' assembly focuses on reconciliation and peace against the backdrop of Africa's challenging social, cultural, religious, and political situation.

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<sup>108</sup> USCCB, *The Harvest of Justice is Sown in Peace: A Reflection on the Tenth Anniversary of the Challenge of Peace* (1993). For more information, see Simpson, *War, Peace, and God: Rethinking the Just War theory*, 74-75.

<sup>109</sup> Charles E. Curran, "The Reception of Catholic Social and Economic Teaching in the United States," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations*, ed., Kenneth R. Himes (Washington DC: Georgetown University Press, 2005), 477.

<sup>110</sup> USCCB, "Statement on Iraq," November 13<sup>th</sup>, 2002; see also "Statement on Iraq," by Bishop Walton D. Gregory, President of the USCCB, February 26, 2003, PDF.

<sup>111</sup> USCCB's Committee on International Policy, "Towards a Responsible Transition in Iraq," by Bishop Thomas G. Wenski, January 12, 2006, PDF.

<sup>112</sup> Rocco Puopolo, "Peacebuilding in Africa," in *The Journal for Peace and Justice Studies* 20, issue 2 (2010): 32-42, accessed on November 14, 2022, <https://doi.org/10.5840/peacejustice201020218>.

<sup>113</sup> African Bishops, "The Church in Africa in Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You Are Salt of the Earth and You Are Light of the World," *The Special Assembly for Africa of the Synod of Bishops*, 2009. Accessed on November 14, 2022. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

Before the commencement of the assembly, African countries had been grappling with poverty, tribalism, racism, ethnicity, killings, kidnapping, religious fundamentalism and fanaticism, corruption, and nepotism. These concerns posed severe challenges across the continent, making people's lives miserable.<sup>114</sup> Moreover, human dignity and rights, especially the rights of women, are not being respected. In their words: "Girls and women are generally unjustly treated."<sup>115</sup> They identified this as generating deep-rooted violence and conflict in many regions of the continent.

These are ongoing challenges. More than a decade after the assembly in Rome, Nigeria's bishops expressed concerns about these and other new challenges. Accordingly: "There are, unfortunately, several killings, banditry, kidnapping, assassination, armed robbery, reckless use of force by security agencies...These realities [they said] make a living in Nigeria very precarious."<sup>116</sup> It is the scenario that informed the case study at the beginning of this thesis.<sup>117</sup>

To return to the document of the Second Synod. The bishops emphasise their awareness that peace is both a gift of God and responsibility. They write:

Peace is primarily a gift of God and the fruit of our efforts...Peace should begin in the hearts of people as grace given (cf J 14:1). 'My peace I give you, says Jesus. As peace is a universal good, depending on respect for everyone's human rights and all creation, we should dedicate all of our energies to its service.'<sup>118</sup>

This acknowledgement of the gift of peace is attuned to the work of Benedict XVI, who published *Caritas in Veritate* earlier in the summer (June 29<sup>th</sup>). Indeed, in the *Instrumentum Laborem* of the assembly, peace is named in the following way: "True peace is offered in and

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<sup>114</sup> Ibid., nos.15 & 45.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., nos. 47; Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator, "The Synod as Ecclesial Conversation," in *Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: The Second African Synod*, ed., Agbonkhanmeghe E. Orobator (Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2011), 1.

<sup>116</sup> Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN), "Moving Beyond Precarious Living in Nigeria," A Communique Issued at the end of the second plenary meeting of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Nigeria (CBCN) at the Divine Mercy Pastoral Centre, Agbamaya, Obada, Oko, Abeokuta, Ogun State, 11-20 September 2019. Accessed on March 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021. [www.cbcn-ng.org](http://www.cbcn-ng.org); Recently, Blessing Onoriode Boloje wrote about how corruption is affecting development and shattering the hopes of Nigerian People. See his *Reading Micha in Nigeria: Ethics, Wealth, and Corruption* (Atlanta: SBL Press, 2023).

<sup>117</sup> Journalists' Hangout, "DSS Arrest Soldier for Hiring, Selling Guns to Kidnappers" (September 27, 2022), *TVC News*, Ayodele. During the broadcast, Babajide Otiadoju narrated different situations where Nigerian soldiers were caught supplying weapons to the bandit. Recently, on January 24, the same television station and presenters reported that, apart from reports of the killings of other religious groups, one hundred and forty-five Catholic priests alone were reported killed by bandits and another terrorist group in 2022. These reports suggest the level of insecurity in Nigeria at present.

<sup>118</sup> African Bishops, "The Church in Africa in Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You are Salt of the Earth, and You are Light of the World," *Proposition*, no. 21.

through Christ. ‘For he is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down the dividing wall of hostility.’<sup>119</sup>

The African bishops identify many factors responsible for the violence in the region, notably a lack of good order, personal holiness, poverty caused by employment and illiteracy, and a crisis of education. Other factors are violence against women, corruption, bad economic policies, and discrimination of any kind.<sup>120</sup> They state: “To serve reconciliation, justice and peace, every form of discrimination, intolerance and religious fundamentalism must be overcome.”<sup>121</sup> In almost every proposition, the bishops identify at least one trigger of violence before presenting a point concerning peace.

An underlying theme to the propositions of the African Synod is a vision of peace predicated on the sacrament of the Eucharist and reconciliation. They state: “The Eucharist remains the source and summit of reconciliation and the entire Christian life and that holiness is the most effective way of building up a society of reconciliation, justice and peace.”<sup>122</sup> The strong emphasis on returning to Eucharistic adoration and worship in the general discussion of peace implies that these bishops are aware that holiness of life shapes African understanding of peace and reconciliation. As the Tanzanian theologian Laurenti Magesa, writing about Africans observes: “Perception of the Holy...demands and enforces their emotional and behavioural commitment and so gives direction to their lives” – a life of mutual solidarity.<sup>123</sup>

Theological and socio-cultural resources are central to their treatment of peace. Regarding theological resources, the African bishops traced the source and climax of peace to the Eucharist and holiness of life. They were optimistic that the holiness of life could help eliminate corruption in Africa. This holiness of life does not mean worshipping traditional idols or performing traditional African rituals. Instead, it refers to respecting African values of reconciliation and solidarity and a regular return to the sacrament of penance. They assert: “The grace of the sacrament of penance celebrated in faith suffices to reconcile us to God and neighbour and does not require any traditional rituals of reconciliation.”<sup>124</sup>

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<sup>119</sup> African Bishops, “The Church in Africa in Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You Are the Salt of the Earth, and You Are the Light of the World,” *Instrumentum Laboris*, no. 46.

<sup>120</sup> African Bishops, “The Church in Africa in Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You Are the Salt of the Earth and You Are the Light of the World,” *Propositions*, nos. 47.

<sup>121</sup> *Ibid.*, 12.

<sup>122</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 45.

<sup>123</sup> Laurenti Magesa, *African Religion: The Moral Traditions of Abundant Life* (Maryknoll, NY.: Orbis Book, 1997), 3.

<sup>124</sup> African Bishops, “The Church in Africa in Service of Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: You Are the Salt of the Earth and You Are the Light of the World,” *Propositions*, no.7.

While the bishops discuss peace with references to theological resources, they do not neglect the significance of social justice and cultural values. Their appeal to the African government to provide “basic needs of life to the most vulnerable from a just distribution of the fruits of development”<sup>125</sup> and microfinance banks that promote fair distribution and prudent ways of seeking loans<sup>126</sup> signals their seriousness about holding authorities responsible as a means to achieve peace.

Apart from deliberating on peace from such perspectives, the assembly reiterates the importance of dialogue, bearing in mind that religious division catalyses peacebuilding. They state: “Religious dialogue is urgently needed with Islam and traditional African Religion at all levels.”<sup>127</sup> Crucially, the dialogue they propose is one that is rooted in African values. A Nigerian philosopher articulated these African values as “respect for elders and authority, [a] sense of the sacred because of deep belief in the supernatural, respect for life, [a] sense of justice and mutual rectitude and so on.”<sup>128</sup> If these proposals are implemented, the bishops are optimistic that the African region can respond meaningfully to the challenge of peacebuilding.

#### **4.4.5 John Paul II**

From 1978 to his death in 2005, Pope St John Paul II (1920-2005) grappled with several new security issues in the world. Among these were the collapse of communism that dominated Eastern Europe in the 1980s, the Persian Gulf War in 1991, the apartheid crisis in South Africa (1993), the Rwandan genocide (1994), and the Bosnian and Kosovo wars of 1995 and 1999, respectively.

There are many key experiences for him, including life under the totalitarian regime in Poland, his native country, the fall of communism, engagement with communism in Cuba and authoritarianism in Chile.<sup>129</sup> He has been credited with fighting against dictatorships for democracy and helping to end communism in Eastern Europe without recourse to violence and

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., no. 15.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., no. 17 & 18.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., no. 11.

<sup>128</sup> Matthew Ikechukwu Nwanfor, “Integrating African Values with Christianity: A Requirement for Dialogue between Christian Religion and African Culture,” in *Journal of African Studies* 6, no 1 (2016), 3, accessed on January 23, 2023. <https://go.exlibris.link/ydCYZsF7>.

<sup>129</sup> See Kenneth S. Zagacki “Pope John Paul II and the Crusade against Communism: A Case Study in Secular and Sacred Time,” in *Rhetoric and Public Affairs* 4, no. 4 (Winter 2001): 689-710, accessed on November 5, 2023, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41940266>.

further revolution.<sup>130</sup> His approach to these concerns was to emphasise human solidarity, a philosophy and movement embraced by his native Poles. As David Willey reports:

The rise of the Solidarity movement and indeed Poland's subsequent transition from Communist dictatorship under Soviet tutelage to the first non-Communist government in Eastern Europe, can be traced directly back to the sense of patriotism, purpose and optimism generated by the Pope's bold visit to Poland a decade before.<sup>131</sup>

In his approach to peace, John Paul adopted the principle of solidarity, in which he gave a Christian rationale that helped combine political movements with faith and Christian tradition, in contrast to secular solidarity.

Between 1972 and 1990, the situation in Chile was like that of Poland. In the country, there were injustices, military dictatorship, and housing crises, particularly during the reign of the military leader, Augusto Pinochet. Describing the situation, Jim Stackhouse of the Institute of Global Affairs Santiago writes:

During the Pinochet regime 1973-1989, the city of Santiago as elsewhere in Chile, was a focus of military government housing and urban development policies; these were policies that complemented the conservative economic and entrepreneurial objectives of the military dictatorship.<sup>132</sup>

These problems were not peculiar to Chile and Poland. Other countries suffered from similar situations, and John Paul testified to that.<sup>133</sup> For instance, the division between the Soviet Union and the Warsaw Pact nations and enmity between the United States of America and the state members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) was a major clash that created social unrest all over the globe.<sup>134</sup>

In response to these and other human hardships, John Paul II travelled to Chile and some other countries. On his return from Chile in 1987, he wrote *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis: On Social Concerns* (1987) and *Centesimus Annus: The Hundredth Year* (1991).

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<sup>130</sup> See David Willey, *God's Politician: John Paul at the Vatican* (London: Faber & Faber, 1992); Carl Bernstein and Marco Politi, *His Holiness: John Paul II and the Hidden History of Our Time* (New York: Doubleday, 1996); Eamon Duffy, *Saints and Sinners: A History of the Popes* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997); Michael Walsh, *John Paul II* (London: Harper Collins, 1994); and George Weigel, *The Final Revolution: The Resistance Church and the Collapse of Communism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1992); Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: HarperCollins/Cliff Books, 1999).

<sup>131</sup> David Willey, *God's Politician: John Paul at the Vatican*, 1.

<sup>132</sup> Jill Stackhouse, "Urban Land Use and the Entrepreneurial State: A Case Study of Pudahuel, Santiago Chile," in *Journal of Latin American Geography* 8, no. 1 (2009): 99-127, 99; Charles E. Curran, Kenneth R. Himes and Thomas A. Shannon, "Commentary on *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (On Social Concern)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 431.

<sup>133</sup> This work argues that chapter three of *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* offers John Paul II's perspective of how the world was in crisis in the late eighties.

<sup>134</sup> Curran, Himes, and Shannon, "Commentary on *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (On Social Concern)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 430.



This work focuses on the *Sollicitudo rei Socialis* (SRS) since it was released after John Paul II visited conflict regions like Uruguay (1978) and Chile (1987).<sup>135</sup> John Paul witnessed first-hand conflict and concerns over the residential and mortgage system in those countries. The country's then president, Angola, Dos Santos, personally visited John Paul to discuss the matter.<sup>136</sup> One incident that occurred in Chile during John Paul II's visit to Chile in 1987 set the tone for this encyclical. Roberto Suro, an American journalist and advocate of ethics with the *New York Times*, described how:

John Paul was in Chile...Mass was held in a Santiago Park to crown the Pope's trip. But the event took a tragic turn...Anti-government protestors clashed with Police during a hit-and-run riot which lasted throughout the service and left nearly thirty persons badly injured...it was by far the worst violence during any of his (John Paul II's) public appearances.<sup>137</sup>

The discussion of his response to violence will draw largely on this social encyclical.

#### **4.4.5.1 *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis***

*Sollicitudo rei Socialis* was John Paul II's second social encyclical. It was released to mark the twentieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio* (SRS, 2).<sup>138</sup> It interprets Paul VI's development vision and reemphasises the new name for development – peace (SRS, 10). Broadly, it offers his perspective on the world in the late eighties, believing it to be in crisis because of the gulf between rich and poor (SRS, 13). To begin the discussion on the peacebuilding effort, John Paul bears the Chilean situation in mind. He writes:

Among the specific signs of underdevelopment which increasingly affect the developed countries also, there are two in particular that reveal a tragic situation. The first is the housing crisis... The lack of housing is being experienced universally and is due in large measure to the growing phenomenon of urbanization...The lack of housing, an extremely serious problem in itself, should be seen as a sign and summing-up of a whole series of shortcomings: economic, social, cultural or simply human in nature...Another indicator common to the vast majority of nations is the phenomenon of unemployment and underemployment (SRS, 17 and 18).

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<sup>135</sup> Suro, "The Writing of an Encyclical," in *Aspiring to Freedom: Commentaries on John Paul II's Encyclical 'The Social Concerns of the Church'*, ed., Kenneth A. Myers (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 161.

<sup>136</sup> Charles E. Curran, Kenneth R. Himes and Thomas A. Shannon, "Commentary on Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (On Social Concern)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 431.

<sup>137</sup> Suro, "The Writing of an Encyclical," in *Aspiring to Freedom: Commentaries on John Paul II's Encyclical 'The Social Concerns of the Church'*, 161.

<sup>138</sup> Peter L. Berger, Empirical Testing," in *Aspiring to Freedom: Commentaries on John Paul II's Encyclical 'The Social Concerns of the Church'*, ed., Kenneth Myers (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 110; Michael Novak, "The Development of Nations," in *Aspiring to Freedom: Commentaries on John Paul II's Encyclical 'The Social Concerns of the Church'*, 67; Curran, Himes and Shannon, "Commentary on Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (On Social Concern)," in *Modern Catholic Social Teaching*, 429 & 430.

John Paul II identifies a myriad of causes of conflict and crisis but pinpoints sin as their common root (SRS 38-39). He cites different forms of sins, such as selfishness, injustice, ideologies, structures that create disunity, and other political miscalculations as influences on violence. Consequently, he assumes that returning to Christ leads to peace. For instance, writing about ideologies that underpinned political and economic structures which gave rise to the Cold War, John Paul II urges people to return to Jesus Christ and avoid sin:

The principal obstacle to be overcome on the way to authentic liberation is sin and the structures produced by sin as it multiplies and spreads. The freedom with which Christ has set us free (cf. Gal 5:1) encourages us to become the servants of all. Thus, the process of development and liberation takes concrete shape in the exercise of solidarity, that is to say in the love and service of neighbour, especially of the poorest (SRS, 46).

Liberation from sin is more important to him than social and political liberation, a position which he reinforced as consistent with church teaching. Notably, John Paul II's emphasis on sin offers an approach to a theology of peace; that is, it links the causes of violence to personal failure of responsibility and, consequently, peace to personal conversion. In *Centesimus Annus* (1991), he says: "The theological dimension is needed both for interpreting and solving present-day problems in human society" (CA, 55).

John Paul II ranks ideology as the primary politically orientated sin and 'a structure of sin' because it leads to violence, contending that competing political ideologies create opposition, division, and tension, leading to war (SRS, 20).<sup>139</sup> Ideologies are promoted through lies, and this attitude results in ongoing competition with rivals. For instance, in the opening paragraph of his *World Day Message of Peace* in 1980, he states: "Another form of non-truth consists in refusing to recognise and respect the objectively legitimate and inalienable rights of those who refuse to accept a particular ideology, or who appeal to freedom of thought."<sup>140</sup> It is the case that non-truth or lies are inextricably linked to the denial of people's rights, particularly the right to freedom, and hence a significant cause of war. It is argued in this work that emphasis on the sin of lies is John Paul II's central insight in writing on peacebuilding. Referring to different kinds of conflict, including the Second World War, he writes:

Where there have been conflicts – and, contrary to a widespread opinion, one can, alas, number more than a hundred and fifty armed conflicts since the Second World War – it was that dialogue did not really take place or that it was falsified, made into a snare, or deliberately reduced."<sup>141</sup>

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<sup>139</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 167.

<sup>140</sup> John Paul II, "In Truth, the Power of Peace," in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 1980, accessed January 17, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>141</sup> John Paul II, "Dialogue for Peace, a Challenge for Our Time," *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 1983, no. 3, accessed on November 15, 2022, available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

At the same time, he does not eliminate the important role of social structures and how they might be sinful. While they are “rooted in personal sin,” a socio-political analysis also “favours the introduction of the “structures of sin” even more (SRS, 36). Explaining this view further, Shadle states:

John Paul asserts that ‘sin and the structures produced by sin as it multiplies and spreads’ lie behind the Cold War division of the world into East and West, as well as the conflict between North and South. Notably, John Paul applies the theological category of ‘sin’ to economic and political realities, not simply individual actions.<sup>142</sup>

Shadle emphasises that sin, particularly social sin, was the central cause of the Cold War and that John Paul II noticed this in his writings on peacebuilding efforts. It should be said that of all the causes of violence, social sin, especially lies, takes the lead.

#### **4.4.5.2 Peace as Forgiveness and Truth-Telling**

If falsehoods are the main cause of violence, John Paul II turns to the antidotes to sin and triggers of war, notably forgiveness and truthfulness. Concerning forgiveness, he writes:

No process of peace can ever begin unless an attitude of sincere forgiveness takes root in the human heart. When such forgiveness is lacking, wounds continue to fester, fuelling in the younger generation endless resentment, producing a desire for revenge, and causing fresh destruction.<sup>143</sup>

Sincere forgiveness becomes the mark of his discussion of peace, insisting that it is a central moral and theological resource of Catholic Social Teaching. Regarding truth-telling, John Paul started by reflecting on the aspirations of *Pacem in Terris*:

There is an unbreakable bond between *the work of peace* and *respect for truth*. Honesty in the supply of information, equity in legal systems, and openness in democratic procedures give citizens a sense of security, a readiness to settle controversies by peaceful means, and a desire for genuine and constructive dialogue, all of which constitute *the true premises of lasting peace*.<sup>144</sup>

He writes on the necessity of truth-telling and sincerity in any dialogue that aims to address division and violence without resorting to violence. It follows that the desire for peace comes with a struggle for a dialogue devoid of lies and insincerity. An example of John Paul's

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<sup>142</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War*, 164.

<sup>143</sup> John Paul II, “Offer Forgiveness and Receive Peace,” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 1997, no. 1.

<sup>144</sup> John Paul II, “Pacem in Terris: A Permanent Commitment,” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2003, no. 8.

commitment was his contribution to the peacebuilding process that occurred in the post-apartheid era in South Africa.<sup>145</sup>

John Paul references and deploys other themes in his discussion on peacebuilding. He discusses justice and respect for human rights while reflecting on how strong countries dominate and control weaker ones. He writes: “To ignore this demand [for justice] could encourage the temptation among the victims of injustice to respond with violence, as happens at the origin of many wars” (SRS, 10).<sup>146</sup> As already noted, solidarity is another significant theme in his treatment of peace.

#### 4.4.5.3 Peace as Human Solidarity

While discussing recent wars that dominated his pontificate, John Paul worried that “the year which has just ended (1982) has once more offered the spectacle of violence and war. People have shown that they preferred to use their arms rather than to try to understand one another.”<sup>147</sup> Also, he writes: “Clashes of ideologies, aspirations and needs can and must be settled and resolved by means other than war and violence.”<sup>148</sup> For him, other approaches to violence and war are dialogue and the principle of solidarity that is based on theology and Christian faith, calling on humans “to settle differences and conflicts by peaceful means.”<sup>149</sup> On solidarity, he states:

At the same time, in a world divided and beset by every type of conflict, the conviction is growing of a radical interdependence and consequently of the need for a solidarity which will take up interdependence and transfer it to the moral plane. Today, perhaps more than in the past, people are realizing that they are linked together by a common destiny, which is to be constructed together, if catastrophe for all is to be (SRS, 26).

His solidarity is certainly not just about human cooperation and interdependence or even ordinarily international relations but covers social and moral grounds. It is about the common good that disregards sin and embraces forgiveness and truth-telling. He contends:

The exercise of solidarity within each society is valid when its members recognize one another as persons. Those who are more influential, because they have a greater share

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<sup>145</sup> Violence has characterised South African history and has created a new feature. The *Truth and Reconciliation Commission* (TRC) of the country and the influence of Archbishop Desmond Tutu had helped in establishing a culture of peace. on that point, Peter-John Pearson observes: “A central dimension of the TRC was its religious, spiritual, and moral character. Archbishop Desmond Tutu, whose thinking guided the process, was influential in framing the TRC dynamic in faith discourse.” See Peter-John Pearson, “Pursuing Truth, Reconciliation, and Human Dignity in South Africa,” In *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, 191.

<sup>146</sup> Read O’Brien and Shannon eds., *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*, 393.

<sup>147</sup> John Paul II, “Dialogue for Peace, a Challenge for Our Time,” *Message for the Celebration of World Day for Peace*, 1983, no. 3.

<sup>148</sup> John Paul II, *Appeal for Peace at the Peace Memorial in Hiroshima*, no. 4.

<sup>149</sup> John Paul II, *Appeal for Peace at the Peace Memorial in Hiroshima* 1981 no. 4.

of goods and common services, should feel responsible for the weaker and be ready to share with them all they possess. Those who are weaker, for their part, in the same spirit of solidarity, should not adopt a purely passive attitude or one that is destructive of the social fabric, but, while claiming their legitimate rights, should do what they can for the good of all (SRS, 39).

Much more than speaking about the universal destiny of the human person, this vision of solidarity considers the human person in its entirety, that is, as made for God and others. It is a faith-based solidarity, not solely a solidarity of human cooperation. In short, it is Christian solidarity that involves a combination of Christian virtues such as forgiveness, truth-telling, and gratuity (SRS, 40)

John Paul found this vision of solidarity suitable for Christians and people living in a conflict environment, such as the Poles and Chileans, because it considers the other person not as a means but as the end, that is, the image of God. He writes:

In this way, the solidarity which we propose is the path to peace and at the same time to development. For world peace is inconceivable unless the world's leaders come to recognize that interdependence in itself demands the abandonment of the politics of blocs, the sacrifice of all forms of economic, military or political imperialism, and the transformation of mutual distrust into collaboration. This is precisely the act proper to solidarity among individuals and nations (SRS, 40)

This notion of solidarity consistently characterised the Pope's way of writing about peace, especially in his native Poland. While John Paul II's teaching on peace also referred to a human rights approach, he was identified with a solidarity-based approach.<sup>150</sup>

While he demonstrates enthusiasm for adding Christology to his thinking on peacebuilding activities through solidarity, the Christian solidarity of John Paul is a point of contact with secular approaches to peacebuilding.<sup>151</sup> On this point, Theodora Hawksley states:

Tracing the development of the Church's teaching on solidarity, particularly in the work of John Paul II, enables us to see its points of connection with contemporary peacebuilding and some ways in which these points of connection with Church teaching on peace could be reinforced.<sup>152</sup>

While scholars like the geographer Emilio Romero (1899-1993) would discuss solidarity from a purely secular framework, John Paul prefers to move between theological, Christological,

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<sup>150</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 118; Christiansen, "Catholic Peacekeeping 1991-2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II," *Review of Faith and International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (2006), 21. Accessed on March 10<sup>th</sup>, 2020. DOI:10.1080/15570274.2006.95232446.

<sup>151</sup> According to Stephen P. Judd, Romero, the absence of Christian-based solidarity is a major cause of violence in Peru in the 80s. See Stephen P. Judd, "Healing the Breaches: The Church's Praxis of Solidarity through Social Networks in Southern Peru in the Context of Political Violence, 1980-1992," in *The Surprise of Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*, ed., J.J. Carney and Laurie Johnston (Mahweh, NJ: Paulist Press, 2018), 212.

<sup>152</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 107.

and political solidarity. For instance, he returns to the theme of justice while referring to political solidarity and the division that characterises the world, especially ideological blocs.

He states:

In fact, if the social question has acquired a worldwide dimension, this is because the demand for justice can only be satisfied on that level. To ignore this demand could encourage the temptation among the victims of injustice to respond with violence, as happens at the origin of many wars... And if the situation is examined in the light of the division of the world into ideological blocs a division already existing in 1967 (SRS, 10)

Despite developing the teaching of the Church in such a direction, he has been criticised for not challenging injustice within the Church. Christiana Astorga observes that while reflecting on the idea of the option for the poor in *Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II “gives no evidence of addressing ecclesial justice or justice within the Church.”<sup>153</sup> Although this is a valid point, this study contends that John Paul’s contribution to peacebuilding can be viewed from four perspectives. First, he introduced theological ethics to the discussion of peacebuilding. Second, he conveys a holistic understanding of the human person. Third, he retains the post-Vatican II understanding of peace as a gift and responsibility. Fourth and finally, his focus on human cooperation is more based on the natural law approach, like his predecessors – rather than on scripture and dogma.

#### **4.4.6 Conclusion**

This last section on the documentary heritage of the CST covered a wide range of discussions. Drawing on John XXIII and the *Second Vatican Council*, Paul VI led the way. He posited that peacebuilding is about socio-economic development. He was vocal that development and work of justice breed peace. The regional bishops’ conferences followed suit. The Medellin Conference interprets the gospel message and responds to human misery based on the needs of their native people. The USSBC supported the idea of legitimate armed defence with an appeal to social justice through non-violent means. Besides, the bishops’ discussion on *The Challenge of Peace* combines Biblical, theological, and philosophical elements.<sup>154</sup> For John Paul II, it was Christian solidarity understood as a commitment to the common good, justice, prayer, and forgiveness. For the African bishops, peacebuilding consists of doing works of justice, paying

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<sup>153</sup> Christiana A. Astorga, *Catholic Moral Theology and Social Ethics* (New York, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 2014), 391.

Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 119.

<sup>154</sup> Tobias Winright and Maria Power, *Current Roman Catholic Ethics Vis-a-Vis The Ukraine - Russia War* (William Temple Foundation, 2023), 1.

attention to the sacrament of the Church and cultural needs, particularly reconciliation and personal and communal holiness. In this period, the tradition centred its messages and activities on the teaching of Christ while bearing people and historical reality in mind. At the same time, it did not highlight an in-depth theology of peacebuilding, as the approach to the discussion was mainly philosophical natural law. Apart from the USSBC's pastoral letter, the debate during the period was dominated by a series of engagements with pacifism and had little to do with legitimate defence.

#### **4.5 An Overview of the Documentary Heritage of Catholic Social Teaching**

The evolving reflection on peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST is formulated in the response of the Church, through successive Popes, to issues of human dignity, socioeconomic factors, human cooperation and political divisions, private ownership, and socialism. The tradition, at different times, responded to wars, violence, poverty, racism, systemic injustice, terrorism, government system failure, inequality, selfishness and, invariably, sin. In other words, CST's vision of peacebuilding is a response to human misery.

The earliest tradition relied on the philosophical natural law approach to respond to violence. It refers to the human community and human rights, which can be discovered through reason. Its message was on social change and order based upon distributive justice while paying attention to divine law based on reason. For instance, although Leo XIII and Pius XI did not use the term peacebuilding, they argued that doing justice for workers and the poor can lead to human flourishing. Apart from the Industrial Revolution and economic issues, Leo and Pius did not experience deep-rooted war during their time. The focus was on ensuring social order, or as Cahill puts it, "responding to workers' pressure, while still protecting private property and a qualified capitalism."<sup>155</sup> Despite that, their explanation of the human person and community as natural offers hope and provides a resource for the modern epoch to respond to violence and war.

In this period, the tradition carried on the aspirations of Leo and Pius, who focused on the social order. It emphasises the presence of God in the natural order and historical situation in which the Church found itself. For instance, John XXIII and *Gaudium et Spes*'s treatment of violence highlights the church's role in activism, making real what the previous period

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<sup>155</sup> Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Blessed are the Peacemakers: Pacifism, Just War and Peacebuilding* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019), 312.

outlined. They called people to human cooperation through the respect of human rights ordained by God in the natural order.

In the contemporary period, activism is the tradition's primary stance on peacebuilding. It was a collective task, aiming at challenging and changing the social and political structures considering the gospel of Christ. It presents the human person and community from theological anthropology, centring its teaching around Christ's message and historical realities. The human person is not only guided by human solidarity but also by faith-based solidarity. Political activities are expected to go hand in hand with religious messages. One could say that there is a move from a natural law approach to a more articulated theological anthropology rooted in the teaching and person of Christ.

Even when different forms of violence, including the use of atomic bombs, nuclear warheads, deterrence, terrorism, kidnapping, banditry, and other methods of attacks, enraged communities, the tradition did not fail in its duty to speak out for peace and peacebuilding. One could say that without abandoning war words altogether, the tradition relies heavily on nonviolence. In other words, it places just war and nonviolence reasoning in its general idea of peacebuilding. Prioritising nonviolence and not abandoning the Just War Theory suggests a shift in approach by the tradition. It is a shift of attention away from, but not as substituting, just war/legitimate armed defence.

Reflecting on Catholic Church responses to violence and war, Drew Christiansen observes:

Since then [World War II], Catholic teaching on war has evolved into more complex views, embracing both nonviolence and just war, placing both in a wider teaching on peace. Vatican Two praised the witness of nonviolence. During the Cold War, John Paul II tutored and practised non-violence in confronting Poland's communist government and their Soviet overlords.<sup>156</sup>

He says Catholic teaching on peacebuilding "evolved as a composite of nonviolent and just-war elements."<sup>157</sup> This combination of just war, justice and nonviolence in peacebuilding. He describes it as a "convoy concept."<sup>158</sup> Tobias Winright, a scholar of Just War Theory, writes:

While it is generally true that just war theorists over the centuries have rarely issued a 'no' to a particular war or some sort of conduct during war, there have indeed been Catholic theologians, ethicists, clergy, and even popes who employ just war reasoning seriously to arrive at a 'no' to war.<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> Christiansen, "Catholic Peacemaking, 1991 – 2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II," 22;

<sup>157</sup> Christiansen, 'After Sept. 11: Catholic Teaching on Peace and War', *Origins* 32, no. 3 (2002): 36

<sup>158</sup> Christiansen, "Catholic Peacemaking, 1991 – 2005, 22.

<sup>159</sup> Tobias Winright, "Introduction," in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Ethicists Engage the tradition*, eds, Tobias Winright and Laurie Johnston (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), xviii-xix.



As the thesis will outline later, good examples of Winright's point are Popes Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and even Francis.<sup>160</sup> While reflecting on the development of the Just War Theory in the Catholic tradition, particularly in Augustine and Aquinas, Lisa Sowle Cahill submits that it was intrinsically linked to non-violence. She argues that Just war is not a substitute for nonviolence. In her view, Augustine and Aquinas alluded to commitment to the gospel of love while creatively suggesting a response to violence and reconciliation. She states: "While just war theory is certainly meant to repel injustice, restrain war, and promote justice, it can never be separated in either intention or action from simultaneous 'Christlike commitment to nonviolence'."<sup>161</sup> In 2018, she argued that pacifists and just war scholars have shifted their focus toward seeking and sustaining a just peace through peacemaking and peacebuilding practices.<sup>162</sup> This dissertation maintains that the focus of CST currently is not a complete abandonment of just war theory but an explicit appropriation of nonviolence.

Catholic Social Teaching supports a model of peacebuilding that does not reject legitimate armed defence but is based on distributive justice, restoration of social order, human rights, integral development, solidarity, forgiveness, and dialogue. For instance, Leo and Pius speak of justice. John XXIII focuses on human rights, and Paul VI concentrates on development. This shift compelled bishops to write documents and theologians to develop political theologies that could build peace. Hence, the Medellin document emerged, the propositions of the second Synod of African bishops were made, and theologies of liberation were made.<sup>163</sup> This same commitment inspired John Paul II to situate his encyclical, *Sollicitudo*

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<sup>160</sup> For now, see the following: Paul VI, "Address of Pope Paul VI to the United Nations General Assembly," *The Pope Speaks* 11, no. 1 (1966), 54. John Paul II, "War a Decline for Humanity," *Origins* 20, no. 33 (1991), 53; Rick Lyman "Pope Francis Urges a Divided Bosnia to Heal Declaring "War Never Again," *New Times*, June 6, 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com>; and Winright, "Introduction," in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Ethicists Engage the Tradition*, xxii.

<sup>161</sup> Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Just War and the Gospel," in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*, 12.

<sup>162</sup> Cahill, 'Just War, Pacifism, Just Peace, and Peacebuilding', *Theological Studies* 80, no. 1 (March 2019): 169-185; and *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Pacifism, Just War, and Peacebuilding* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019), 320-322. More information about this shift of focus can be found in the writings of Pope Francis and Catholic Ethicists. See Francis, "Nonviolence, A Style of Politics for Peace," World Day of Peace Message, January 2017. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va); Mark Allman and Tobias Winright, "Protect Your Neighbour: Why the Just War Tradition is Still Indispensable," *Commonweal*, June 17 2016; Kenneth Himes, "Humanitarian Intervention, and the Just War Tradition," in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Ethicists Engage the Tradition*, eds., Tobias Winright and Laurie Johnston (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005), 60-66.

<sup>163</sup> The theology of liberation was developed by Gustavo Gutierrez to respond to political injustice meted out to the citizens of South America. See Gutierrez, Gustavo. *A Liberation Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis

*Rei Socialis*, within the context of the Polish totalitarian regime and Chile's social unrest.<sup>164</sup> He combines solidarity, forgiveness, dialogue, and justice in his idea of peacebuilding.<sup>165</sup> As Thomas Massaro writes:

There are other examples that illustrate how Catholic Church's response to poverty and injustice has shifted in recent decades. Older approaches have been retained, but have been supplemented with newer ones. There are certainly many points of continuity with the past, such as the Church's constant concern for well-being of the least advantaged, its call for other personal conversion and care of others, and the willingness to perform direct services to the poor in moments of crisis and dire need. But there are also striking elements of change. For example, contemporary observers now enjoy an expanded view of what is needed to foster total human integral development.<sup>166</sup>

This is precisely why theologians read the Catholic vision of peacebuilding differently.

Even though the Church began its response to the challenge of economic concerns, theologians have pointed out that discussion on the broader understanding of the magisterial teaching on war and violence began with *Pacem in Terris* and continued in *Gaudium et Spes*. It is the case that these documents provided a warrant to evaluate war and peace through the lens of pacifism, nonviolence, and just war.

Judging from the response of the USCCB to the attack of September 11, 2001, and the American invasion of Iraq in 2003, Gary Simpson named the Church's approach to peace as a combination of "just war and pacifism."<sup>167</sup> Turner James Johnson argues that the Church's stance on peace involves "practical" and "functional" opposition to the use of military force.<sup>168</sup> Hawksley divides the Church's non-violence into two, active and passive, and argues that the church focuses its involvement on active non-violence.<sup>169</sup> Reflecting on Pope Francis's

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Books, 1988). Suro, an insider to the situation of Chile during the reign of a military dictator, General Pinochet, explains the agenda of this theology succinctly, saying: "Liberation theology is a school of thought that calls on the Church radically to transform itself so that, it can become an aggressive agent of social change." Read Suro, "The Writing of an Encyclical" in *Aspiring for Freedom*, 162. Meanwhile, the theology of peacebuilding is an initiative of different ethicists and theologians. Read Robert J. Schreiter, R Scott Appleby and Gerard Power eds., *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*. Of particular importance to the subject matter is the work of Cahill, "A Theology of Peacebuilding," 300-331.

<sup>164</sup> John Paul had a personal experience of Chile and brought this to *Solicitudo rei Socialis*. Read Michael Novak, "The Development of Nations," in *Aspiring to Freedom*, 67.

<sup>165</sup> Christiansen, "Catholic Peacemaking, 1991 – 2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II," 22.

<sup>166</sup> Thomas Massaro, *Catholic Social Teaching in Action: Living Justice* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 12.

<sup>167</sup> Simpson, *War, Peace and God: Rethinking the Just War Tradition*, 73-78.

<sup>168</sup> Turner James Johnson, "Getting it Right," *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 171. See also Johnson, *The War to Oust Saddam Hussein: Just War and the New Face of Conflict* (New York: Rowman & Little Field Publishers, 2005), 32; Johnson also thinks that the Church "became increasingly tied to development in secular international law" rather remaining in the framework of just war as handed over by Augustine. See Johnson, "Just War, As It Was and Is," *First Things* 149 no. 2 (2005), 1-2; and Johnson, "Getting it Right," *Journal of Religious Ethics*, 176-177.

<sup>169</sup> Hawksley speaks of the Church adopting active non-violence as the Church's manner of means of reconciliation and peace. See Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 183-184.

document, *Fratelli Tutti* (2020), the previously mentioned Winright contends that the Church continues to prioritise non-violence but at the same time alludes to the criteria of Just War Theory, such as just cause (that is, self-defence), right intention, last resort and proportionality, without explicitly mentioning just war.<sup>170</sup> In his view, the Church should embrace both just war and nonviolence. He links Just War Theory to just policing, which for him is also an aspect of the Responsibility to protect (R2P) and international order, arguing that although there may be disagreement between just war theorists and pacifists about the use of force to prevent crime, the Church and peacebuilders should know that their duty is essentially to deter people from crime and suffering the pain of violence crime by preserving their dignity.<sup>171</sup>

Overall, ethicists share similar opinions on the present direction of the Catholic vision of peacebuilding. Cahill refers to the Catholic approach to peacebuilding as just war reasoning and nonviolent or active pacifism because of its increasingly restrictive approach to war and its emphasis on reconciliation.<sup>172</sup> For her, Christian peacebuilding must go beyond Just War Theory. It should embrace other religious values without losing its values. She states: “[Christian peacebuilding can be] public, political, and pluralistic without losing its religious character.”<sup>173</sup> She criticises passive nonviolence and challenges the Church to do the same. Kenneth Himes seems to follow Cahill’s reasoning when he writes that Christian pacifism must not be confused with passivism. In his view, Catholic Pacifism is not passivism; it means “all believers must defend the cause of justice, must protect human rights, and must resist evil.”<sup>174</sup> As previously mentioned, Drew Christiansen best describes peacebuilding in Catholic tradition as a “convoy [composite] concept” of peace, by which he means it comprises many related layers but often side by side.<sup>175</sup> He argues that the tradition has high standards in applying Just

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<sup>170</sup> Tobias Winright, “Why I Shall Continue to Use and Teach Just War Theory,” *Expositions* 12, no. 1 (2018) 145.

<sup>171</sup> Winright, “Just Policing and the Responsibility to Protect,” *Ecumenical Review* 63, no 1 (2011), 90. The term responsibility to protect refers to a criterion to prevent crimes or for intervention. It was proposed and use by the International Commissions to intervene and protect citizens from impunity, crimes, violations of human rights by preserving their dignity, well-being and safety. Semegnish Asfaw, “Introduction,” in *The Responsibility to Protect: Ethical and Theological Reflections*, eds., Semegnish Asfaw, Guillermo Kerber and Peter Weiderud (Geneva: World Council Churches, Geneva, 2005).

<sup>172</sup> Cahill, “Just War, Pacifism, Just Peace, and Peacebuilding, 177; Cahill also argues that “presumption against violence is necessary to Christian social ethics.” She argues that the Church’s appeal to nonviolence to speak of peace.

<sup>173</sup> Cahill, *Blessed Are the Peacemakers: Pacifism, Just War and Peacebuilding* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2019), 23.

<sup>174</sup> Kenneth Himes, “Passivism,” in *The New Dictionary of Catholic Social Thought*, ed., Judith A. Dwyer (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1994), 707.

<sup>175</sup> See Christiansen, “Catholic Peacemaking, 1991 – 2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 22.

War Theory.<sup>176</sup> Whilst at times the focus of the tradition on peacebuilding is on structures and institutions, at other times, individuals are called to account for the high rise of violence.

#### 4.5.1 Peacekeeping in Catholic Social Teaching

Scholars in the field have acknowledged the importance of CST in peacebuilding efforts. Hehir writes:

Peacebuilding is more closely related to Catholic social teaching as found in the Papal tradition than it is to the moral categories used in the JWE. It is perhaps best to conceive of peacebuilding and the JWE as correlative resources rooted in the Catholic tradition (but not only there) they can be used independently in situations of potential and actual conflict.<sup>177</sup>

In *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis* (2010), many have treated the rich contents and principles of CST as indispensable resources for peacebuilding.<sup>178</sup> For instance, R. Scott Appleby writes:

This book describes the myriad ways in which the Catholic Church is engaged in peacebuilding activities and operations around the world. In doing so, it explores the distinctive resources, concepts, and practices the Church contributes to the process of transforming conflict and peacebuilding a sustainable peace, and it reflects on the ways in which the Catholic participation and leadership is testing, challenging, and renewing the Church's historic commitment to the work of justice and peace.<sup>179</sup>

The Catholic tradition's commitment to justice and peace is primarily nonviolence, albeit without completely abandoning just war thinking. As important as this approach to peacebuilding, it attracted criticism. The following section will outline them.

#### 4.5.2 Criticisms of Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching

The lack of sufficient emphasis on profound theology in the social tradition has become a more pressing concern.<sup>180</sup> To some degree, themes such as forgiveness, sin, the trinity, passion, and resurrection of Christ are mentioned in the documentary heritage of CST, but it does not

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<sup>176</sup> Christiansen, S.J., "After Sept. 11: Catholic Teaching on Peace and War," *Origins* 32, no. 3 (May, 2002), 36.

<sup>177</sup> JWE = Just War Ethics. Bryan Hehir J, "The Ethics and Policy of War in the Light of Displacement," in *Driving from Home: Protecting the Rights of Forced Migrants*, ed., David Hollenbach (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2010), 191.

<sup>178</sup> Read the book edited by Schreiter, Appleby, and Powers, titled *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*. In the book, theologians and ethicists like Cahill, John Paul Lederach, Daniel Philpott, Kenneth R. Himes, and others elaborate on the connection between Catholic social teaching and peacebuilding.

<sup>179</sup> Scott, "Peacebuilding and Catholicism: Affinities, Convergence, Possibilities," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, 3-4

<sup>180</sup> Schreiter worries that the Church finds itself at a crossroads, struggling to choose between changing structures and calling for spiritual discipline and the transformation of individuals. See Schreiter, "Future directions in Catholic Peacebuilding," eds., Robert J. Schreiter, R Scott Appleby, and Gerard Power (New York: Orbis Books, 2010), 445

sufficiently handle the topics. It has been noted that Catholic tradition relies strongly on natural law that is based on reason. As stated already in this study, *Gaudium et Spes* began with a theological analysis of global issues. However, when it comes to matters of peace, it adopts the long-existing deontological ethical model with natural law as the fundamental way of viewing peacebuilding themes, such as human dignity, human rights, and international cooperation. John Paul II gives prominence to the theological framework but “was influenced by the neo-scholastic framework of his predecessors, John XXIII and Paul VI.”<sup>181</sup> Subsequently, Hawksley states:

The word reconciliation appears only a few times in the major conciliar documents, usually referring to reconciliation between human beings or to the sacrament of reconciliation. In the conciliar documents, as in John XXIII’s *Pacem in Terris*, the biblical concept of reconciliation is not really in view. ...Given the centrality of the themes of human unity and interdependence to the council, and its ecclesiological vision of the church as the sacrament of human unity, one might have expected more emphasis on the theology of reconciliation in the year following Vatican II than has actually been evident.<sup>182</sup>

The use of themes such as God, forgiveness from the perspective of the cross of Christ, and sin by some of the pontiffs signposts a theological approach. At the same time, this does not mean that the tradition in this state embraces the theological approach to peacebuilding deeply, which, for Cahill, is of paramount importance to peacebuilding. She writes: “A theology of peacebuilding can see the cross as God’s willingness to enter into the human condition of guilt as well as of innocent suffering in order to restore relationships and communities that have been perverted by human sin.”<sup>183</sup> The Catholic peacebuilding at this stage (before Benedict XVI) relied on the natural law approach based upon the teachings of Christ. Equally, there can be much focus on political structures and systemic injustice rather than discussing theological content. As Himes states:

Reconciliation involves the transformation of relationships so that future conflicts do not erupt into violence. This presents a challenge to Catholic social teaching because the tradition’s focus on economic and political structures has left it deficient in the way it relates personal character and virtue to social issues.<sup>184</sup>

There is then, for many, less emphasis on personal character. On the same matter, Schreiter observes:

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<sup>181</sup> Shadle, *The Origin of War: A Catholic Perspective*, 171.

<sup>182</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 165.

<sup>183</sup> Cahill, “A Theology of Peacebuilding,” in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, 315.

<sup>184</sup> Himes, “Peacebuilding in the Catholic Social Teaching,” 287.

In some instances, it is a matter of where one enters the peacebuilding process. Should it change structures first or implement spiritual discipline that transforms individuals? This is not an either-or proposition. The Catholic Church finds itself struggling with both sides, each of which reflects a different point of departure. This was much in evidence in the 2009 Special Synod for Africa in the Vatican as the participants debated how to achieve reconciliation, healing, and peace in the continent of Africa.<sup>185</sup>

Given this wrestling, others think that the Church did not offer guidelines for people to properly understand its teaching. For instance, Power writes: “The purpose and nature of Catholic social teaching is often difficult for people to understand. It does not provide a ready-made handbook for action; rather, it is a set of guidelines which need to be approached in a spirit of prayerful endeavour.”<sup>186</sup>

More criticisms focus on the tradition’s approach to social justice, especially its use of human rights to address violence. Curran states: “Rights’ language can easily become just a battleground of individual claims. Even in the best conditions, however, human rights often conflict.”<sup>187</sup> Curran is not rejecting the Church’s use of human rights language as a tool for social action but instead questioning the tradition’s insistence and persistence on rights.

Elsewhere, the Church’s use of dialogue itself has been questioned. According to a Nigerian theologian, Teresa Okure:

To date, certain expressions make it clear that often when we refer to the Church, we do not mean the people of God (of *Lumen Gentium*) or the Church-family of God (of *ecclesia in Africa*), but principally the hierarchy. A key area is the priest-laity relationship.”<sup>188</sup>

In her view, there is no practical dialogue in African churches because the dialogue she sees in the region does not represent God’s reconciliation; it is about the hierarchy.

At the same time, the Synodal Exhortation of the Second Synod on Africa broke the trend and strongly linked the theological themes and practices of reconciliation with peacebuilding. One observation from Theodora Hawksley deserves to be cited.

*Africae Munus* also links the theme of reconciliation more closely to Catholic social teaching on peace. This is partly because the document clearly emerges from, and addresses, the particular and concrete situation of Africa; *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia*, while more theologically systemic, is much more abstract. This means that the political is much more in view in *Africae Munus*, in the relationship between the Church and

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<sup>185</sup> Schreiter, “Future Direction in Catholic Peacebuilding,” 445.

<sup>186</sup> Maria Power, *Catholic Social Teaching and Theologies of Peace: Cardinal Daly and the Pursuit of the Peaceable Kingdom* (London: Routledge, 2021), 166.

<sup>187</sup> Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching 1891- Present*, 222.

<sup>188</sup> Teresa Okure, “Church-Family of God: The Place of God’s Reconciliation, Justice and Peace,” in *Reconciliation, Justice and Peace: The Second African Synod*, 14.

politics. The tension between the spiritual and political on the grounds begins to emerge in the document itself.<sup>189</sup>

There is no clear distinction between religious or theological reconciliation and political reconciliation in *Africae Munus*.

It has also been noted that the Church's role in advocacy, such as condemnation of systemic injustice, violation of human rights, and the call for distributive justice, has been one-sided. According to O'Brien and Shannon: "To pretend that all evils in the world have been or are now being perpetrated by dictatorial regimes would be both dishonest and absurd."<sup>190</sup> Such a regime indeed perpetrates evil, especially in the case of the present Russian president, Putin. At the same time, it is true that this is not the case in all instances. The crux of the matter, according to O'Brien, is that violation of human rights, whether by a tyrannical or democratic regime, must be condemned.

Growing awareness has emerged with regard to violence against women. Although this has been acknowledged in parts, the Catholic tradition has been criticised for not dealing with the problem strongly.<sup>191</sup> Returning to the African situation, Anne Arabome observes: "The African Church has a long way to go before it can say in any sense of truthfulness that women are treated with dignity and justice as recognised as equal disciples in the community called the Church...For African women, no words are too strong to express the injustice that we feel."<sup>192</sup> She noted that the scripture is an underutilised resource to address injustices and violence against women.

These critical analyses deserve attention, setting a further context for engaging Benedict's logic of the gift with CST's vision of peacebuilding.

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<sup>189</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 171-171.

<sup>190</sup> O'Brien and Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*, 546.

<sup>191</sup> For more information on violence against women, read Anne Arabome, "'Women, You Are Set Free': Women and Disciples in the Church," in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace: The Second African Synod*, 119-120, and 21; Megan Clark reports that "In 2017, there is not a single nation that does not have a problem addressing violence against women." See Meghan Clark, "How Will *Amoris Laetitia* Assist the Church's Dialogue with Women?" in *Amoris Laetitia: A New Momentum for Moral Formation and Pastoral Practice*, eds., Grant Gallicho and James F. Keenan (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), 98; John I. Allen, "Pope Extol Women's right in Africa," in *National Catholic Reporter*, March 22, 2009.

<sup>192</sup> Anne Arabome, "'Woman, You Are Set Free!': Women and the Discipleship in the Church," in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace: The Second African Synod*, 119.

### 4.5.3 Models of Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching.

This brief review of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST and the opinions of theologians on the same matter should suffice to show that the models of peacebuilding in CST are four, namely, just war, pacifism, social justice, and pastoral accompaniment.

#### 4.5.3.1 Just War Theory

The Just War Theory and pacifism are the earliest models of Catholic peacebuilding. The focus here is on the former. At its core, Just War is the ethical commitment to adhere to the reasoning about the morality of war and defend one's position or proffer an alternative ethical claim towards peacebuilding. Michael Walzer and John Courtney Murray are significant figures in the contemporary articulation of the theory.<sup>193</sup> Traditionally, the theory marked out two branches, namely, *jus ad bellum* (justice before war) and *jus in Bello* (justice during war). These have norms guiding them. Garry Simpson listed ten norms: Just cause, legitimate authority, right intention, last resort, proportionality end, probability of success, public declaration, noncombatant discrimination, and proportionality of means. Even though other theologians outlined their lists of norms, they all reflect the aforementioned.<sup>194</sup> John Paul approved legitimate armed defence if the intention was to love. *Gaudium et Spes* condemns those who reject it, especially when it is approved by a legitimate authority and promises rewards for

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<sup>193</sup> Scholars of peacebuilding cited Saint Augustine as the originator of the Just War Theory, arguing that the theory was introduced and handed over to legitimate authority for the purpose of serving and promoting the common good. This means that for the originator of the concept, those in authority have the duty to wage war for the sake of peace or the common good. See Michael Walzer, *arguing about war* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2004), 3. John Courtney Murray offers a critical analysis of how the Catholic tradition received and revised the tradition of Just War over time. He highlights that Pope Pius XII, in the nineteen forties, was the first to begin the revolutionary shift from just war to what looks like pacifism. See John Courtney Murray, "Theology and Modern War," in *William J. Nagel, The State of the Question: Morality and Modern Warfare* (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960), 74-83. Although Hawksley pointed out that scholars referred to Augustine as the originator of just war theory, she describes this assumption as "peripheral to Augustine." See Theodora Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020), 26 and 33. For more information about the theory, see Bryan Hehir. He explains the connection between just war tradition in the 1940s and 1950s. See Hehir, "The Just-War Ethic and Catholic Theology: Dynamics of Change and Continuity," in *War and Peace*, ed., Thomas Shannon (Maryknoll, N.Y: Orbis, 1982) 1-39; On the historical development of the just war theory, see James Turner Johnson, *Just War Tradition and the Restraint of War: Moral and Historical Inquiry* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1981), ix-xix; Simpson, *Rethinking, the Just War Tradition: Re-thinking the Just War tradition* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007); Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Love Your Enemy: Discipleship, Pacifism, and Just War Theory*, (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 58.

<sup>194</sup> See Maryann Cusimano Love outlined just peacebuilding, right intention, right authority, proportionality/comparative justice, probability of success, last resort, and description of proportionality. See "What Kind of Peace Do We Seek: Emerging norms of Peacebuilding in Key Political Institutions?" in *Peacebuilding, Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, 82 and "Morality Matters: Ethics and Power Politics in the War on Terrorism," in *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 3, no. 2 (Summer/Fall 2002), 10-11. For further information, see James Turner Johnson, *Just War Tradition and The Restraint of War Tradition: A Moral and Historical Inquiry* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1981); Gregory Reichberg, Nicholas Turner, and Vesselin Popovski, *World Religions and Norms of War* (New York: United Nations University Press, 2009).



those who crave it. The Catechism of the Catholic Church endorses legitimate authority and last resort without explicitly using the term war. (CCC, 2263-2267). The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (CSDC) corroborates but is more explicit on just war: “In the tragic case where such a war breaks out, leaders of the state that has been attacked have the right and the duty to organise a defence even using the force of arms.”<sup>195</sup> Here, the tradition upholds the norms of legitimate authority by calling leaders to act appropriately against any aggressor and last resort because they have no option

More recently, *jus post bellum* (justice after war). It is a response to the criticism within the *Jus ad Bellum* and *Jus in Bello*.<sup>196</sup> Kenneth Himes calls it a “minimalist approach to post-war responsibility,”<sup>197</sup> which, rather a more maximalist approach, fits the Church’s commitment to those affected by violence, supporting affected communities with material resources to rebuild their inhabitants and standard of living.<sup>198</sup>

The origin of *jus post bellum* criteria can be traced to the theologian Michael Schuck, who in 1994 proposed three principles for it - repentance, surrender and restoration.<sup>199</sup> Later, Louis Iasiello outlined seven moral norms guiding this moral claim. These include a healing mindset, just restoration, safeguards for the innocent, respect for the environment, post-war justice, warrior demobilisation, and learning the lessons of war.<sup>200</sup> After that, more scholars contributed to the discussion, offering and defending their moral claim about how to respond

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<sup>195</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 500.

<sup>196</sup> Allman Mark and Tobias Winright offered detailed explanation of the shortcomings of *Just ad Bellum* and *Jus in Bello* and proposed *jus ante bellum* and *jus post bellum* to peacebuilders. Read Allman and Winright, “Growing Edges of Just War Theory: *Just ante Bellum*, *Jus Post Bellum*, and Imperfect Justice,” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32, no. 2 (2012), 174-175; Benjamin Banta R, “Virtuous War’ and the Emergence of Jus Post Bellum,” in *Review of International Studies* 37, no. 1 (2011): 277-299, Accessed on April 22, 2023 doi:<https://doi.org/10.1017/S0260210510000434>.

<https://may.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/virtuous-war-emergence-jus-post-bellum/docview/874921987/se-2>

<sup>197</sup> Himes, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 284.

<sup>198</sup> Leo XIII and Pius XI adopted such approach to peacebuilding while writing about property ownership and dignity of labour.

<sup>199</sup> Michael Schuck, “When the Shooting Stops: Missing Elements in *Just War Theory*,” In *Christian Century* 101 (1994): 982-983.

<sup>200</sup> Louis, Iasiello v. “Jus Post Bellum: The Moral Responsibilities of Victors in War,” in *Naval War College Review*, 57 3-4 (2004): 33-52, accessed on April 22, 2023 Retrieved from <https://may.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/jus-post-bellum-moral-responsibilities-victors/docview/60602926/se-2>

to peace within this branch of just war theory.<sup>201</sup> Among these is Brian Orend, who writes on promoting justice for victims, proposing fair standards of rehabilitation and punishment, and ensuring public, proportional settlements.<sup>202</sup> Mark F. Allman proposes four criteria for *jus post bellum*: just cause, reconciliation, punishment, and restoration.<sup>203</sup> Allman and Tobias L. Winright regard *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* as too narrow in their scope. Without rejecting these aspects of just war, they include *jus ante bellum*, an element of just war which means carrying actions to protect violence from occurring.<sup>204</sup>

The Catholic tradition did not explicitly mention or outline terms for judging *jus post bellum*, and one cannot find any lists that guide it; it constantly argued for the satisfaction of basic human needs and humanitarian intervention. For instance, after the Industrial Revolution, Leo XIII and his predecessor call for distributive justice in economic life to satisfy basic needs. More recently, the call is on the option for the poor. This initiative places the tradition on *jus post bellum*.

#### 4.5.3.2 Pacifism

CST embraces pacifism at different times and seasons while responding to violence in various places. Among the tradition's pacifist activities are prayers, justice, love, forgiveness, dialogue and, in short, non-violence.<sup>205</sup> The CSDC states:

It is not easy to forgive when faced with the consequences of war and conflict because of violence, especially when it leads to the very depths of inhumanity and suffering, leaves behind heavy burden and pain... The weight of the past, which cannot be forgotten, can be accepted only when mutual forgiveness is offered and received; this is a long and difficult process, but one that is not impossible.<sup>206</sup>

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<sup>201</sup> Brian Orend "Justice after War," *Ethics and International Affairs* 16, no. 1 (2002): 43-56.

Brian Orend, "Jus Post Bellum," *Journal of Social Philosophy* 31 (2000), 117-37; David Kellogg, "Jus Post Bellum: The Importance of War Crimes Trials," *Parameters* 32, no. 3 (2002): -87-99, Brian Orend "Justice after War," in *Ethics and International Affairs* 16, no. 1 (2002): 43-56; Louis Iasiello, "Jus Post Bellum," *The Moral Responsibility of Victors in War*, *Naval War College Review* 57, no. 3 /4 (2004): 33-52; Garry Bass, "Jus Post Bellum," *Philosophy and Public Affairs* 32 (2004): 384-412; Tobias Winright, *Jus Post Bellum: Extending the Just War Theory*, in *Faith In Public Life: The Annual Publication of the College of Theology Society*, ed., William Collinge (Maryknoll NY: Orbis Books, 2008) Read Stephen Pope, "The Convergence of Forgiveness and Justice," *Lessons From El Salvador*, *Theological Studies* (Baltimore) 64, no. 4 (2003): 812-835 p. 817.

<sup>202</sup> Brian Orend "Justice after War," 43-44.

<sup>203</sup> Mark Allman, *Who Would Jesus Like? War, Peace, and the Christian Tradition* (Washington D.C: Anselm Academic, 2008), 234-238.

<sup>204</sup> Allman Mark and Tobias Winright, "Growing Edges of Just War Theory: Jus Ante Bellum, Jus Post Bellum, and Imperfect Justice," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32, no, 2 (2012), 174.

<sup>205</sup> Simpson calls the Church's non-violence pragmatic (or consequentialist) pacifism, distinct from 'principled pacifism'. He writes: "Principled pacifism opposes violence and war in principle, no matter what the situation is or circumstances are." See Simpson, *War Peace and God*, 76.

<sup>206</sup> Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *The Compendium of the Catholic Social Doctrine of the Church*, no. 517.

As previously mentioned, in 1968, Paul VI exclaimed, ‘No more war!’ and followed the exhortation by teaching that development is peace. While he did not reject legitimate armed defence, John Paul calls for prayers and forgiveness profusely, giving much attention to “the spirit of the Assisi.”<sup>207</sup> For instance, he teaches that society and individuals need forgiveness for peace to reign.<sup>208</sup> Although he allowed the use of force and mentioned legitimate authority, Faith-based solidarity is his preferred principle of peacebuilding.

In 2016, the *Catholic Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace* (CPCJP) and *Pax Christi International* (PCI) hosted a non-violence and Just Peace conference. The conference hosted more than eighty peacebuilding scholars, theologians, priests, and lay leaders worldwide. Among these were just war scholars, pacifists, and active nonviolence activists. After discussing matters of war, violence and peace, they agreed that the Church should practice non-violence.<sup>209</sup> This thesis submits that the tradition’s stance on peacebuilding is an open discussion on nonviolence and implicit adoption of legitimate armed defence. It combines just war and pacifism as opposed to passivism. It is a commitment to human rights and what this study earlier called positive peace – establishing enabling conditions for flourishing. Catholic social teaching on peacebuilding is better described as active nonviolence. Himes gets its best when he observes: “Pacifism in the Catholic Church means that one is committed not only to the condemnation of war but also to positive peace. It is not sectarian withdrawal from responsibility or transmitting the message of Christ into the political order, or rejection state’s human right to self-defence.”<sup>210</sup> It is the view that the Church is committed to condemn violence and war through the promotion of human dignity but at the same time preaches the message of the risen Christ and Christian ethics in the public domain. This point leads to the third model of Catholic peacebuilding.

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<sup>207</sup> This is an interfaith prayer meeting organised by the Church at Assisi, especially to respond to violence. In 1986, 1993, and 2002, John Paul used the forum to organised prayers and other non-violence activities that have helped to restore peace in Yugoslavia and cautioned the effect of the September 11, 2001 bomb attack in the United States of America. See Christiansen, “Catholic Peacemaking, 1991-2005: The Legacy of John Paul II,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (2010), 25.

<sup>208</sup> John Paul II, “No Peace without Justice, No Justice without Forgiveness,” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2002, no. 2.

<sup>209</sup> For more information on this conference, read The Council Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace Pax Christi International, *Conference for Nonviolence and Just Peace: Contributing to the Catholic Understanding of and Commitment to Nonviolence* Rome, April 11-13, 201, accessed on May 15, 2023, PDF; Steve Chase, “Review of Works: The Catholic Church Returns to the Gospel of Non-violence by Mary Dennis,” *International Journal on World Peace* 36, no. 4 (2019): 92 – 96; Cahill, “Just War Pacifism, Just Peace,” *Theological Studies* 80, no 1 (2018), 171.

<sup>210</sup> Himes, *Christianity, and the Political Order: Conflict, Cooptation, and Cooperation* (New York: Obis, 2013), 330.

#### 4.5.3.3 Social Justice

Social justice is another model of peacebuilding in the Catholic tradition. It refers to a commitment towards human dignity. Here, the work identifies four ways in which the Church shows commitment to human dignity. The first is by observing the principle of the universal destination of goods. It holds that God created the earth and all it contains for the well-being of everyone. The second is the principle of the option for the poor and the earth. This principle refers to empathy towards others, including the natural environment. In the words of Himes, “It is acting on behalf of the poor.”<sup>211</sup> Thirdly, there is the commitment to human rights. The fourth and final is observing the principles of distribution, solidarity, and subsidiarity. As pointed out in this study, Christiansen states:

For John XXIII, the substance of peace was the promotion, safeguarding, and defence of human rights; for Pope Paul VI it was socio-economic development, as in the famous dictum ‘if you want peace, work for justice’ (*Populorum Progressio*, 1968); and for John Paul II it was solidarity, understood as ‘the unswerving persevering commitment to the common good’ (*Sollicitudo rei Socialis*, 1988), including both human rights and development.<sup>212</sup>

The key ground here is that the Church commits itself to social justice that is based on commitments to *Imago Dei* and human dignity.

#### 4.5.3.4 Pastoral Accompaniment

Pastoral accompaniment is described as a commitment to be with those suffering the effects of violence and injustice. This chapter demonstrated how various pontiffs have responded to people’s miseries of violence and injustice. For instance, in 1968, Paul VI travelled to South America to meet with a gathering of bishops trying to implement his views on peace in their context.<sup>213</sup> While there, he listened to people’s perspectives and encouraged them. In 1987, John Paul II was in Chile to be with and encourage the people following conflicts and the housing crisis. These visits were not intended to provide a technical solution to the multiple issues confronting those populations but rather to accompany them. For many years, the Church has accompanied people in different situations and countries, such as Colombia. By way of example, Hawksley reports:

Over the course of more than sixty years of armed conflict in Columbia, the Catholic Church has come to play a significant role in peacebuilding efforts in diverse ways,

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<sup>211</sup> Himes, “Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching,” 276.

<sup>212</sup> Christiansen, “Catholic Peacemaking, 1991 – 2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 22 (Parenthesis are original).

<sup>213</sup> Dorr, *Option for the Poor & for the Earth: From Leo XIII to Pope Francis*, 154.

ranging from facilitation of the national peace process to pastoral accompaniment on a local level in communities affected by conflict.<sup>214</sup>

One of the Church's responses to violence is guiding societies damaged by conflict and other challenging situations rather than providing technical solutions.

The Church has never promised to provide perfect solutions to world problems, including violence. At the same time, it has made it clear that its central duty has always been to guide and accompany societies and people already suffering the trauma of injustice, violence, and war. It provides a moral and spiritual guide which in turn helps people navigate troubled situations through its social encyclicals (PP, 13 & 23, SRS 41 & 35 and CV, 9).<sup>215</sup> It has been argued that since its establishment by Paul VI in 1967, the messages of *World Day of Peace* have accompanied people in many ways, adding spiritual and moral aspects to the understanding of a non-violence approach to peace. Maria Power rightly places the Catholic Church's manner of pastoral accompaniment in perspective, stating:

...reading of the Gospel, the Magisterium, and crucially 'the signs of times', will provide the prophetic and pastoral nourishment needed for the laity to bring about constructive social change based upon the need for justice. In societies affected by deep-rooted conflict such as Northern Ireland, this moral imagination was inevitably turned towards building the positive conception of peace taught by the Catholic Church. Papal teaching on peace through the World Day of Peace Messages, has, since 1967, been based upon the provision of such a vision, the restoration of which can link theory and practice in a transformative manner.<sup>216</sup>

As Hawksley explains:

Pastoral accompaniment can become a peacebuilding practice in this way – *that is, helping a community or people to answer complex questions and pursue reconciliation* – but it is not just a tool or strategy adopted for pragmatic reasons. Pastoral accompaniment also has symbolic and spiritual value."<sup>217</sup>

Time after time, peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST reflects attitudes of Pastoral Accompaniment rather than claiming to provide an answer to the multiple questions of peacebuilding. This study claims that in addition to just war, pacifism and social justice, pastoral accompaniment is now identified as a longstanding model of peacebuilding in the Catholic tradition.

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<sup>214</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Teaching Social Teaching*, 106.

<sup>215</sup> Heuhaus, writes: "The Church's aim is to 'interpret' realities, to 'guide' behaviour, and always to point man towards his vocation which is at once earthly and transcendent. Heuhaus, "Sollicitudo Behind the Headlines," in *Aspiring to Freedom*, 143.

<sup>216</sup> Power, *Catholic Social Teaching and Theologies of Peace in Northern Ireland: Cardinal Cahal Daly and the Pursuit of the Peaceful Kingdom* (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis, 2021), 14.

<sup>217</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Teaching Social Teaching*, 85 (Italics are my words).

This thesis, to be precise, this chapter, does not argue that the Church prefers one of these models to the other despite the differences in them. It presents the reality of violence and war in society, as it combines just war and nonviolence in different contexts and times. David Carroll Cochran gets it correct when he writes: “A Narrow space for justified war still exists in Catholic Doctrine.”<sup>218</sup> Some theologians and ethicists, both from the perspectives of just war and pacifism, have tried to combine these models in practice and theory. For instance, Cahill and Michael Baxter, just war and pacifist scholars, respectively, refused to argue for abolishing legitimate armed defence altogether.<sup>219</sup> Winright, a just war scholar, states: “We Catholics pray for an end to war.”<sup>220</sup> Along with many pacifists and just war theorists, these stressed integral peacebuilding, peacekeeping, Christian love that embodies activism, responsibility to protect, and so forth.<sup>221</sup> This thesis contends that they are arguing within the boundary of Benedict’s logic of the gift because of the emphasis on love, activism and responsibility.

#### **4.6 The Correlation Between Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching and the Concept of the Gift**

It has been established that Catholic tradition operates four models of catholic peacebuilding, including Just War, Pacifism, Social Justice, and Pastoral accompaniment. The tradition based these models on different principles, such as the dignity of the human person, solidarity and subsidiarity, the common good, participation, options for the poor, forgiveness, and economic and integral development. It could be said that it shows commitment to non-violence via these principles without completely ignoring just war reasoning.<sup>222</sup> For instance, it concludes that

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<sup>218</sup> David Carroll Cochran, *Catholic Realism and the Abolition of War* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 2.

<sup>219</sup> Lisa Sowle Cahill and Michael Baxter, “Is This Just War?” In *Moral Issues and Christian Responses*, 7<sup>th</sup> ed., es., Patricia Beatie Jung and Shannon Jung (Belmont, CA: Thomson Wads Worth, 2023), 358.

<sup>220</sup> Winright, “Introduction,” in *Can War Be Just in 21<sup>st</sup> Century?*, xxii. Elsewhere, Winright, a Just War thinker, supports pacifist reasoning when he writes on integral peace, a proposal for peacebuilding efforts that involves commitment, duties, and Christian virtues. He believes Christians are called to share the peace of Christ through eucharistic worship. This, in his view, can help Christians to become peacemakers. See Winright, “The Eucharist as the Basis for Catholic Identity, Just War Theory, and the Presumption against War,” in *Catholic Identity and the Laity, College Theology Society Annual*, Vol. 54, ed., Tim Muldoon (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2009), 134-151.

<sup>221</sup> See Winright, “Just Policing and the responsibility to protect,” 84-95; Tobias Winright and Maria Power, *Current Roman Catholic Ethics on War and Peace vis-à-vis the Ukraine-Russia War* (Willian Temple Foundation, 2023). Hauerwas, a Protestant pacifist and Edna McDonagh, who aligned himself with the Just War Theory, appealed to the abolition of war. In the appeal, both just war theorists and pacifists were invited. For more information, See Hauerwas, *War and the American Difference: Theological Reflections on Violence and National Identity* (Grand Rapid, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 40-41; Michael Baxter, *A Just Peace Ethic Primer: Building Sustainable Peace and Breaking Cycles of Violence*, ed., Eli S. McCarthy (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2020).

<sup>222</sup> Maria Power and Christopher Hrynkow, “Qualified Advocacy for Just Peace: The Popes’ World Day of Peace Messages 1968-2020) in Historical and Ethical perspectives,” *Journal of Peace Research* 45, no 3 (2020), 342.

peace follows when human dignity is valued, respected, protected, and promoted, and violence when it is threatened.

This thesis argues that these principles tend to share certain features with Benedict's idea of the gift. Benedict's logic of the gift is articulated in different characteristics. For example, it is Charity in love, reciprocity, hope, fraternity, truth, truth-telling, transparency and accountability, generosity, financial aid and so forth. These characteristics of the gift have ethical roots in human dignity. They also promote human dignity, solidarity, and economic development, which ultimately concern loving and caring for others without demanding rewards. On this argument, the following discussion shall invoke five principles of CST - human dignity, economic development, justice, solidarity, and participation or subsidiarity. This list is chosen for two reasons: firstly, to shorten what is quite a long list of principles, and secondly, these principles are more closely related to secular theories of peacebuilding outlined in the next chapter.

#### **4.6.1 Human Dignity**

According to the Second Vatican Council, "There is a growing awareness of the sublime dignity of the human person, who stands above all things and whose rights and duties are universal and inviolable. [The Church] ought, therefore, to have ready access to all that is necessary for living a genuinely human life" (GS, 26). Reflecting on homelessness and human dignity, Suzanne Mulligan sheds more insight on this new vision of the dignity of the human person. She writes: "What we find, therefore, in the social doctrine of the Church is a robust defence of human dignity that includes analysis of how this dignity is violated or threatened in our world."<sup>223</sup> The suggestion here is that human dignity means ensuring that people's basic needs for real human life or conditions of human survival, such as housing, poor working conditions, slavery and arbitrary detention, are met. As already discussed, in different popes and at different times, the promotion of human dignity is peace, and its violation is violence.

The logic of the gift performs a similar function since its primary focus is the analysis of the living condition of the human person in his or her social and transcendent nature; it is about the freedom to give oneself to others. Gift-giving can be a way to express love, appreciation, and thoughtfulness towards others, which can contribute to enhancing their sense

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<sup>223</sup> Suzanne Mulligan, "Homelessness: Some Theological Reflection," *Studies: An Irish Quarterly Review* 112, no.448 (2022), 442.

of worth and dignity. When we give someone a gift, it shows that we value and care for them, which can have a positive impact on their self-esteem and sense of belonging. Additionally, the act of giving a gift can create a sense of reciprocity and connection between individuals, strengthening their social bonds and relationships and leading to co-existence. The gift can play a role in upholding and promoting human dignity by fostering feelings of worth and connection among individuals. It is about generosity that stands against corruption and any vice that threatens the worth of the person by reducing them into a tool for profit. Thus, the significant link between the concept of the gift and peacebuilding in CST resides in their common goal of promoting human dignity.

#### **4.6.2 Economic Development**

Economic development is closely related to peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching. This thesis already mentions that the tradition believes that markets and businesses must be geared towards the promotion and well-being of the person. There is a growing impression that Catholic Social Teaching condemns the free market, ignoring its positive impact. It is argued that the Church welcomes economic models that accrue profit and fulfil basic human needs, creating job and education opportunities, and leading to flourishing. It condemns short-term profit that undervalues the worth of the human person and creates social and economic inequality. In other words, economic development that prioritises pure profit threatens human dignity, leading to violence, and one that considers profit but not at the detriment of the human person leads to peace.

The gift also impacts economic development in multiple ways. Firstly, it does not focus on policies alone but concentrates on encounters with persons in the market, civil society, and the worth and flourishing of the person. These encounters stimulate collaboration, sharing of ideas, and identification of economic needs, such as equality. These can be crucial to economic development since they create job opportunities and peace. Secondly, the gift stimulates generosity, voluntary and philanthropic services and social relations, leading to consumer spending and encounters in the market and civil society. These can create jobs and education opportunities and reduce homelessness, economic crises, and inequality (*EG*, 60), stimulating economic development.

#### **4.6.3 Justice**

It has been shown that Catholic Social Teaching considers justice as a strong instrument of peace because it refers to giving people their due. Thus, CST explains the intimate relationship



between justice and gift-giving. For example, for Leo XIII and Pius XI, justice means properly distributing resources. John XXIII believes that justice is when people's rights are granted. From this perspective, CST sees active violence in unjust structures. Papal teachings on justice are about governance and how families and individuals can change their hearts and offer people what belongs to them. In short, it is a nonviolent transformation of society. The point is that justice means participating in the act of granting people their due.

This understanding of justice, then, is preceded by an act of gift-giving since it means granting people their due. It is in this overlap that the gift is related to justice. In this way, the concept of the gift allows for a discussion that serves to promote the act of granting people what belongs to them. Thus, justice is akin to reciprocity inherent in gift-giving. Gift-giving is a responsibility and response of political authorities, families, and individuals to the love of God in public space (CV, 6). It also allows people to view justice as reciprocity or political charity, showing that charity is intrinsic to justice. Put in another way, true justice, which is connected to promoting human dignity and peacebuilding, is grounded in the logic of the gift. One could even say that the logic of the gift adjudicates between justice that is true and the one that is not. The link between the gift and papal teaching on peacebuilding from the perspective of justice finds approval in the relationship between Christian charity and justice. Overall, justice and the concept of the gift intertwine in their commitment to human dignity, social cohesion, and fairness.

#### **4.6.4 Solidarity**

Solidarity is a foundational concept to peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of Catholic Social Teaching. It speaks of mutual respect, a sense of goodwill that stands against control but promotes participation. The tradition favours solidarity through global governance as its preferred means for fostering peace, calling on the global community and authority to rise to their commitment to the principle of solidarity. For example, Paul VI focuses on integral development, valuing participation, and democratic government. John Paul II dwells on Christian solidarity, valuing forgiveness, dialogue, moral truth, prayer and so forth. In short, the tradition deploys diverse themes, such as respect, dialogue, reciprocity, fraternity, and forgiveness, to write on solidarity and subsidiarity. In this methodology, the thesis sees a close link between Benedict's concept of the gift and papal teaching on peacebuilding.

Benedict articulates the gift of mutual respect, forgiveness, and dialogue. It is precisely in these three themes that this thesis sees a link between the gift and solidarity. Firstly, from the perspective of mutual respect, the gift can also strengthen social bonds and relationships of

mutual respect, leading to solid community bonding, which solidarity seeks. When individuals and communities exchange material or non-material gifts, it can foster goodwill and respect and contribute to solidarity, leading to peacebuilding.

The gift is primarily a virtue ethic and an act of giving, aligning itself with forgiveness that stimulates solidarity. It is about forgiving the other and inviting the same to the table of dialogue-in-reciprocity.<sup>224</sup> As Desmond Tutu observes: “Even if there is not one in your life who has demonstrated the pattern of acceptance to you [love and forgiveness], it is a pattern that you can discover for yourself. It is a gift you give to yourself.”<sup>225</sup> The gift facilitates this virtue, and so promotes reconciliation and togetherness. It can serve as a gesture of reconciliation and forgiveness in conflict regions. By offering gifts to individuals involved in conflict, parties can express their desire or willingness to move beyond grievances to forgiveness and solidarity.

The central argument here is that gift-giving can strengthen solidarity within a group or community because it creates a sense of unity, trust, fraternity, and connection among individuals. It solidifies and fosters a sense of togetherness among people, changing people’s attention from competition to cooperation. Additionally, it solidifies solidarity because it can be a gesture of support in times of need or crisis. By giving a gift to someone in a problematic situation, individuals show empathy, offer comfort, and believe that they stand together in times of adversity.

#### **4.6.5 Participation and Subsidiarity**

The general nature of gift-giving is highly linked to the principle of participation. This principle is primarily about active involvement in whatever improves society and social cohesion, going beyond merely participating in democratic activities. As *Gaudium et Spes* states:

Sometimes there exist conditions of life and of work which impede the cultural striving of men and destroy in them the eagerness for culture. This is especially true of farmers and workers. It is necessary to provide for them those working conditions which will not impede their human culture but rather favour it. Women now work in almost all spheres. It is fitting that they are able to assume their proper role in accordance with their own nature. It will belong to all to acknowledge and favour the proper and necessary participation of women in the cultural life (GS, 60)<sup>226</sup>

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<sup>224</sup> See Chapter 3, section 3.4.2 of this Study.

<sup>225</sup> Desmond Tutu, *Made for Goodness* (London: Rider, 2010), 183.

<sup>226</sup> See also *Laudato Si*, no. 217; and Tobias Winright, “Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding,” in *All Creation is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis’s Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo (Winona: Anselm Academic, 2018), 204.

Andrew Kim simplifies the meaning of participation, stating: “The idea here [participation] is to reduce the scope of governmental reach so that individual citizens are freer to make their own decisions and thus participate’ in the general direction of society as a whole.”<sup>227</sup> This principle of participation is closely related to the principle of subsidiarity, which speaks of the need for limited participation of government authority or donors and the responsibility of citizens.

Benedict’s concept of the gift entails people participating and taking responsibility freely and actively without control.<sup>228</sup> It is about participating in the general act of giving through passing on of whatever one receives; it involves encounters with the other through exchange, dialogue and sharing. From this perspective, it aligns itself with CST teaching on Peacebuilding through the principle of participation.

The concept of the gift is an integral part of the teaching of the church and has been integrated into CST because It runs through the conversation on human dignity, economic development, justice, solidarity, participation and subsidiarity. Put differently, the concept of the gift is intrinsic to CST because its teachings on peacebuilding are predicated on it; whether they are a gift or gift-giving – an idea or practice – the gift embodies Catholic peacebuilding since they intertwined in our understanding of social harmony, well-being, and peacebuilding.

#### **4.7 Conclusion**

The chapter has identified four models of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST: Just War Theory, pacifism, social justice, and pastoral accompaniment. Social justice and non-violence dominated the tradition’s teaching. *Jus Post Bellum* has become an essential part of the Just War Ethics that now carries more weight. Scholars are becoming aware that pastoral accompaniment is a CST peacebuilding model. The practice of just war is almost losing grip. The Church has not put explicit emphasis on it in recent times. The church only endorses it. The CST uses these models in different ways depending on the prevailing circumstances. From Leo XIII's era to Pius XI, it appealed to citizens and authority to sustain natural order. From John XXIII to *Gaudium et Spes*, an appeal and advocacy existed. Paul VI, regional bishops’ conferences, and John Paul II demonstrated a deep sense of appeal, advocacy, and activism.

Each encyclical and teaching presented by an individual pope complements the other. Interpreting the ideas advanced by an individual pope in isolation or drawing from one social

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<sup>227</sup> Andrew Kim, *An Introduction to Catholic Ethics Since Vatican II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 2015),

<sup>228</sup> See section 2.5 of this thesis.

encyclical alone to point out these models of peacebuilding will not yield a substantive result. For example, John Paul II's idea of solidarity complements Paul VI's notion of integral development. Paul's development supplements John XXIII's human interdependence and cooperation. Essentially, the models of peacebuilding in CST are based on core principles such as the dignity of the human person, solidarity, the common good, human rights, interdependence or cooperation.

As expected, specific criticisms were levelled against the tradition's approach to peace. The critique that the tradition fails to discuss the role of theology in peacebuilding discourse is a concern. *Gaudium et Spes* gives us a theological insight in its opening chapters but fails to continue with the discussion in the section that deals with peacebuilding. It aligned with a philosophical approach to natural law. Despite this and other criticisms, this chapter has advanced two points: one, that the tradition responds to violence through the mentioned four models of peacebuilding, and two, there are fundamentals to these models that are either ignored or left untapped. One of them is the explicit and robust mention of the link between the logic of the gift and peacebuilding in CST. Although Benedict developed the tradition in his principle of gratuitousness (the gift), he did not address peacebuilding to the same extent as John XXIII or John Paul II. While chapter six of this work discusses how he touches on the gift and peacebuilding, the next chapter explores the Basic Human Needs Theory. The purpose is to explore a secular theory of peacebuilding and how it may overlap with the Catholic tradition and share similarities in the concept of the gift.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### Exploring Basic Human Needs Theory of Peacebuilding

#### 5.1 Introduction

Morton Deutsch observes that conflict resolution and transformation, aspects of peacebuilding, “emerged as a discipline after World War II”.<sup>1</sup> This, it may be said, is reflected in the developments in Catholic Social Teaching (CST) which were outlined in the previous chapter.

To have a greater understanding of the Catholic tradition’s idea of peacebuilding, it helps to outline alternative theories. Paramount among these theories are: ‘The Nested Theory’, ‘Justice Theory’, and ‘The Basic Human Needs Theory’. The first, ‘The Nested Theory,’ holds that “local conflicts are largely embedded in larger conflicts.”<sup>2</sup> The theory articulates the idea that global or bigger conflicts can be addressed by treating their manifestations at the domestic level. It was developed by Marie Dugan and adopted by John Paul Lederach, including Mahatma Gandhi’s nonviolent campaign in India.<sup>3</sup>

The second, ‘Justice Theory,’ deals with issues involving fairness and equality that may give rise to conflict or peace. According to Deutsch, “Conflict can lead to changes that reduce injustice; or it can increase injustice if it takes a destructive form, as in war.”<sup>4</sup> For instance, if there is an unfair procedure in the process of justice, people lose confidence in an institution that facilitates peacebuilding, and the result could be violence. This theory relies on institutions to deliver peace through equity and fairness. Prominent promoters of the theory of justice are

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<sup>1</sup> See his “Preface,” in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*, eds., Morton Deutsch and Peter T. Coleman (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 2000), xi.

<sup>2</sup> Maria Dugan, ‘A Nested Theory of Conflicts,’ in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, eds., Tom Woodhouse, Hugu Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Mitchell (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 113

<sup>3</sup> See “The Nested Theory of Conflict,” in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, ed., Tom Woodhouse, Hugu Miall, Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Mitchell (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015), 115-119.

<sup>4</sup> Morton Deutsch, “Justice and Conflict,” in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution*, 41.

John Rawls and Morton Deutsch.<sup>5</sup> This theory takes account of social engagement, but its starting point is abstract rather than people's concrete situation. In other words, this theory, especially the Rawlsian model of social justice, begins with abstract reasoning that attempts to work out social engagement as a basic requirement for fairness and equality.<sup>6</sup> Its starting point is the abstract idea of justice rather than the concrete situation of people.

The third and final model is the Basic Human Needs Theory (BHNs), which is the focus of the chapter. The chapter focuses on this theory because, unlike the Justice theory, it adopts a social justice approach similar to the Catholic Tradition. It begins with the identification of the current and essential needs of people in their concrete situation before moving to social engagement.<sup>7</sup> The historical roots of this approach in the Catholic tradition are in the natural tradition, sourced in Aristotle and Greek philosophy and exemplified by Thomas Aquinas.

The chapter features a critical discussion of the contributions made by three of the leading authors who promote the theory, namely John Burton (1915-2010), Amartya (1933 -), and William Ury (1953 -). These theorists were chosen because of three reasons that represent each. First, Burton pioneered this theory in the field of peacebuilding.<sup>8</sup> Second, Sen is a significant theorist across disciplines, such as economics and philosophy, and a Nobel Prize winner.<sup>9</sup> Third, Ury develops ten roles that can potentially satisfy social needs. His theory of the *Third Side* applies to Burton and Sen in a convenient way to peacebuilding.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Morton Deutsch writes on the Justice Theory of peacebuilding in an article entitled "Justice and Conflict" in *The Handbook of Conflict Resolution: Theory and Practice*. John Burton developed the Basic Human Needs Theory of Peacebuilding. See Burton, *Conflict Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990): 41-64; Burton, "Conflict and Communication," in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015). See also John Burton, *Conflict and Communication* (London: Macmillan, 1969); Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict: A Handbook* (Lanham, M.D.: University Press of America, 1987).

<sup>6</sup> The individual, as a participant in society or concrete situation people, received little or no attention in Rawls' idea of justice. He writes: "...fairness [is a], theory of Justice that generalises and carries to a higher level of abstraction the traditional conception of the social contract." It is the "virtue of a social intuition, as the truth of a system of thought." See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 3.

<sup>7</sup> See Section 4.5.3. For more information on the Church's focus on the concrete situation of people, see Maria Power and Christopher Hrynokow. They observe that the Catholic Church is described as the largest NGO in the world because of its response to people's concrete situations worldwide. An approach it sees as social justice and peace. Read Power and Hrynokow, "Are the Popes Leaving Behind Just War and Embracing Justpeace?" in *Peace Review: A Journal of Social Justice* 31, no. 2 (2019), 241.

<sup>8</sup> See Burton, *Conflict and Communication*; Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict: A Handbook*; Burton, *Conflict Resolution and Prevention*; Burton, "Conflict and Communication," in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*; Dennis J.D Sandole, "Extending the Reach of Basic Human Needs: A Comprehensive Theory for the Twenty-first Century," 23.

<sup>9</sup> See Amartya Sen, *Development as Freedom* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 10. See also Amartya Sen, "Development as Capability Expansion," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, eds., Bina Agarwal, Jane Humphries, and Ingrid Robeyns (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), 442; William Ury, *The Third Side: Why We Fight and How We Can Stop* (United States of America: Penguin Books, 2000), 114-189.

<sup>10</sup> William Ury, *The Third Side: Why We Fight and How We Can Stop* (New York: Penguin Books, 2000); Ury, *Must We Fight?* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

This chapter, then, addresses the question: How does an alternative theory, such as the Basic Human Needs Theory, respond to violence and peacebuilding? It does so to further the research question of the previous chapter by identifying alternative models of peacebuilding with which the CST tradition and, more specifically, Benedict's innovation of the logic of the gift can dialogue.

The discussion comprises four sections. The first considers the development of BHNs' Theory. The second selects three adherents of the theory and explains the view of each in order to tease out specifics. The third section evaluates these views. Fourthly, and finally, common grounds in Basic Human Needs Theory and Catholic Social Teaching are highlighted.

## 5.2 Basic Human Needs Theory

Quite simply, Basic Human Needs Theory holds that society achieves peace when basic needs are fulfilled, and deep-rooted conflict emerges when these needs are denied.<sup>11</sup> Abraham Maslow (1908-1970) initially located the theory within the Behavioural Psychology of human development. In an article titled, 'A Theory of Human Motivation' (1964), Maslow identifies five essential human needs, hierarchically arranged from the highest to the lowest: physiological, safety, love, self-esteem, and self-actualisation needs.<sup>12</sup> Although hierarchical, these needs are interconnected. He contends:

If both the physiological and safety needs are fairly well satisfied, then there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs, and the whole circle already described will repeat itself with this new centre. Now, the person will feel keenly, as never before, the absence of friends, or a sweetheart, or a wife or children.<sup>13</sup>

Maslow also outlines the conditions for satisfying these basic human needs:

Such conditions as freedom to speak, freedom to do what one wishes so long as no harm is done to others, freedom to express one's self, freedom to investigate and seek for information, freedom to defend one's self, justice, fairness, honesty, orderliness in the group are examples of such preconditions for basic need satisfactions. Thwarting in these freedoms will be reacted to with a threat or emergency response. These conditions are

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<sup>11</sup> Kevin Avruch and Christopher Michell, "Beyond the 'Classic Model' of Problem-Solving Workshop: 25 Years of Experience and Experiment and Adaptation," in *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice*, eds., Kevin Avruch and Christopher Mitchell (Taylor: Francis Group, 2013), 143; Avruch and Michell, "Introduction to Basic Needs in Theory and Practice", in *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice*, 4.; Dennis J.D Sandole, "Extending the Reach of Basic Human Needs: A Comprehensive Theory for the Twenty-first Century," in *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice*, 21.

<sup>12</sup> Abraham Maslow, "A Theory of Human Motivation," in *Psychological Review* 50, no. 4 (1943): 370-380, accessed on January 30, 2023, EBSCOhost, <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0054346>; Maslow, *Motivation and Personality* (New York: Harper & Row, 1970).

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 380-381

not ends in themselves, but they are almost so since they are so closely related to the basic needs, which are apparently the only ends in themselves.<sup>14</sup>

While, to some degree, the conditions for satisfying needs resemble the actual needs, particularly freedom, Maslow refuses to regard them as such. They do not meet his conditions, for a basic need must serve as an end. Satisfying basic needs and creating opportunities for people to fulfil these needs are pivotal in his theory of motivation. Significantly, in the above quotation, he points out that even denying the conditions for satisfying needs can lead to conflict.

Some years later, Paul Sites picked up the discussion in his book *Control: The Basis of Social Order* (1973). His purpose in publishing the book was to establish that control is one of the bases for moderating social behaviour. Building on BHNs' theory, he maintains that controlling and addressing social behaviours is based on the power of meeting these needs.<sup>15</sup> Similar to the needs identified by Maslow, Sites discusses social interaction that leads to human flourishing: consistency of response, stimulation, security, recognition, distributive justice, rationality, and control.<sup>16</sup> However, in contrast to Maslow, he maintains that there is no hierarchy of needs.

Drawing primarily on Sites, John Weah Burton introduced BHNs' theory into peacebuilding, an initiative that continues to attract attention.<sup>17</sup> Site argues that "individuals are not totally a piece of plastic that can be completely moulded by others."<sup>18</sup> At the same time, they [individual] must "know that control through conditioning is the essence of social life...without this orientation, socialisation could not and would not be successful."<sup>19</sup> Burton read Site and critiques control by institution or society for serving only the elites in his Basic Need Theory in international relations. For him, every conflict is embedded in the social structure that fails to fulfil essential needs.<sup>20</sup> In 1973, the social psychologist Kelman Herbert

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 383.

<sup>15</sup> Philip Melanson H., "Book Review Control: The Basis of Social Order by Paul Sites (New York: Dunellen Publishing co., 1973 pp 225)," *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 69, No. 1 (1975), 257-258, access on March 27, 2023, <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1957922>.

<sup>16</sup> See Paul Sites, "Needs are Analogues of Emotions," *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*, ed. John Burton, New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990). For more information, see Chapter Two of *Control: The Basis of Social Order* (New York: Dunellen, 1973).

<sup>17</sup> See John Burton, *Conflict and Communication*; Burton, *Resolving Deep Rooted Conflict: A Handbook*; Burton, *Conflict Resolution and Prevention* (New York: St. Martin's, 1990); Burton, "Conflict and Communication," in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, eds., Tom Woodhouse, Hugh Miall Oliver Ramsbotham and Christopher Michell (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2015).

<sup>18</sup> Sites, "Needs are Analogues of Emotions," 13.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 14.

<sup>20</sup> See Burton, *Global Conflict: The Domestic Sources of International Crisis* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1984).



applied the theory to the Israeli and Arab wars.<sup>21</sup> Scholars like Kevin Avruch, Christopher Mitchell, Ronald Fisher and Doob Leonard have discussed and situated Burton's theory in peacebuilding activities.<sup>22</sup> Even though he critiques the BHNs' Theory to a certain degree, Sen appreciates its impact on social interaction and human flourishing. As mentioned previously, this chapter focuses on Burton, Sen, and Ury.

### 5.2.1 John Wear Burton

John Wear Burton was an Australian high commissioner with a high profile in public and academic life. In 1937, he became a member of the *Commonwealth Public Service* and later became the Australian High Commissioner to Ceylon. At 32 years of age, Burton became Secretary of the *Department of External Affairs* and held that position until June 1950. He resigned from the position and contested a federal election but was defeated. He published several academic books, including *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unsolved Social and Political Problems* (1979), *Resolving Deep-Rooted Conflict: A Handbook* (1987), and *Conflict Resolution as a Political System* (1988). His involvement in politics and public life provided a context for him to write about basic human needs and peacebuilding.

Burton's starting point of argument is that every individual has specific basic needs regardless of location, age, culture, race, or religion. Drawing from Sites, Burton re-articulates eight basic needs which promote social interaction. These are a "need for the response, a need for security, a need for recognition, a need for stimulation, a need for distributive justice, a need for meaning, and a need to be seen as rational...and a need for control."<sup>23</sup> However, he also added a ninth, describing it as 'the need for self-defence' when he argues that there must be "protection of needs once they have been acquired."<sup>24</sup> Burton divides these nine needs into individual and communal needs. While the former serves the self, the latter treats universal and shared values. When discussing peace, he concentrates on communal needs, which include

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<sup>21</sup> Consolidating on Burton's Theory of Basic Human Needs's Theory, Herbert, Kelman develops a problem-solving approach in the Middle East (Israeli and Palestinian conflict) since the seventies. See his "The Development of Interactive Problem Solving: In John Burton's Footsteps," *Political Psychology* 36, no. 2 (2015): 244-245. Accessed on February 1, 2023. DOI: 10.1111/pops.12265.

<sup>22</sup> See Avruch and Mitchell, *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice*; Sandole Dennis, "John Burton's Contribution to Conflict Resolution Theory and Practice: A Personal Review," *International Journal for Peace Studies* 6, no. 1 (2001): 11-21 Accessed on January 29, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/mz7RS44s>; Ronald Fisher, *The Psychology of Intergroup and International Conflict* (New York: Springer Verlaag Publishers, 1990); Doob Leonard (ed.), *Resolving Conflict in Africa: The Fermeda Workshop* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

<sup>23</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 95.

<sup>24</sup> Burton, *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1979), 73.

identity, participation, recognition, and security.<sup>25</sup> They are universal, that is ontological, because every individual demands them, not for personal gratification but for social participation, which is essential to the human condition.

By defining needs as ontological –part of the human condition – Burton does not mean that our feelings determine our needs, for example, sexual feelings. Although these needs pertain to feelings, he does not pay much attention to them. Rather, he explains that needs are ontological because they contribute to social interaction, and the common good is expected in international relations. They ought to be sought after and defended.<sup>26</sup> He writes: “It may be that there are human relationship needs, no less vital than food and shelter, that will be fought for accordingly” but not necessarily needed in social interaction.<sup>27</sup> The view is that societies and authorities often frustrate basic human needs, resulting in conflict and violence. These are common and general needs.<sup>28</sup> From this perspective, basic needs are described as universal needs. As Ian Gough explains:

The universality of needs rests upon the belief that if needs are not satisfied then serious harm, including violence and conflict, of some objective kind will result. This is not the same as objective feelings like anxiety or unhappiness. It refers to functions, not feelings. This harm implies obstacles to successful social participation.<sup>29</sup>

Burton refuses to accept the needs of personal gratification as essential because they obstruct social engagement and interaction and considers instead the need for identity and security as the most basic needs. He does not intend to devalue personal happiness, good health or personal behaviour in the analysis of basic needs. He does not consider them as a framework for peacebuilding for two reasons: one, they do not provide long-term solutions to conflict, and two, they do not provide observed behaviour in international relations.<sup>30</sup> They do not represent a medium for effective social interaction. Instead, he opted for generally accepted needs such as security, arguing that only a radical change in society can bring about these needs. It is the claim that all basic needs are ontological, but not all are required for international relations.

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<sup>25</sup> Burton, *Global Conflict: The Domestic Sources of International Crisis*, 73 & 147.

<sup>26</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 96; Burton, *Deviance, Terrorism and War*. Mohammed Abu-Nimer, “Conflict Resolution and Human Needs,” in *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice*, 161.

<sup>27</sup> Burton, *Violence Explained: The Sources of Conflict, Violence and Crime* (New York: St Martins’ Press, 1997), 26.

<sup>28</sup> Burton, *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems*, 159.

<sup>29</sup> Ian Gough. *Heat, Greed, and Human Need: Climate Change, Capitalism and Sustainable Wellbeing* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar Publishing Limited, 2017), 42. Accessed March 29, 2023, ProQuest Ebook Central.

<sup>30</sup> Burton, John, *Deviance, Terrorism and War* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1979), 161

Drawing on this elucidation of needs, Burton presents his argument on peacebuilding, asserting that violence occurs when universal needs are not fulfilled, and peace is present if we satisfy them. Burton argues that every society should incorporate needs satisfaction into thinking about resolving conflict and other social problems since he believes that fulfilling basic needs in the face of terrorism, poverty, and rights deprivation can lead to peace.<sup>31</sup> It brings to mind the revolutions of the Arab Spring in 2011, which, while starting in Tunisia, were the direct result of corruption and economic stagnation.<sup>32</sup> These conflicts emerged because people were agitated for reforms to meet their basic needs, which are more than just food and shelter; they require societal reconciliation and freedom.<sup>33</sup>

### 5.2.1.1 Basic Human Needs and Peacebuilding

In 1979, Burton released a book, *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems*, in which he contends that deep-rooted conflict emerges when basic human needs are unmet and divisive issues can be resolved when people's needs are identified and fulfilled.<sup>34</sup> Later, in 1990, Burton published another book, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, again presenting the same argument that the frustration of needs causes violence and the fulfilment of such needs delivers peace.<sup>35</sup> He sees society as one body in which everyone is linked together in the fulfilment of basic needs. Conflict resulting in violence is triggered when the chain of fulfilling needs that binds society together is broken. It could be said that every conflict is in a social structure.<sup>36</sup>

For Burton, the burden of fulfilling these needs in the contemporary world rests on the state or authorities at international and domestic levels. When these fail to fulfil their obligations, conflict is inevitable. In his words:

Conflict avoidance is of two different kinds. One is in respect to likely or anticipated conflicts – those that reasonably can be anticipated because of some observed changes that will in the future alter local relationships, as when the influence of a great power (authority) declines in a particular region. The other is in respect of the maintenance of

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<sup>31</sup> Burton, *Deviance, Terrorism and War: The Process of Solving Unresolved Social and Political Problems*, 25.

<sup>32</sup> Drew Christiansen, "Catholic Peacebuilding, 1991-2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II," *The Review of Faith and International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (2006), 25, accessed on March 3, 2020, <https://www.tandfonline.com/loi/rfia20>.

<sup>33</sup> Franke Wilmer, *The Social Construction of Man, the State and War: Identity, Conflict, Violence in Former Yugoslavia* (New York: Routledge, 2002), 26.

<sup>34</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 95; *Deviance, Terrorism and War*, 79 & 81.

<sup>35</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 95.

<sup>36</sup> Bercovitch, J., Book Review: John W. Burton, *Global Conflict: The Domestic Sources of International Crisis* (Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books, 1984, 194pp., £20.00). *Millennium*, 14, no. 3 (1985), 355. <https://doi-org.may.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/03058298850140030704>

peaceful relationship among states that are already in a close working relationship and do not anticipate the development of tensions.<sup>37</sup>

Since Burton assumes that peace depends on the influence of society and the power that controls it, he insists that state authorities are responsible for sustaining peace and violence.<sup>38</sup> Therefore, leaders must be responsive to people's needs if they are to retain their legitimacy, derived from coordinating social interaction and well-being. He blames them for frustrating basic needs to serve their own interests, citing terrorism in Northern Ireland as an example. He writes:

The leaders of the opposing Protestant and Catholic factions have been ordinary citizens, caring for their families and living their lives as wholly normal persons. Many of their more active followers were also ordinary citizens who in due course had a vested interest in the continuation of the conflict in that without it they would have no social role or identity, and no job or income.<sup>39</sup>

It is said that Burton offers a critique of power politics, calling for individual and general people's participation in society.

Seeing how authorities can weaponize the frustration of basic needs, Burton doubts if the state can fulfil basic needs because it cares more about acquiring power than about establishing social relations that satisfy human needs. Bearing this misgiving about the state in mind, he establishes what he describes as *Controlled Communication*. This is an informal body that looks into the future when it thinks of peacebuilding without disregarding the present situation of people.<sup>40</sup>

### **5.2.1.2 *Controlled Communication***

Burton argues that participants in peacebuilding must reject two critical assumptions because they obstruct social interaction that establishes peace. The first is to assume that coercion delivers peace. Opportunities for development lead to a peaceful future rather than institutional constraints.<sup>41</sup> Put differently, society must avoid elites' control of the institutional reality. He believes that basic needs are universal and that conflict can be resolved when they are understood as such and are met, rather than enforcing law and order. The second assumption

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<sup>37</sup> Burton, *Conflict and Communication*, 31 (Parenthesis are mine).

<sup>38</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 23.

<sup>39</sup> Burton, *Violence Explained: The Sources of Conflict, Violence and Crime*, 27.

<sup>40</sup> The Controlled Communication is a non-formal body that keeps vigil of what is going on in the states. It does not refer to formal meetings. See Burton, "Controlled Communication," 31.

<sup>41</sup> Burton, John and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: practices in management, settlement, and resolution*, Vol. 4, ed., Burton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990) 79 & 253.

relates to competition over victimhood. For Burton, victimhood is when, in a conflict, one ethnic group feels the conflict affects them more than the targeted group.<sup>42</sup>

Burton presents two propositions to avoid these assumptions. Firstly, he stresses the importance of anticipating the frustration of needs that could obstruct social relationships. Therefore, according to his reasoning, peacebuilding means identifying common and generally accepted needs and developing an approach that meets them. Rather than concentrating on meeting individual interests or desires, he opts for shared and generally accepted and agreed needs.<sup>43</sup> Secondly, he contends that there must be a relationship, or an encounter, between citizens or states. Coercion and force, which he saw in Site's social control, are unacceptable even if they are geared towards need identification.

Any approach to needs identification must include participation, or there will be resistance. The point of focus in needs identification and satisfaction is the individual and the people, rather than the state or institution controlled by elites. There are two reasons for this: on the one hand, the institution may not be able to address essential and common needs because they coerce the people, and on the other hand, the people may lose trust in the institution to provide and protect their needs.

Bearing such an approach in mind, Burton argues that authority or formal institutions may not be able to address violence. He found a solution to violence in what he calls 'Controlled Communication'. Burton maintains:

To a limited degree the informal meetings of the British Commonwealth of Nations were an institution that fulfilled these combined functions (conflict avoidance and maintenance of peace). In many respects, it was a controlled communication exercise in which tensions between members could be brought to the surface in the presence of other members who in some instances, could act as a third party. No agenda, no minutes, no publicity, secret discussions, and conditions conducive to free expression of attitude... the absence of bargaining or negotiation were all features of the prime minister's meetings.<sup>44</sup>

He presents the concept to his readers as "provention." Provention is a "more fundamental study and exercise...it is a decision-making process in which the future is analyzed and anticipated"<sup>45</sup> For Burton, the problem with different forms of governing, even representative political systems, is that no current political system has yet been discovered that gives adequate priority to the future. Such a system would lead to conflict avoidance because it prevents

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<sup>42</sup> Mohammed Abu-Nimer, "Conflict Resolution and Human Needs," 169.

<sup>43</sup> Burton, Deviance, *Terrorism and War: practices in management, settlement, and resolution* (Oxford: Martin Robertson, 1979), 159.

<sup>44</sup> Burton, "Conflict and Communication," 31.

<sup>45</sup> Burton, John and Frank Dukes, *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*, ed., Burton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 161.

occurrences of violence in the present and future. The suggestion is that it helps manage anticipated conflict. It also contributes to sustaining the existing peaceful atmosphere. But what precisely is Controlled Communication?

Primarily, it is about establishing an independent body to prevent and analyse potential and actual conflict, respectively. Its role is to help people picture a problem that affects everyone, that is, their common and general needs, and welcomes everyone's participation as the solution to the problem. This is different from the tradition of mediation and negotiation as an approach to peacebuilding. According to him:

Traditional mediation seeks agreement by compromise or by persuading the parties that their interest would be served by ceasing violence and arriving at a settlement. It is a negotiating framework. Controlled Communication on the other hand, endeavours to establish a condition in which the party sees their relationships as posing a problem to be solved...Neither is more wrong or right than the other.<sup>46</sup>

In actual conflict, the body performs its functions as follows:

When parties to disputes are brought together in a face-to-face analytical dialogue, facilitated by a third party inevitably they soon discover that they have the same ultimate goals...Once it is discovered, that goals are held in common, the stage is set for a search for means that satisfies all parties to a dispute.<sup>47</sup>

It is similar to but not the same as the third-party system of peacebuilding. They both share the goal of preventing and resolving conflict. However, they are also alike because neither system is an institutional entity per se nor a formal establishment.

However, there are differences. Controlled communication can maintain a peaceful relationship, even if there is no apparent threat in the society because identifying an agreed and common goal can provide insight into the future. They differ in two further respects. Firstly, whereas the third-party system tries to establish a situation where parties would accept one another, in Controlled communication, "both sides are assumed to have been acting in ways which appear to them."<sup>48</sup> In this latter situation, both parties tell themselves there is a problem at hand. Second, while the third party deals with actual conflict situations through negotiation, the Controlled Communication goes deeper, maintaining relations even when there is no threat to social relationships and human flourishing – "they establish a condition in which all the parties join with it in defining, identifying and solving the problem."<sup>49</sup> It points to three different functions: prevention, identifying basic needs that cause conflict, and satisfying them.

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<sup>46</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>47</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 42.

<sup>48</sup> Burton, "Conflict and Communication," in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, 28.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 29.

Burton's method involves assembling different approaches to identify and fulfil basic needs even in contexts where there are no apparent signs of potential conflict. According to Burton, the system demands enormous effort to build and sustain relationships and peace. It plays a preventive and curative role in peacebuilding efforts and involves a combination of factors, some of which are acknowledging and appreciating primary human concerns, the importance of every member of the society and the common good. Its central goal is to identify unmet needs and satisfy them. And two, to deconstruct formal institutions controlled by elites for personal interest.

### 5.2.1.3 Assessing John Burton

Burton firmly believes that people will accept his conclusion that peacebuilding is the work of *Controlled Communication*, which is finding ways of identifying and fulfilling unmet needs. His theory makes a case for real opportunities and optimism for conflict analysis and provides insights for peace practitioners. Some scholars acknowledged and celebrated the theory.<sup>50</sup> Among these, Kevin Avruch wrote:

Being non-negotiable, basic needs resisted negotiable, even 'the principled' sort of interest-based and integrative solution-seeking championed by Fisher and Ury in their influential *Getting to Yes* (1981). The non-negotiable of basic human needs- they cannot be traced or bargained away even if the individual wanted to – was a key part of their essential character and remained so for Burton.<sup>51</sup>

One of the reasons for this widespread admiration of BHNs' theory is that it predicts later developments, including future violence and conflict. For instance, the conflict in North Africa and the Middle East (the Arab Spring) and the most recent violence in Nigeria during and after the general election of 2023 illustrate the concern raised by Burton about unfulfilled basic needs leading to frustration and violence.<sup>52</sup> The conflicts and violence in these regions emanated from a struggle for liberation from corrupt leaders. Another scholar who appreciates Burton's theory is Franklin Duke. Drawing on personal experience, he observes:

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<sup>50</sup> For a detailed explanation of Burton's appreciation, See Dennis Sandole's "Extending the Reach of Basic Human Needs: A Comprehensive Theory for the Twentieth-Century," 22. In this book, many authors have contributed immensely to peacebuilding strategies using Burton's Basic Human Needs Theory.

<sup>51</sup> Avruch, "Basic Human Needs and the Dilemma of Power," in *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory with Practice*, 43.

<sup>52</sup> Sandole pointed out the context of the Arab Spring. See his "Extending the Reach of Basic Human Needs: A Comprehensive Theory for the Twentieth-Century," 22; It has been pointed in the previous chapter that violence took place during and after the general elections in Nigeria in 2023. This suggests that even democratic regime is not immune from violence. The violence was assumed to be a result of legitimate demand by the locals to remove corrupt leaders. See Miftaudeen Raji, "How Vote Buying, Violence marred polls in South-East, North-West- CD D," in *The Nigerian Vanguard New Paper*, March 20, 2023, accessed on March 20, 2023, [vanguardngr.com/2023/03/how-vote-buying-violence-marred-polls-in-south-east](http://vanguardngr.com/2023/03/how-vote-buying-violence-marred-polls-in-south-east).

In fact, most of the conflict that I find myself working with revolves primarily around individual and community, *identity*, *security*, and *recognition*. These three needs – identity, security, and recognition – are the trinity that drives conflict behaviour in the type of environmental and community conflicts in which I work.<sup>53</sup>

BHNs' Theory is, therefore, significant to our discussion of peace because it suggests that peace is not just about preventing violence or the absence of war but also providing basic needs for human flourishing, even when there are no indications of conflict.

Although not writing from the viewpoint of Basic Needs Theory, Emmanuel E. Katongole, the African peacebuilding scholar, acknowledged the role of *Controlled Communication* in peacebuilding efforts. While reflecting on reconciliation in East Africa, he explains:

A German colony until 1919, Burundi came under Belgian rule that, using the same Hamitic methodology as in Rwanda, divided the country neatly into Hutu, Tutsi, and Twa identities and affirmed (as natural allies) Tutsi privilege while setting up a system of political and economic administration that marginalized the majority Hutu. Unlike Rwanda to the north, Burundi's independence in 1962 left the Tutsi in power, but the 'ethnic' hatred between the groups set the framework for Burundi's post-independence history, which has been marked by political instability, a series of *coup d'état* and massacres that have pitted Hutus and Tutsis in an endless circle of revenge and counter revenge.<sup>54</sup>

Katongole identifies the fact that there was no framework for predicting future conflict after Burundi gained independence, and so the political and ethnic crisis that erupted between the Hutus and Tutsi in Burundi.

Furthermore, while Controlled communication can be a third-sided system, it functions deeper than that; it allows the parties in conflict to decide for themselves and examine alternative means by which, through functional cooperation or otherwise, possible conflict might be avoided. From this perspective, it is very suggestive of Catholic Social Teaching. Furthermore, his appreciation of the role of human cooperation and human encounters and his attention to unmet needs suggest his close link to CST in peacebuilding. Recall that CST counts on the cooperation of both local and international communities to create the solidarity needed for peacebuilding.

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<sup>53</sup> Franklin Dukes, "Human Needs and Conflict Resolution in Practice: Environment and Community," in *Conflict Resolution and Human Needs: Linking Theory and Practice*, 221.

<sup>54</sup> Emmanuel E. Katongole, "*Memoria Passionis* as Social Reconciliation in Eastern Africa: Remembering the Future at Maison Shalom," in *The Surprise of Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*, eds., J.J. Carney and Laurie Johnston, (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), 271.



Scholars of peacebuilding observe that Burton's theory of BHNs is controversial.<sup>55</sup> For instance, one could ask who becomes the satisfier and provider. Would the provider also be the satisfier? For how long and to what degree would the provider continue to provide? To what extent is it possible to satisfy human needs? Burton seems to concentrate on needs fulfilment and counting on the state for that without imagining what happens when resources are unavailable.<sup>56</sup> He does not think about the egoistic perspective of the individual and the individual responsibility. Instead, the focus was on the state or institutions. Peacebuilding authors bring some of these concerns to the fore and provide suggestions. Terry Beitzel writes: "One way to transcend the egoistic view of humanity with an exclusive focus on needs is to include basic human responsibilities — responsibilities to oneself and to others. For the problem-solving workshops to function and deliver positive outcomes, the needs of others must be recognized and respected."<sup>57</sup> As mentioned earlier, Sen, whom this study classifies as a scholar of BHNs Theory, observes:

The 'basic needs' literature has, in fact, tended to suffer a little from uncertainties about how basic needs should be satisfied. The original formulations often took the form of defining basic needs in terms of needs for certain minimal amounts of essential commodities such as food, clothing, and shelter. If this type of formulation is used, then the literature remains imprisoned in the mould of commodity-centred evaluation, and can in fact be accused of adopting a form of commodity fetishism.<sup>58</sup>

In offering his critique, Sen established his form of BHNs' Theory, namely, the Capability Theory.

### 5.2.2 Amartya Sen

Amartya Sen is an Indian economist and philosopher who, since 1972, has taught in the United Kingdom and the United States of America. His contributions to welfare economics, social justice, and measures of people's well-being in different countries earned him a Nobel Prize in economics (1998). He has published widely on justice, development, women empowerment,

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<sup>55</sup> See Terry Beitzel, "Puzzles, problems, and prevention: Burton and Beyond," *International Journal of Peace Studies* 24, no 1 (2019), 46.

<sup>56</sup> Burton, *Conflict: Resolution and Prevention*, 23.

<sup>57</sup> Beitzel, "Puzzles, problems, and prevention: Burton and Beyond," 58. For more information on this, see Zartman, I. William, "Need, Creed and Greed in Intrastate Conflict," in *I William Zartman: A Pioneer in Conflict Management and Area Studies: Essays on Contention and Governance* (2019): 95-117.

<sup>58</sup> Sen, "Capability Freedom and Equality," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 443; see also Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 10.

and other themes and has pioneered the theory of capability, a social interaction theory that speaks of BHNs Theory.<sup>59</sup>

Sen uniquely discusses basic needs. Sometimes, he uses Capability Theory to criticise basic needs, whereas, at other times, he praises them, as mentioned earlier. Drawing from two sustainable development scholars, Gro Brundtland and Robert Solow, Sen argues that no matter how much we save the environment, provide amenities, or promote the living standard of the present and future generations, people will not flourish if their freedom is denied.<sup>60</sup> He argues that

One way of putting all these concerns (providing amenities, saving the environment for the future generation), into an integrated formulation is to argue that what we must be concerned with is not just sustaining living standards, *or rather providing basic needs*, but sustaining human freedom...Indeed, I would argue that the idea of 'sustainable freedoms can add something substantial to the living-standard-based notion of sustainable development. It can combine the very important concept of sustainability.'<sup>61</sup>

While he agrees that sustaining a standard of living by providing basic needs is crucial to development, he insists that it is not enough. He conceives of human well-being in terms of having "freedoms" and capabilities. Ultimately, he stresses that capabilities enhance development, and development expands capabilities. It is the view that both concepts are basic needs of human existence.

Of capability, Sen states: "The capability set represents a person's freedom to achieve various functioning and combinations."<sup>62</sup> Capabilities are a resource for evaluating things that the individual and people value doing, especially development. As the philosopher Martha Nussbaum puts it: "Capabilities provide us with an attractive way of understanding the normative content of the idea of development."<sup>63</sup> It has roots in earlier works, such as that of

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<sup>59</sup> Ian Gough points out that capability approach was first elaborated by Sen. See Gough *Heat, Greed, and Human Need: Climate Change, Capitalism and Sustainable Wellbeing*, 41.

<sup>60</sup> Sen, "Continuing the Conversation: Amartya Sen talks with Bina Agarwal Jane Humphries and Ingrid Robeyns," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 359-360.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 360.

<sup>62</sup> Sen, "Development as Capability Expansion," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 445.

<sup>63</sup> Nussbaum, "Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 40.

Aristotle, Adam Smith, John Stuart Mill, Karl Marx, and recently, Nussbaum and a few others.<sup>64</sup>

Sen highlights that capabilities are a real alternative to depending on growth in GDP or individual income. He writes:

Indeed, the preservation of human living standards need not be the only concern that human beings themselves have. To use a medieval European distinction, we are not merely ‘patients’ preoccupied with just our own standard of living but also responsible and active agents who are capable of judging the world around us and undertaking wider commitments.<sup>65</sup>

Capabilities are important to understanding the concept of freedom and development because they evaluate concepts and opportunities. Here, Sen implies that capabilities provide the best form of development.<sup>66</sup> Capability Theory allows humans to participate in and assess their poverty and development. For instance, Sen states:

What the capability perspective does in poverty analysis is to enhance the understanding of the nature and causes of poverty and deprivation by shifting primary attention away from means (and one particular means that is naturally given exclusive attention, viz., income) to ends that people have reason to pursue, and, correspondingly, to the freedom to be able to satisfy these ends.”<sup>67</sup>

The assumption here is that even a rich country or person who lacks the opportunity to participate freely in decision-making could be deprived of an essential aspect of well-being. As explained here, capabilities do not represent a mere concept; neither do they have importance of their own only but serve as instruments of progress and well-being. In other words, Sen argues that although economic growth and financial income enhance well-being, there are better ways of achieving that, namely through capabilities. Thus, Sen highlights how capability is superior to other social theories that focus on satisfying human needs, such as utilitarianism and libertarianism.<sup>68</sup>

Prioritising Capability Theory does not mean that Sen is against the BHNs Theory. This study will later highlight that Sen’s capabilities are human’s basic needs. He identifies basic

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<sup>64</sup> See Sen, “Development as Capability Expansion,” 439; Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 24; Nussbaum, “Capabilities and Social Justice,” *International Studies Review* 4, no. 2 (2002): 123- 135; Nussbaum, “Capabilities as Fundamental entitlements: Sen and Social Justice,” in *Feminist Economics* 9, no. 2/3 (2003a): 33-59; Sen, “Equality of What?” in *The Tanner Lectures on Human Values*, ed., S. McMurrin (Salt Lake City, 1980); Sen, “Response to Commentaries,” *Studies in Comparative International Development* 37, no. 2 (2002): 78-86. For more information, see earlier editions of the same work: 1980, 1999, 2002.

<sup>65</sup> Sen, “Continuing the Conversation: Amartya Sen talks with Bina Agarwal Jane Humphries and Ingrid Robeyns,” 359

<sup>66</sup> Nussbaum, “Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice,” 40.

<sup>67</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 90.

<sup>68</sup> Sen, “Development as Capability Expansion,” 30.

deprivations such as inequality, tyranny, famine, limited access to health care, intolerance, and poverty.<sup>69</sup> He, then, argues that paying attention to these alone is incapable of assessing people's actual well-being and cannot fully satisfy these and other essential and frustrated needs because of the problems arising from differences and inequality among humans.<sup>70</sup> In other words, the theory of capability can meet basic needs or manage social deprivations quicker than mere satisfaction of needs.

This explanation suggests that the capability approach benefits a person and institution or state. It can explain and evaluate poverty and equality as needs and analyse ways of satisfying them, depending on how they appear to individuals. Considering this, Sen argues that carrying out social policies requires consideration of what people can do to achieve what they need. He states:

The capability approach to a person's advantage is concerned with evaluating it in terms of his actual ability to achieve various valuable functions as a part of living the corresponding approach to social advantage – for aggregative appraisal as well as for the choice of institutions and policy – takes the sets of individual capabilities as constitutional and indispensable and central part of the relevant informational base of such evaluation.<sup>71</sup>

From this perspective, capabilities are as basic a need as a nation's constitution for its citizens. It is a person's freedom or finding a space to be or do things that contributes to flourishing. By extension, Sen's capabilities suggest freedom and "functionings",<sup>72</sup> which are opportunities to do the things one values.

### 5.2.2.1 Capabilities and Basic Human Needs Theory

There were concerns that Sen did not provide lists of capabilities.<sup>73</sup> In a conversation with him, Bina Agarwal, Jane Humpries, and Ingrid Robeyns asked, "In your writings on the capability

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<sup>69</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 3-4.

<sup>70</sup> Lawrence Daka, *A Human Empowerment Approach to Economic and Social Justice: An Appropriation of Sen's Capability Approach* (Saarbrücken: Verlag Dr Muller, 2008), 37-36.

<sup>71</sup> Amartya Sen, "Capability and Wellbeing," in *The Quality of Life*, ed., Martha Nussbaum and Amartya Sen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 30; Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 18; *Ibid.*, 15; Capability refers to the "various things a person may value being and doing." Sabina Alkire, Mozaffar Qizil and Flavio Comim, "Introduction," in *The Capability Approach*, eds., Flavio Comim, Mozaffar and Sabina Alkire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 2; Ingrid Robeyns explains Sen's Capability succinctly: "Capabilities are people's potential functionings. Functionings are beings and doings. Examples are being well fed, taking part in the community, being sheltered relating to other people, working in the labour market, caring for others and being healthy. See Robeyns, "Sen's Capability Approach and Gender Inequality; Selecting Relevant Capabilities," in *Capability, Freedom and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 71.

<sup>72</sup> Sabina Alkire, *Valuing Freedom: Sen's Capability Approach and Poverty Reduction* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 4.

<sup>73</sup> Sen, "Capabilities, Lists, and Public Reason: Continuing the Conversation," 362.

approach, you provide no list of capabilities. Is that because you think such a list cannot be drawn?”<sup>74</sup> Sen was explicit in his response, stating:

The problem is not with listing important capabilities but with insisting on one predetermined canonical list of capabilities, choosing by theories without any general social discussion...I have, of course, discussed various lists of capabilities that will seem to command attention in any theory of justice and more generally in social assessment, such as the freedom to be well nourished, to live disease-free lives, to be able to move around, to be educated, to participate in public life, and so on. Indeed, right from my first writings on using the capability perspective (for example, in my 1979 Lecture ‘Equality of What?’: Sen 1979), I have tried to discuss the relevance of many specific capabilities.<sup>75</sup>

Thus, Sen does indeed present lists of capabilities, though he did not discuss them individually in detail, as Nussbaum later did when she differentiated Sen’s capability into ten different capabilities.<sup>76</sup> In the final analysis, this study argues that although Sen does not totally align with Burton’s theory of BHNs, his argument on the satisfaction of deprived human needs extends to how humans, as individuals, can assess the value of their basic needs. These may not be just material needs but also enable the environment to assess material needs that can be beneficial to people.

Sen’s identifies some causes for concern in the BHNs theory. He explains:

The basic needs’ literature has, in fact, tended to suffer a little from uncertainties about how basic needs should be specified. The original formulation often took the form of defining basic needs in terms of needs for certain minimal amounts of essential commodities such as food, clothing, and shelter.<sup>77</sup>

While he acknowledges that this theory has helped enormously in addressing social issues, he believes that it has neglected essential aspects of development and human fulfilment, which is evaluating the quality of what individuals need.<sup>78</sup> Sen assumes that the capability approach can address this concern adequately, maintaining that:

To bridge this gap (fulfilling needs without evaluating the needs), we have to compare and contrast the foundational features underlying the concern with the quality of life, needs, etc. with the informational foundations of the more traditional approaches used in welfare economics...It is precisely in this context that the advantages of the capability approach become perspicuous.<sup>79</sup>

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<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> The ten capabilities of Nussbaum are life, bodily health, bodily integrity, senses, imagination and thought, emotion, practical reason, affiliation, other species, play, and control over one’s environment. See Nussbaum, “Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice,” in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen’s Work from a Gender Perspective*, 47-48.

<sup>77</sup> Sen, “Development as Expanding Capabilities,” 443.

<sup>78</sup> Detailed explanation of this point is found in Sen’s “Development as Expanding Capabilities,” 442-44.

<sup>79</sup> Sen, “Development as Expanding Capabilities,” 443.

Sen mentions basic needs in relation to economics, education, and other deprivations, presenting his view on basic needs.<sup>80</sup> In his words:

Our conception of needs relates to our idea of the preventable nature of some deprivations, and to our understanding of what can be done about them. In the formation of these understandings and beliefs, public discussions play a crucial role. Political rights, including freedom of expression and discussion, are not only pivotal in including social responses to economic needs but are also central to the conceptualisation of economic needs themselves.<sup>81</sup>

This elucidation of basic needs places heavy emphasis on the capabilities. In other words, Sen's elucidation of deprivations suggests his affinity with BHNs Theory. An extended explanation of Sen's adoption of BHNs is found in Alkire's writings. She states:

Sen phrases some capabilities as the capacity to meet nutritional requirements, to be educated, to be sheltered and to be clothed. These capabilities descriptions refer transparently to what is needed at a general level. (Nutritional diet, education, shelter, and clothes). On the other hand, if  $y$  has a basic need for  $x$  (defined generally, as above), and if  $y$  is a functioning which is entirely and only reflects the relationship between  $y$  and  $x$ , then  $f$  is a basic needs functioning. Likewise, if  $c$  is the capability to  $f$  then  $c$  would be a basic needs capability. It is these sorts of capabilities which will represent basic needs.<sup>82</sup>

Sen stresses that democratic government is the safest form of government, especially in handling deprivations, since it offers opportunities for people to do what they value. He remarks:

Democracy has been especially successful in preventing those disasters that are easy to understand and where sympathy can take a particularly immediate form. Many other problems are not quite accessible...For example, India's success in eradicating famines is not matched by that in eliminating regular undernutrition or curing persistent illiteracy...other deprivations call for deeper analysis and more effective use of communication and political participation. In short, fuller practice of democracy...has to be seen as creating a set of opportunities, and the use of these opportunities calls for analysis of a different kind.<sup>83</sup>

This leads Sen to be explicit that democracy is one of human's basic needs. As the English social analyst Ian Gough explains:

Basic needs are then universal preconditions for effective participation in any form of social life. To do this, a person must be able to formulate aims, understand how to achieve them and act to strive to achieve them in practice. Whatever a person's goal, whatever the cultural practices and values within which she lives, *including cultures that promote*

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<sup>80</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 147, 150-151.

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*, 154

<sup>82</sup> Alkire *Valuing Freedoms*, 160.

<sup>83</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 154-155.

*liberal freedom*, she will require certain prerequisites or basic needs in order to strive towards those goals.<sup>84</sup>

Gough indicates that we need a medium to participate in social life. He agrees with Sen that society needs a democratic government to afford people greater opportunities for freedom and capabilities.

One might notice that Sen wishes us to place social progress and development under the scrutiny of capability but is hesitant to mention basic human needs.<sup>85</sup> He asserts that capabilities are “not so significant in ranking living standards, but in deciding on a cut-off point to assess poverty and deprivation.”<sup>86</sup> In his desire to explain how social theorists attempt to satisfy these needs, he loses sight of his claim that capabilities require something, a medium (for example, democracy and freedom), which theorists – and he to a certain degree – describe as the BHNs Theory.

### **5.2.2.2 Capability Approach**

Johan Galtung, a theorist of peace and development, reflects on direct and structural violence and contends that freedom as a basic need and capability can deliver peace in the context of structural violence. He explains:

Whereas the focus on direct violence would lead to analyses of the capabilities and motivations of international and intranational actors, with efforts to create institutions that can prevent them from exercising direct violence (for instance, by punishing those who do), the focus on structural violence will lead to a critical analysis of structures and possibly to efforts to transform structures pregnant with violence into less violent ones.<sup>87</sup>

Against this background, this study presents Sen’s idea of peace from the framework of capabilities since they are about assessing development and well-being, democracy, globalisation, and freedom.

A key feature of Sen’s capability approach is assessing how well a programme or policy functions, as well as allowing people to function. For him, these roles lead to people’s well-being and development. Sen’s Capability Theory privileges individual freedom and choice in social engagements, including development and peacebuilding. He posed the rhetorical question: “What does human development do?” He then argues that “the creation of social

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<sup>84</sup> Ian Gough, *Heat, Greed, and Human Need: Climate Change, Capitalism and Sustainable Wellbeing*, 42.

<sup>85</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 69.

<sup>86</sup> Sen, “The Standard of Living,” in *The Standard of Living*, ed., G Hawthorn (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), 109.

<sup>87</sup> Johan Galtung, “Twenty-five Years of Peace Research: Ten Challenges and Some Responses,” *Journal of Peace Research* 22, no 2 (1985), 146.

opportunities makes a direct contribution to the expansion of human capabilities and the quality of life (as already discussed). Expansion of health care, education, social security, etc., contribute directly to the quality of life and to its flourishing.”<sup>88</sup> It has been highlighted that Sen trusts a democratic society to provide and satisfy the “freedoms” and choices that society needs for well-being and flourishing. The view has been reiterated here. He is convinced that fulfilling the need for freedom through a democratic regime has either led to peace or contributed to adequate development.

Sen admits that democracy leads to a different type of social analysis. He writes: “Democracy has to be seen as creating a set of opportunities, and the use of these opportunities calls for analysis of a different kind, dealing with the practice of democracy and political rights.”<sup>89</sup> He concludes that a democracy that does not allow its citizens to do what they value cannot ensure their well-being. Put positively, democracy must promote and enhance capabilities in every part of society so that it can assess not only people’s quality of life but also allow society to reflect on the kind of democracy it needs.

Furthermore, capabilities can assess globalisation (that is, discussion on global issues such as freedom, economics, politics, poverty, famine, market activities, and so on) and can potentially increase the prospect of peace.<sup>90</sup> These issues impact peacebuilding efforts globally. According to John Barnett:

The emergence of human rights organisations like Amnesty International, coupled with the proliferation of harder-to-contain communications technologies such as mobile telephones and the internet, have increased transparency and made it harder for human rights violations to go unnoticed.<sup>91</sup>

Sen deploys capabilities to discuss global concerns, namely violence, death, violation of human rights, and poverty. He maintains:

In the context of some type of welfare analysis, for example, in dealing with extreme poverty in developing economies, we may be able to go a long distance in terms of a relatively small number of central important functionings and the corresponding capabilities, such as the ability to be well-nourished and well-sheltered, the capacity to escape avoidable morbidity and premature mortality and so forth.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>88</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 144.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 155.

<sup>90</sup> Sen speaks of global issues such as climate change/natural environment, economics, poverty, famine, market, democracy, politics, and human rights in the context of capabilities. For detailed discussions of these subjects, See Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 1999; Sen, “The Possibility of Social Choice,” in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen’s Work from a Gender Perspective*, 369-419.

<sup>91</sup> Barnett, “Peace and Development: Towards a New Synthesis,” 84.

<sup>92</sup> Sen, “Development as Capability Expansion,” 442.



Sen is optimistic that capabilities can help humans identify rights violations, analyse them, and point out the negative impact such violations might cause, such as premature death. The capability approach is meant to achieve two important goals. The first is to allow people the freedom to take steps to avoid poverty or premature death and to help them function well. The second goal is to help humans assess and re-assess how well and peacefully people live after acquiring what they value. In other words, although capabilities do not provide direct answers to the questions of human reality, they are a tool for evaluating certain situations. Robeyns espouses this view, stating:

The Capability approach is a framework of thought, a normative tool, but it is *not* a fully specified theory that gives us complete answers to all our normative questions. It is not a mathematical algorithm that prescribes how to measure inequality or poverty, nor is it a complete theory of justice. The capability approach, strictly speaking, only advocates that the evaluative space should be that of capabilities.<sup>93</sup>

Capabilities allow individuals, policymakers, academics, NGOs, and other organisations to assess every policy and theory in their struggle to promote well-being and development. For instance, Nussbaum and Ingrid Robeyns deploy the theory to assess equality, inequality, development, and social progress. While Nussbaum discusses capabilities to deal with issues concerning distributive justice and women's development,<sup>94</sup> Robeyns draws from the Capabilities Theory to discuss gender and inequality.<sup>95</sup>

### 5.2.2.3 Assessing Sen

The key to the theory is the belief that freedom can assist people in managing, being, or doing what they desire. He argues that more freedom gives people more opportunities to achieve those things they value. It means freedom is concerned primarily with our ability to achieve rather than with the process through which events happen.<sup>96</sup> Capabilities are not commodities but sets of opportunities that help people assess commodities and know whether these commodities are appropriate for their well-being. In Sen's view, deprivations of "freedoms" and opportunities can further reduce the chances of development and well-being and affect

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<sup>93</sup> Robeyns, "Sen's Capability Approach and Gender Inequality; Selecting Relevant Capabilities," in *Capability, Freedom and Equality*, 73

<sup>94</sup> Read Nussbaum, "Nature Functioning and Capability: Aristotle and Political Distribution," in *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy Supplementary Volume* (1998); Nussbaum, "Women and Human Development: The Capabilities Approach," Vol. 3. Cambridge University Press, 2000; Nussbaum, "Capabilities and Social Justice," *International Studies Review* 4, 2 (2002): 123-135.

<sup>95</sup> Read Robeyns, "Sen's Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities," *Feminist Economics* 9, no. 2/3 (2003): 61-92, accessed on March 26, 2023, <https://go.exlibris.link/CPpMlfrB>

<sup>96</sup> Sen, *Rationality and Freedom* (Cambridge: The Redknapp Press of Harvard University Press, 2002), 585.

peacebuilding. In this way, he links development with peacebuilding. As the Zimbabwean Professor of Security and Strategic Studies, Martin R. Rupiya, writes: “There is a definite link between security and development. Africa is host to insecurity and lack of development.”<sup>97</sup>

For instance, Nussbaum develops Sen’s Capability Theory from the perspective of social justice, arguing that it addresses human development and social issues.<sup>98</sup> According to her:

We typically say to and of governments, let them pursue the social good as they conceive it, so long as they do not violate the items on this list...I have already said that I regard my list of basic capabilities this way, as a list of very urgent items that should be secured to people no matter what else we pursue...Indeed, the point made by Sen, in endorsing the Rawlsian notion of the priority of liberty, was precisely this. We are doing wrong to people when we do not secure to them the capabilities on this list.<sup>99</sup>

By asserting that capability can help people in the pursuit of whatever they value, Nussbaum includes a myriad of social realities, including peacebuilding. The goal of the Capability Theory, therefore, is also the promotion of dignity and value of the human person. It claims that capabilities provide a moral vision for individuals and those who develop policies that affect people and their well-being. She writes:

View capabilities as rather like side-constraints also help here: for it helps to understand what is tragic and unacceptable in such situations, and why individuals, so treated have an urgent claim to be treated better, even when government are in other ways pursuing the good with efficiency.<sup>100</sup>

Additionally, Sen’s capability approach helps people to demonstrate agency, which he understands as the ability to pursue individual goals. He defines an agent as:

Someone who acts and brings about change and whose achievements can be judged in terms of her own values and objectives, whether or not we can assess them in terms of some external criteria as well. This book is concerned with the agency role of the individual as a member of the public and as a participant in economic, social, and political life.<sup>101</sup>

This interpretation of agency is vital to Sen. It implies that one can attain well-being and flourish as a human with capabilities. A person does not need other people to achieve human flourishing. A rise in income or a community's growth is insufficient to deliver well-being. Within the framework of agency, capabilities are needed if humans are to understand and assess

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<sup>97</sup> Martin R. Rupiya explains how development is closely related to security, peace, and conflict. See his “A Critique of the Efficacy of Providing Aid to Africa’s Peace and Security Agenda,” *The Reality of Aid 2006: An Independent Review of Poverty Reduction and Development Assistance* (London: Zed Books, 2006), 61-75.

<sup>98</sup> Nussbaum, “Capabilities as Fundamental Entitlements: Sen and Social Justice,” 39-69.

<sup>99</sup> Nussbaum, “Capabilities and Human Rights,” *Fordham Law Review* 66, no. 2 (November 1997), 300, accessed on June 21, 2023. <https://heinonline.org/HOL/P?h=hein.journals/flr66&i=316>.

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Sen, *Development as Freedom*, 19.

their yearnings, including the value of their income. In short, capabilities help humans evaluate their needs while interacting with other humans. Therefore, well-being must be measured according to how a participant – in this sense, an agent – functions.

Sen's Capability Theory's focus on individual freedom appeals to the notion of freedom in which the individual is primary.<sup>102</sup> In his words:

Ultimately, it is individual evaluation on which we will have to draw while recognising the profound interdependence of the valuation of individuals who interact with each other...in valuing a person's ability to take part in the life of society, there is an implicit valuation of the life of the society.<sup>103</sup>

Sen is described as a social scholar who favours the largely individual.<sup>104</sup>

While this study agrees with Sen that a democratic society, more than any form of government, offers "freedoms" that enhance and expand capabilities, it submits that his judgment is open to criticism. Experience has shown that even in democratic nations, there is deep-rooted violence owing to the denial of the right to freedom, as mentioned earlier in this chapter.<sup>105</sup> Citing another example of the drawbacks of a democratic regime, the Palestinian scholar Riman Barakat describes a situation where democracy failed to provide and promote the right to freedom. He reports:

In Egypt, state violence and the use of force against citizens, including rape and other repressive practices, has during different periods of the transformation, shed light on the fact that the Egyptian regime has for many years kept a façade of democracy without any real accounting for human rights.<sup>106</sup>

Furthermore, the most recent general elections in Nigeria (2023) show that Sen's optimism about democracy to deliver "freedoms" cannot be applied everywhere. Reflecting on the elections, the Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) in Nigeria states:

Vote buying and violence marred the governorship and house of assembly elections...Electoral violence was more in the Northwest, with voters being threatened with death in some polling units...Voter suppression, voter intimidation, and the

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<sup>102</sup> Thomas Pogge, "Can the Capability Approach Be Justified?" *Philosophical Topics* 30, no. 2 (2002), 10.

<sup>103</sup> Sen, *The Idea of Justice* (London Allen Lane, 2009), 246.

<sup>104</sup> According to Lawrence A. Daka, in Sen, "we are left with an ambiguous egalitarian liberalism of the Rawlsian type that reveals a person who is arguably individualistic, self-interested, and situated outside the community...I argue that Sen's approach does not go far enough to guarantee the integral conception of person I think we need to evaluate individual and social advantages and address today's deprivation and dehumanization especially in developing societies." See *Towards a Human Empowerment Approach to Justice: An Appropriation of Sen's Capability Approach, with Particular Reference to the Zimbabwe Land Reform* (ProQuest Dissertation Publishing, 2006), 151.

<sup>105</sup> See section 5.2.2.2 of this study.

<sup>106</sup> Riman Barakat "The Challenge of Democratic Transitions in the Middle East," *Palestine-Israel Journal of Politics, Economics, and Culture*. 18, no. 4 (2013), 57.

destruction of materials predominantly by political party agents and politically aligned thugs were recorded across all six geopolitical zones.<sup>107</sup>

Sen should have pointed out the attitudes of leaders who govern states under such a form of government before declaring that it is the best regime for expanding freedom that enhances capabilities. Democracy offers freedom, but some human values must guide individuals operating the system.

It is the claim of this study that describing development as peace is a discourse that allows for dialogue with the Catholic social tradition. As outlined in the previous chapter, development is intrinsic to the Catholic Social Teaching vision of peacebuilding. As Hollenbach observes: "...since civil conflict and lack of development can be closely linked in poor nations, efforts to prevent internal conflicts and civil war must be central in development strategy"<sup>108</sup> The connection of peace and development – with specific attention to the basic goods of people – is a key connection between BHNs Theory and CST. It is along these lines that this study aligns Sen's Capability Theory with models of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST.

However, given that Sen's Capability theory is based mainly on individual freedom, it contradicts the claim articulated in CST that the human person is primarily social. It is a tradition that holds a communitarian perspective of the human person.<sup>109</sup> Owing to this contradiction, some thinkers depart, to some degree, from him and stay with the Catholic tradition. They argue that capability can be more influential in human society if it is considered from the perspective of human cooperation and interdependence rather than individualism. Ingrid Robeyns observes:

The view of social and human nature that I endorse is one that does not assume away people's interconnectedness, or the importance of care and interpersonal interdependence, or the gendered nature of society...However, viewing social and human nature from a feminist perspective is not sufficient for applying the capability approach to gender inequality.<sup>110</sup>

For Robeyns, then, the human person and capability must be viewed from the perspective of society. One could say that she provides the missing link between Sen's Capabilities Theory

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<sup>107</sup> Miftaudeen Raji, "How Vote Buying, Violence Marred Polls in South-East, North-West- CDD," in *The Nigerian Vanguard Newspaper*, March 20, 2023, accessed on March 20, 2023, [vanguardngr.com/2023/03/how-vote-buying-violence-marred-polls-in-south-east](http://vanguardngr.com/2023/03/how-vote-buying-violence-marred-polls-in-south-east).

<sup>108</sup> David Hollenbach, "Caritas in Veritate: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice," *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 8, no. 4 (2011), 177.

<sup>109</sup> We have cited this passage already but it is important to bring it here to show how the CST speaks of communitarian life and cooperation. "God did not create man for life in isolation, but for the formation of social unity (GS, 32)

<sup>110</sup> Robeyns, "Sen Capability Approach and Gender Inequality: Selecting Relevant Capabilities," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 77.

and the CST's approach to human flourishing and development. The concept of human values in Catholic Social Teaching might enhance Sen's Capability Theory. Overall, Sen summit that capabilities, enhanced by development and freedom, are the basic needs of humans that build peace.

### 5.2.3 William Ury

William Ury is an American anthropologist and expert in mediation and negotiation. He is a co-founder of the *Harvard Programme on Negotiation* and assisted in the establishment of the *International Negotiation Network* with the former American President, Jimmy Carter, who served between 1977 and 1987. The work of the Network led to the pardon of Vietnam War draft evaders by President Carter. In addition, he wrote a book with Roger Fisher titled *Getting to Yes: Negotiating Agreement Without Giving In* (2011), which outlines different principles of negotiation. His other works are *Beyond the Hotline: How Crisis Control Can Prevent Nuclear War* (1985), *Getting to Peace: Transforming Conflict at Home, at Work, and in the World* (1999), and *The Third Side* (2000). He deploys his ideas of mediation and negotiation when discussing peacebuilding.

Ury assumed that there was insufficient literature available to write about peacebuilding when he wrote *The Third Side*. He invoked the experience of a peasant community of hunters called Bushmen who, armed with poisonous hunting weapons, lived in upwards of five hundred groups, each comprising small, at least twenty-five persons.<sup>111</sup> In his words:

I'd like to draw on some of the ethnographic knowledge that we have and to interpret it through the lens of conflict resolution. Unfortunately, conflict resolution, unlike wars, leaves no material traces for archaeologists to uncover. To discover any kind of alternative mechanism requires looking for clues among simpler societies who have survived into modern times.<sup>112</sup>

Contrary to Thomas Hobbes' notion of an authoritative leader being at the helm of a civil state, Ury maintains that these Bushmen live together without such a ruler. They acknowledge the reality of conflicts and devise a means of managing them. For that reason, he finds their community useful when writing about peace and violence.

He offers two reasons why the Bushmen community experiences constant conflict. The first is that one group hunts on another's territory without seeking permission. The other is the unequal distribution of potential partners, food, or other commodities. Nevertheless, he

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<sup>111</sup> William Ury, "The Power of the 'Third Side': Community Roles in Conflict Resolutions," in *Must We Fight?* (San Francisco: Jossey Bass, 2002), 39.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 38.

maintains that despite these challenges, they live peacefully and have a culture of sharing, which forms society's bedrock. He writes:

In a Bushmen camp, no one is allowed to go hungry. The idea of eating alone and not sharing shocks them. 'Lions could do that,' they say, 'but not human beings!' Sharing helps everyone meet their basic needs, thus preventing conflict. Tension over conflict can easily escalate when people lack the proper skills or attitudes to defuse them."<sup>113</sup>

In archaic society, people pass on this tradition to their children, guiding them on how to avoid conflict. One would assume that with this tradition laid down, there can be no conflict among these people. However, the reverse is the case. Although this community experience deep conflict, they have different ways of preventing and containing it.

### 5.2.3.1 The Nature of the *Third Side*

Key to conflict resolution is what he identifies as the Third Side, the people connected to the agitators and those close to them, typically family members, friends, neighbours, communities, neutrals, and bystanders. He writes:

The Third Side is the surrounding community, which serves as a container for any escalating conflict. In the absence of that container, serious conflict between two parties all too easily turns into destructive strife. Within the container, however, conflict can gradually be transformed from confrontation into cooperation.<sup>114</sup>

Two years after publishing the theory, Ury highlighted that a Third Side "is composed of people from the community using a certain kind of power, the power of peers, from a certain perspective, which is a perspective of common ground, supporting certain process."<sup>115</sup> Here, one can see again the picture of the Bushmen community. However, Ury's theory of the Third Side suggests that it is not a body but an embodiment of ideas that help people manage conflict within their society.

From the above, Ury divides the Third Side into two, namely, the insider and the outsider. The former is the community of family, friends or disciplines or the disputing community itself; the latter comprises neighbours and neutrals or bystanders.<sup>116</sup> Despite this characterisation of the Third Side, it has a single goal. It supports dialogue or non-violence, aiming at a good solution for those directly involved in the conflict and the larger community. They serve as a voice that urges people to heal old wounds and grievances. In short,

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<sup>113</sup> Ury, *The Third Side*, 115.

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 7; Ury, "The Power of the 'Third Side': Community Roles in Conflict Resolutions," 42-3.

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

<sup>116</sup> Ury, *The Third Side*, 7 & 19

The Third Side manifests itself as a kind of conscience within the single individual engaged in conflict. It is a voice that urges us to heal old grievances; it is a capacity to listen to the other side and show empathy; it is the impulse to respect the basic needs of all...the inner third Side instinctively values life and abhors violence.<sup>117</sup>

Mainly, the Third Side requires a social and moral response to violence, encouraging people to think about conflict in an entirely new way, which contributes to peacebuilding efforts from different perspectives. The Third Side admits that society can prevent and contain conflict.

Buttressing the idea of the Third Side by connecting it to the lifestyle of the Bushmen, Ury argues that it represents people coming together to carry out the will of the community. Although it may look like an institution, it does not look like a tyrant. It is an impulse emanating from a vital relationship that joins individual community members. According to Ury:

The Third Side, in other words, is a creation of a host of individuals and organisations freely interacting with each other. The People can contribute to the Third Side, but not one commands it. In other words, it is a self-organising phenomenon with its own natural laws. If each person contributes his or her bit, a powerful collective phenomenon slowly materialises.<sup>118</sup>

The Third Side is a concept that represents a group of people and the community's ideas that grow and become powerful and robust. It does not protect selfish interests. Instead, it protects the most vital interest, promoting flourishing. Crucially, the Third Side works collectively, but people also act as individuals.<sup>119</sup>

In this sense, the Third Side represents the idea of a collaborator posited by Allan Barsky. According to him, "Collaborators use comparative strategies such as jointly analysing problems, self-disclosing, demonstrating respect, validating the other's views, offering suggestions designed to meet both parties' interests, and accepting responsibility for the conflict, where appropriate."<sup>120</sup> This means that for Ury, the Third Side manifests itself in diverse ways, sometimes as a collaborator, at other times as a negotiator, and so on. While he accepts that it could be seen playing out in different peacebuilding activities, he argues that the Third Side mainly challenges individuals to collaborate.

Indeed, the Third Side invites individual consciences to take steps aimed at resolving both potential and actual conflict. The entire community gets involved, performing different functions when there is a problem. Members of this body have norms guiding their affairs, and

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<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>118</sup> Ury, "The Power of the 'Third Side': Community Roles in Conflict Resolutions," 43.

<sup>119</sup> Ury, *The Third Side*, 24.

<sup>120</sup> Allan Edward Barsky, *Conflict Resolution for the Helping Professions* (Belmont, CA: Thomson Brooks/Cole, 2007), 48.

everyone conforms to these. In short, collaboration is a core concept of the Bushmen, and Ury deploys it in his presentation of the Third Side to write on conflict prevention and resolution. In doing so, he provided ten roles of the Third Side.

### 5.2.3.2 Ten Roles of the Third Side

Ury proposes ten roles through which the Third Side prevents, resolves, and contains conflict.<sup>121</sup> These are the provider, teacher, bridgebuilder, mediator, arbiter, equaliser, healer, witness, referee, and peacekeeper.<sup>122</sup> The work carried out by these ten groups of people must achieve ten different objectives, all geared towards the same goal: preventing, resolving, and containing conflict. The first three roles attempt to prevent conflict from occurring. The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh groups resolve conflicts as they arise. Finally, the role of the eighth, ninth and tenth groups is to contain conflict.

Let us look at their specific functions. The provider identifies and satisfies basic needs, such as knowledge, peacebuilding skills, roads, food, and cash. Members share resources and offer respect, recognition and protection. The function of this group is like Burton's Controlled Communication. The teacher offers instruction on skills that help prevent conflict. People in this group teach the basics of peacebuilding, such as dialogue and tolerance. Bridge builders help to re-establish relationships that have broken down. According to Ury: "The bridge builder is someone who invites two estranged family members who have not talked in years to the same celebration or who invites two business rivals for a golf game."<sup>123</sup> The primary function of these three groups is to prevent conflict from occurring. Ury summarises their activities in these words:

Tension over conflicting needs can easily escalate when people lack the proper skills or attitude to defuse them. The Bushmen, therefore, carefully teach their children to control their tempers and refrain from violence. Children learn to tolerate and respect others and avoid giving offence.<sup>124</sup>

Here, tolerance does not mean passivity but carrying out the task of reconciliation and respecting people's boundaries. Ury presumes that these three roles prevent conflict from escalating.

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<sup>121</sup> Ury, *The Third Side*, 114-190.

<sup>122</sup> Ury outlines ten different roles of the *Third Side* in clear terms, using different illustrations and diagrams to show how society can prevent, resolve, and contain conflict. See *The Third Side*, 117-190.

<sup>123</sup> *Ibid.*, 133.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*, 115.



The next four groups are mediators, arbiters, equalizers, and healers. A mediator, according to Ury, mediates in reconciling conflicting interests. The role is not to judge or determine who is right and who is wrong. Instead, it is focused on helping opposing parties reach an agreement if possible. This function involves discussion, patience to listen, understanding each other and making amends. An arbiter deals with issues relating to human rights. The task here is not just to declare who is right or wrong but to reform offenders and establish peace. In Ury's view:

The arbiter's goal, in such cases, is not just to determine who is right and who is wrong but to repair the harm to victims and to the community, and to reintegrate the offender as a constitutive member of society. What works with teens works with adults as well. Hundreds of community courts have recently been established, part of a growing trend toward the restorative and compensatory justice long practice in a simpler society.<sup>125</sup>

Repairing harm to victims and reintegrating aggressors into the community is the role of the arbiter. Integrating aggressors into the community may not be welcome or sit well with the community, but Ury believes that arbiters must hold on to his ideas. An equaliser ensures equal power or power-sharing. The role is about engaging politicians and other influential public figures in negotiations, mainly when they vehemently refuse to negotiate with the disadvantaged. An equaliser also spurs people to think of a genuine and collaborative democracy that decides issues and balances power. The healer ensures that damaged and injured relationships are healed. They defuse wounded emotions, listen to an acknowledgement of faults, and encourage apology and forgiveness to reconcile parties. The suggestion is that someone has to encourage someone. The essential virtue of healers is listening to apologies. The primary function of these four groups is to resolve conflict.

Ury's last three groups perform the role of containing conflict. The eighth group, comprising witnesses, goes on patrol, signalling and informing the community about signs of impending danger. The referee is in the ninth role. They provide rules or set a limit for fighting if it is the last resort.<sup>126</sup> The tenth and final role is that of the peacemaker, whose job is to preempt violence and bring peace. This role extends to using actual force to protect the innocent against an aggressor.<sup>127</sup> These last two rules speak explicitly of just war criteria, namely, last resort and use of force.

Ury stresses that these roles are performed in a network of relationships. According to him:

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<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 150.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid., 176-183.

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 185.

In a sense, all these ten roles together are like a series of safety nets. If one doesn't catch the conflict, another will. If two people are fighting, the community will surround them, and the community plays all ten roles. One role is not enough. But you put all the ten together and they have a chance. That is the basic methodology as far as I can understand it.<sup>128</sup>

These ten roles are performed together whenever there is conflict. There are many roles, but they work hand in hand. Any member of the community can play more than one role. It is the level of cooperation that matters.

This model of peacebuilding speaks of just war and nonviolence. Regarding just war, the model specifies norms of just war when it accepts the use of force to stop aggressors, rules of fighting aggressors and ways of supporting victims of war. This point can be explained in four points that relate to *jus ante bellum*, *just ad bellum*, *jus in bello*, and *jus post bellum*. Firstly, the ten roles claim to prevent conflict from occurring and harming citizens. This function implies *jus ante bellum*.<sup>129</sup> Secondly, it claims to resolve conflicts as they occur. This role suggests *jus ad bellum*. Thirdly, it aims to contain violence. Here, it suggests *jus in bello*, since it provides the necessary rules for fighting against aggressors. Fourthly, and finally, there is *jus post bellum* in the role of provider. This role identifies and provides the basic needs of victims of violence and war. Paramount among these are road and other infrastructures, food, and cash, including means of protecting the damaged environment.

Ury's ten roles speak of a commitment to human rights, distributive justice, and options for the poor. These are nonviolence commitments. Other evident nonviolent activities carried out by the Third Side are accompanying victims of violence and injustice, embracing distributive justice, dialogue and so forth. For instance, providers are committed to distributive justice, Arbiters are committed to the value of human rights, and healers focus on accompanying victims facing the trauma of conflict and injustice.

### 5.2.3.3 Assessing Ury

On the Third Side, advocacy is vital for conflict prevention. Even John Burton testified to such a contribution, writing: "The third part has the function of bringing to attention domestic problems that governments sometimes find more convenient not to consider, and not admit to

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<sup>128</sup> Ury, "The Power of the 'Third Side,': Community Roles in Conflict Resolutions," in *Must We Fight?* 46.

<sup>129</sup> Just ante bellum, according to Garrett Wallace Brown and Alexandra Bohm, refers to two things. First, "to act in defence of others" regarding human and public rights. Secondly, "the duty to prevent conflict from happening." See their "Introducing *Jus Ante Bellum* as a Cosmopolitan Approach to Humanitarian Intervention," *European Journal of International Relation* 22, no. 4 (2016), 902. Both considerations of *Jus ante Bellum* are significant to this thesis.

exist.”<sup>130</sup> It encourages grassroots activism, combined with national and international support, to solve present and future problems. It also underlines participation in different movements, ranging from active human rights movements campaigning on national issues to a long campaign that raises consciousness of the needs of others, not just the needs of the individual. The activities of the NGOs fit into many of the Third Side roles. Often, they respond to people’s material needs and carry out advocacy tasks. Along these lines, without explicitly mentioning his name, Ury aligns himself with Burton regarding the role of the provider.

Ury’s Third Side presents a picture of a leaderless society. People carry out roles individually or in a group without a designated leader. Individuals or institutions can identify areas or groups where they may perform without coercion to do what they can. The functions of the ten roles of the Third Side correspond to Burton’s *Controlled Communication* since it predicts future conflict and works against it to maintain peaceful relationships.

Like Burton and Sen, Ury’s proposal has shortcomings. Joshua Weiss, a supporter of the Third Side, questions the claim that the Third Side is self-governing. He asks: “What does a system do that is leaderless or lacks catalysts? How then does the Third Side mobilise?”<sup>131</sup> Carolyn Gellermann and Kurt C. O’Brien contend that while we may all contribute to the Third Side, there is no guarantee that peace analysts can predict its actual outcome owing to the complexity of its interactions.<sup>132</sup> These have alluded to the fact that the individual who is a critical member of the Third Side is unpredictable due to the general assumption that no one can predict the individual’s thoughts.

Ury’s insistence that to achieve peace and prevent conflict, his ten roles must function together and simultaneously seems unrealistic. Similarly, his contention that the Third Side could operate without bias is open to significant criticism because human nature is intrinsically biased in favour of the individual self, as seen in Sen’s Theory of Capability. The self-interested individual member of society may behave in a manner other than that stipulated by the Third Side.

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<sup>130</sup> Burton, “*Conflict Communication*,” in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, 32.

<sup>131</sup> Joshua N. Weiss, “Tuzla the Third Side and the Bosnian War,” in *The Third Side* website, PDF, 21. Accessed on 12/05/2018, <http://www.thirdside.org>

<sup>132</sup> Carolyn Gellermann and Kurt C. O’Brien, “Resolving Conflict from the *Third Side*,” in *Working for Peace: A Handbook of Practical Psychology and Other Tools*, ed., Rachel M. MacNair (California: Impact Publishers 2006), 159.

At the same time, Ury's vision of society echoes CST's emphasis on the principle of participation and the common good.<sup>133</sup> Certainly, his advocacy for peace by way of the fulfilment of basic needs is an important common ground between his work BHNs, Capability Theory, and CST since all work towards helping people by providing a vision of the future direction that allows for well-being. He is then an important dialogue partner for CST and the common desire for peace and human cooperation.

### 5.3 Evaluating Basic Human Needs Theory

This section focuses attention on three matters: the first is the significance, the second is critique, and the third and final is how the theory may dialogue with Catholic Social Teaching.

#### 5.3.1 Significance of Basic Human Needs Theory

The theory of Basic Human Needs has flourished in peacebuilding and conflict resolution institutions. Of course, Burton led the way. An array of authors, including those who doubted the theory's viability in development, followed his lead. For instance, Terry Beitzel notes: "A general search of the conflict and peace literature in the 1990s reveals that while the promise of human needs for theory development has never fully materialized, the promise of human needs for developing strategies of resolving conflict has been developed and has been fruitful."<sup>134</sup> Kai Nielsen reasons that although the BHNs' Theory is problematic, it is possible to judge between true and false needs.<sup>135</sup>

We pointed out how Sen alluded to BHNs' Theory despite criticising it. He is categorical in saying that people need democracy and "freedoms" to do what they value. These needs are prerequisites of capabilities. In other words, freedom and democracy are crucial elements of the capability approach.

Ury's *Third Side*, particularly his elaboration of the ten roles of the *Third Side*, explicitly invokes BHNs' Theory since the role of the *provider* is about fulfilling basic human needs.<sup>136</sup> He argues that negotiation that seeks to identify people's basic needs is a more trusted option in peacebuilding than transitional justice: "More than nine out of every ten lawsuits filed in

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<sup>133</sup> Participation is a Vital principle of Catholic Social Teaching. For a helpful discussion of this principle, See Andrew Kim, "An Introduction to Catholic Ethics Since Vatican II (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 122-23.

<sup>134</sup> Beitzel, "Puzzles, problems, and prevention: Burton and Beyond," *International Journal of Peace Studies*, 45.

<sup>135</sup> Kai Nielsen "True Need Rationality and Emancipation," in *Human Needs and Politics* ed., Fitzgerald, Ross (Sydney: Pergamon Press, 1977): 142-156.

<sup>136</sup> Ury, *The Third Side*, 117-118.

court are eventually settled through negotiation.”<sup>137</sup> He accepts Burton’s proposal that “frustration [of basic needs] leads people to bully others, to use violence and to grab someone else’s things.”<sup>138</sup> This dissertation sees Ury operating within the boundaries of BHNs’ Theory.

Many organisations and institutions promote the claim advanced by this theory.<sup>139</sup> The NGOs, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), CST, and the World Bank (WB) are among them.<sup>140</sup> This study limits itself to NGOs since it performs the same function as CST, and government institutions approve of its activities. Although there is no single definition for NGO, according to Sabine Lagan, the term was “first coined in 1945 when the United Nations made a distinction in its charter between the participation of intergovernmental agencies and non-government associated groups,” describing it as the non-governmental organisations.<sup>141</sup> NGOs are widely considered providers of needs.<sup>142</sup> The European Union (EU) not only recognised the benefit of these organisations in providing basic needs in conflict and displaced areas, but it also opened its doors to them.

The NGOs promote the practice and theory of BHNs in international and domestic conflict areas by providing for the immediate needs of people in conflict and post-conflict zones. Meeting and fulfilling material needs, including public advocacy, are some of the areas in which NGOs demonstrate the aspirations and importance of BHNs’ Theory. As Sabina Lang reports:

The EU has redefined goals of women’s advocacy by creating institutional means for supranational leverage. It has redefined strategies by opening up institutional spaces for access to NGOs and networks and thus invited institutional advocacy. At the same time, innovation in communication has led to a whole array of cheap public advocacy means for NGOs<sup>143</sup>

Elsewhere, writing about the war and conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995), McMahon posits: “Humanitarian NGOs have been involved in conflict zones for a long time, providing life-saving relief, care for the suffering, and shelter for the homeless.”<sup>144</sup> She emphasises that

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<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 106.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid., 125.

<sup>139</sup> See Coser, *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict*, 106-107; Ury, *The Third Side*: 114 -190; Wallenstein, *Understanding Conflict Resolution*, 37; John Galtung, “International Development in Human Perspective,” in *Burton: Conflict and Basic Human Needs* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), 301-335.

<sup>140</sup> See Karl-Heinz Peschke, “Debt Crisis and Debt Relief,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 70 (2005): 355-361.

<sup>141</sup> Sabine Lagan, *NGOs, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, 2013), 10.

<sup>142</sup> Lang argues that NGOs do not only provide resources to those in need but also represents the voice of the voiceless or deprived. Ibid., 10-11.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 170.

<sup>144</sup> Patrice C. McMahon, *NGO Game*, 3.

these organisations have been active in activism and advocacy.<sup>145</sup> They talk about what they need to support people and explain what, how and where they carry out their activities. In other words, they engage people rather than merely meeting their material needs.

### 5.3.2 Critique of Basic Human Needs Theory

BHNs' Theory generates multiple questions that raise concerns. For instance, how do we know a real need when there is a conflict of interest? Does fulfilling need genuinely give rise to peace? Arguing that it is difficult to distinguish between needs and wants, the works of John Jones, Anthony Flew, and Agnes Heller cast doubt on the possibility of an actual need.<sup>146</sup> According to the American sociology and peacebuilding author Lewis Coser, selfish interest is a major issue within the theory. He states:

Where political structures are incapable of accommodating all political demands, there is an ever-present chance that violence will be resorted to by those who feel they cannot get their voice heard, as well as by those who have a vested interest in suppressing this voice.<sup>147</sup>

This criticism of BHNs Theory gained the support of international security scholars Roland Paris and Timothy Sisk, who observed that “today, the future of postwar peacebuilding and state building is uncertain, for many reasons.”<sup>148</sup> These include the fact that fulfilling basic needs for well-being and flourishing has an abysmal record and that provision for basic needs or institutional strengthening, in most cases, turned into neo-imperial or capitalist exploitation.<sup>149</sup>

Others contend that even if there are genuine needs, true peace cannot be achieved through their fulfilment.<sup>150</sup> Rubenstein observes:

[Human needs] are watered fitfully by ‘satisfiers’ which, under present circumstances, do not and cannot satisfy fully and whose partiality continuously creates false stopping points in the development of human nature. They can flower only in a future which

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<sup>145</sup> Lang, *NGOs, Civil Society, and the Public Sphere*, 91

<sup>146</sup> Jones John, “How Basic Are Basic Needs?” *Journal for Peace and Justice Studies* 8, no. 1 (1997), 49; Anthony G.N. Flew, “Wants or Needs, Choices or Command?” in *Human Needs and Politics*, ed., Fitzgerald, Ross (Sydney: Pergamon Press 1977): 213-228; Agnes Heller, “Can ‘True’ and ‘False Needs’ Be Posited?” in *Routledge Revivals: The Power of Shame* (London: Routledge, 1985): 285-299.

<sup>147</sup> Lewis A. Coser, *Continuities in the Study of Social Conflict* (New York: The Free Press, 1962), 106-107.

<sup>148</sup> Roland Paris and Timothy Sisk, “Understanding the Contradiction of Postwar Conflict,” in *The Contemporary Conflict Resolution Reader*, 304.

<sup>149</sup> For more information on turning financial support into neo-imperialism or exploitation, Read Peschke, “Debt Crisis and Debt Relief,” 355-361.

<sup>150</sup> Carol David, Jerel A. Rosati and Roger A. Coate, “Human Needs Realism: A Critical Assessment of the Power of Human Needs in the World Security,” in *The Power of Human Needs in the World's Society*, ed., Roger A. Coate and Jerel A. Rosati (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1988): 257-274.

permits men and women to become masters of production, of the state, and of themselves.<sup>151</sup>

He appears to imply that to be fully realized and escape individual desires and self-interest, human beings need to address the question of responsibility. In other words, escaping individual desires and self-interest, as Burton tries to do, is not the solution, commitment, and responsibility. Abu-Nirmer states: “Applying the notion (of basic need) unreservedly to productive and transformational practice continues to present us with unresolved problems.”<sup>152</sup> One example of this reservation is the report from Patrice C. McMahon. Citing the context of the war in Bosnia Herzegovina, she states that “peacebuilding turned to disappointment if not cynicism” when local and international NGOs who satisfied people’s basic needs left the country.<sup>153</sup> Also, the Nigerian author Kenneth Omege and the anthropologist Tricia Redeker Hepner write:

Institution building, democratic reforms, participatory development, and peacebuilding are among the favourite buzzwords of the externally dominated and often petulant conflict and development intervention community active in the regions. These interventions have met with mixed results depending upon how they have interfered with local needs and social-political dynamics. But such interventions and their associated buzzwords do not exclusively belong to donors and external actors’ initiatives. They are also mobilised by those most affected, often at both local and international levels, social and cultural resources have been mobilised that promote peacebuilding, conflict resolution, reconciliation, and human rights. Alternatively, they also fuel conflict.<sup>154</sup>

Despite showing the significance of the NGOs – both locally and nationally – in fulfilling basic needs, Omege and Redeka emphasise that the theory is ambiguous since the fulfilment of basic needs can cause further problems.

Rubenstein observes that BHN’s theory is like natural law, which is used to confirm existing assumptions or back up a moral argument. He goes on to say that unless needs serve means to a general insight, they will continue to be limited.<sup>155</sup> It is to be noted that this point was directed at Burton. When one looks at the BHNs Theory, as discussed here, he or she

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<sup>151</sup> Richard E. Rubenstein, “Basic Natural Law: Beyond Natural Law,” in *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*, ed. John Burton, New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1990), 352.

<sup>152</sup> Mohammed Abu-Nimer, “Conflict Resolution and Human Needs,” 183.

<sup>153</sup> Patrice C. McMahon, *The NGO Game: Post Conflict Peacebuilding in the Balkans and Beyond* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2017), 1, accessed on June 5, 2022, <https://ebookcentraproquest.com/lib/nium/detail.action?docID=4877969>.

<sup>154</sup> Kenneth Omeje C. and Redener Tricia Hapner. “Introduction,” in *Conflict and Peacebuilding in the African Great Lake Region*, eds., Kenneth Omeje C. and Redener Tricia Hapner (Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press, 2013), 3.

<sup>155</sup> Rubenstein, “Basic Natural Law: Beyond Natural Law,” in *Conflict: Human Needs Theory*, 344.

would realise that apart from using capabilities as an end, Sen argues that they must be used to assess policies and quality of life.

Additionally, McMahon is less than enthused by the interventions of NGOs, asserting: “NGOs are not business organisations and do not make a profit, but their employees were often motivated by a mixture of misguided altruism and salaried self-interest.”<sup>156</sup> The African researcher, Nankin Bagudu, shares that view. Focusing mainly on the north-central region of Nigeria, he states: “In Jos, Plateau State of Nigeria, some NGOs are controlled by those who sponsor them.”<sup>157</sup> These observations can potentially test the credibility of the theory.

Despite these criticisms, the theory, supported by the example of the work carried out by NGOs and other international bodies, emphatically states that there is always conflict if needs are frustrated and peace when they are fulfilled. From that framework, BHNs’ Theory’s stance as a substantive theory of peacebuilding shares the features of other peacebuilding theories, such as distributive and communicative justice. It may be argued that the theory establishes itself as a supplemental model to CST’s vision of peacebuilding and dialogues with other disciplines.

The following subheadings demonstrate the correlation of the theory with CST and the Concept of the gift, as discussed in chapter three.

### **5.3.3 Dialogue with Catholic Social Teaching**

This dissertation pointed out four models of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST: just war, pacifism, social justice, and accompaniment. The CST has always reflected upon needs fulfilment and other social matters. These include options for the poor and human empowerment when responding to human misery and violence. This study mentioned in chapter four that in discussing peacebuilding, CST shows concern for those who are deprived of specific essential needs.<sup>158</sup> Francis Campbell writes:

Concern for the poor and the need to relate with the poor is absolutely embedded in the DNA of the Catholic Church. Jesus was not signalling indifference to the poor when he referred to them as always being with us. The point he was making was captured in what he said next. ‘You will not always have me.’<sup>159</sup>

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<sup>156</sup> McMahon, *NGO Game: Post Conflict Peacebuilding in the Balkans and Beyond*, 4.

<sup>157</sup> Nankin Bagudu, *Identity, Political Religiosity and Communal Violence in Nigeria: Implications, League for Human rights*. (Jos: Dales Press, 2003), 139.

<sup>158</sup> This point has been mentioned by Kenneth Himes as pointed out previously.

<sup>159</sup> Francis Campbell, “The Poor Will Always Be Among You: Poverty, Education and the Catholic Ideal,” in *Poverty in the Early Church and Today*, eds., Steve Walton, and Hannah Swithinbank (London: T & T Clark, 2020), 190.



CST encourages the state and institutions to carry out the task of providing people's basic needs; these are conditions for flourishing.<sup>160</sup> As Himes argues, the tradition of CST employed a variety of formulations to call attention to the satisfaction of basic needs.<sup>161</sup> Needs fulfilment is essential to the functioning of the human person and general people rather than institutions. Catholic Social Teaching has applied this theory in different ways even before Burton inaugurated it in the Peacebuilding discipline.

Like CST, BHNs' Theory provides a perspective and framework for understanding and appraising one's well-being and flourishing. This leads to the expansion of possibilities in the person's life.<sup>162</sup> In various ways, the theory emphasises fulfilling needs by fostering empowerment or aiding people towards well-being to build peace in society through the promotion of the right to freedom and other themes. Of central importance for BHNs' Theory is people's concrete situation. Its analysis of the essential needs of human beings offers an alternative approach to the nonviolent approach to peacebuilding, focusing on social justice issues, identifying basic needs, and outlining ways of creating conditions for fulfilling them without coercion.

For instance, Sen contends that capabilities can help individuals to do many things, such as evaluating their quality of life and freedom:

First, we use capabilities for different purposes. What we focus on cannot be independent of what we are doing and why (e.g., whether we are evaluating poverty, specifying certain basic human rights, getting a rough and ready measure of human development, and so on). Second, social conditions and the priorities that they suggest may vary.<sup>163</sup> Burton's Communication supports the community, empowers individuals to sustain peace, allows flourishing, and prevents unforeseen violence and conflict. He argues against coercion by elites or institutions controlled by elites and settles for decision-making in which the present and future are analysed and anticipated.<sup>164</sup> Sen's nonviolence is a commitment to positive

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<sup>160</sup> See our discussion of social justice initiative of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST in chapter four.

<sup>161</sup> Himes pointed out that popes after Leo XIII have employed a variety of formulations to call attention to the satisfaction of basic needs. See Himes, "Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, eds., Robert J. Schreiter, R Scott Appleby, and Gerard F. Powers (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010), 276.

<sup>162</sup> For example, Sen observes that capabilities offer the human person various means of achieving many functions. One of these is evaluation exercise. Here, the vision of human life is a combination of many functionings and capabilities, and the analyses of human freedom, as a central feature of living, provides a different grounded foundation route to the evaluative exercise. See Sen, "Development as Capability Expansion," in *Capabilities, Freedom, and Equality: Amartya Sen's Work from a Gender Perspective*, 443.

<sup>163</sup> Sen, "Dialogue: Capabilities, Lists and Public Reason: Continuing the Conversation," *Feminists Economist* 10, no. 3 (2004), 79.

<sup>164</sup> Burton and Dukes, *Conflict: Conflict Resolution* eds., Burton (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990), 161. See Dunn David, *From Power Politics to Conflict Resolution* (London: Palgrave, 2004), 102.

peace. Such an activity of peacebuilding promotes positive peace.<sup>165</sup> Ury's ten roles are a commitment to nonviolence, not a withdrawal from responsibility.<sup>166</sup> He cites excellent figures of nonviolence such as Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King Jr. Other nonviolent activities, such as dialogue, commitment to justice, negotiation, and human rights, are among the ten roles. At the same time, as already highlighted, his tenth role appropriates the criteria of war – such as just force, good motives, last resort, and right intentions. He argues for the need to protect the innocent and stop the aggressor.<sup>167</sup>

This work argues that, like the CST, BHNs' Theory explicitly supports nonviolence, which is committed to human rights and political order.<sup>168</sup> It implicitly and explicitly accepts just war criteria may be used in the last instance. Additionally, Theory provides a framework that can potentially guide people to access and assess flourishing, setting its eye on the dignity of the human person rather than institutions. The well-being of people, especially those on the margin, formed their context. In each account, nonviolence, norms, and criteria of just war are given priority. In this way, both CST and BHNs' Theory shows genuine care and concern for peace through their emphasis on just war, pacifism/nonviolence, social justice, and Pastoral accompaniment. From the perspective of human needs' frustration, particularly the frustration that comes because of injustice, BHNs' Theory shares a common understanding with CST.<sup>169</sup>

#### **5.3.4 Dialogue with the Concept of the Gift**

We have discussed controlled communication, capability, and the ten roles of the third side, which characterise basic human need theory. This section of the thesis shall deploy these three aspects of Basic Human Needs Theory to highlight the link between the theory and the concept of the gift in the same established order.

Controlled communication refers to the fulfilment of the immediate material needs of the people. Here, we can speak of fulfilling frustrating material needs that could help build bridges, school libraries, recreation centres, et cetera. In other words, Controlled communication means granting financial aid and checking how this aid is being used to avert potential conflict caused by scarcity of resources. Fulfilling material needs must avoid

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<sup>165</sup> Betty Reardon, "Feminist Concept of Peace and Security," in *A Reader in Peace Studies*, eds., P. Smoker R. Davis and B. Munske (Oxford: Pergamon Press 1990);

<sup>166</sup> Ury, *The Third Side*, 159-160

<sup>167</sup> *Ibid.*, 185

<sup>168</sup> Kenneth Himes, "Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, 276.

<sup>169</sup> Burton, *Violence Explained: The Source of Conflict, Violence and Crime*, 23.

donations for competition, selfish interest, and other forms of imperialism. It must promote freedom and participation. Benedict's logic of the gift is not a controlled communication, but because it challenges individuals and institutions to be generous with their wealth and profits without an explicit agreement for any rewards, it can perform the same function as Controlled communication. It can even serve as an antidote to the negative activities, such as selfish interest and neo-imperialism, that may be found in it. Thus, donors and receivers or beneficiaries who participate in Controlled communication can turn to Benedict XVI's logic of the gift for direction regarding how to help without obligation or expecting immediate reward.

Capability enhances well-being and enables individuals or institutions to appraise well-being, hence peacebuilding. We also mentioned that capabilities need economic and political rights for their expansion. Even though there is a contrasting difference between Sen's capabilities and Benedict's logic of the gift – in that the former is secular and tends to align itself with individual freedom, and the latter is theological and promotes social freedom – both agree that their job is mainly about enhancing well-being and human dignity. While Sen capitalises on human rights and development for the expansion capabilities that can lead to well-being, Benedict's logic of the gift goes beyond these to reciprocity and Charity in truth. On the former, Benedict XVI states: “The sharing of reciprocal duties is a more powerful incentive to action than the mere assertion of rights” (CV, 43). By fostering reciprocity, the gift can create a cohesive society and improve the well-being of the human person. This is because people are more likely to engage in economic and development activities with one another without expecting immediate or future rewards. They can also establish a network of relationships they can fall back on in times of hardship. As Michael Naughton maintains:

He [Benedict] defines charity as love received and given' CV, 6). The phrase is the beginning of what we mean by a 'logic of the gift.' This logic of receiving and giving is like the inhaling and exhaling of life. It begins to describe the dynamic of relationship between the contemplative and active within the person, which informs the nature of relationships that are first and foremost expressed in family and faith communities, but also in work communities.<sup>170</sup>

To further explain the practical importance of the gift to building a community of people, Naughton states: “The theological insight of Benedict's the 'logic of the gift' should serve as a basis to understanding business as a community of persons.”<sup>171</sup> When businesses are viewed

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<sup>170</sup> Michael Naughton, “The Logic of the Gift and World of Business,” in *The Moral Dynamic of Economic Life: An Extension and Critique of Caritas in Veritate*, ed., Daniel Finn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 20112), 81.

<sup>171</sup> Naughton, “The Business Enterprise,” in *The Moral Dynamic of Economic Life*, 90.

as a community of people and not merely a group of shareholders, reciprocal relationship proves.

On the latter, Benedict's logic of the gift combines love and truth in order to address issues of human well-being, particularly poverty (CV, 9 and 11). Love and truth foster trust, and this can create a more cohesive community where people's worth can be visibly seen and cherished. In this way, Benedict XVI's logic of the gift, from the perspective of reciprocity and "charity in truth," shares common ground with Sen's capability because people's well-being is the primary goal.

The Ten Roles of the Third Side share the same goals as Benedict's logic of the gift because the roles it performs are acts of giving. The roles of a teacher and healer demand being present and spending sufficient time with those facing the reality of conflict or expected conflict. He instructs people to be tolerant, respectful, and hospitable. The healer tries to mend broken relationships. These engagements require a certain level of tolerance and self-giving towards the other. Time is required to visit places, teach peacebuilding skills, and heal physical and relationship wounds. For instance, Ury posits that teachers and students need to prepare and pass on the knowledge they acquire to others.

The logic of the gift is articulated to carry out the same task. It is giving oneself to another or carrying out voluntary services. It means passing on ideas and knowledge to others without looking for present or future rewards. In this perspective, Benedict XVI's logic of the gift can improve the teaching and healing roles of the *Third Side* since it is about passing on what one receives: reciprocity that leads to social bonding and fraternity (CV, 36).

The relationship of the concept of the gift with the ten roles can also be gleaned from the role of the provider. This group of the *ten roles* provides food, roads, and other essential needs. Amidst these, the provider speaks of mutual respect. Here, the provider performs two important tasks. Firstly, like the different roles, the provider carries out a volunteering job, and secondly, a philanthropy job or inviting philanthropists to participate in their roles by raising funds to provide essential needs. Volunteering and giving oneself generously toward community service are some practical implications of the gift.

Benedict's logic of the gift encourages people and firms to offer financial support even from their profit. It does not imply that businesses should operate alongside profit or condemn pro-profit businesses. Instead, it establishes that profit-oriented businesses should allocate sufficient profit in service toward the human good (CV, 38). Given this correlation of the gift with the Ten Roles of the Third Side, providers and other roles can refer to the gift while campaigning for funds because, one, its content is persuasive, and two, some firms earn profit

and seek a morally acceptable way of using it beyond their business. Presenting them with the teaching of Benedict's logic of the gift can move them to contribute to the role of the provider.

#### **5.4 Conclusion**

This chapter identified three peacebuilding models: 'Controlled Communication', 'Capabilities', and the 'Ten Roles of the Third Side'. Burton asserts that peace thrives when leaders identify and fulfil basic needs by operating 'Controlled Communication'. An essential aspect of both BHNs and CST is their perspectives on how institutions and organisations like NGOs apply their ideas. The NGOs visibly carry out the role of identifying and fulfilling basic needs; they also guide and help people to help themselves. Although criticisms have been levelled against NGOs, their activities attest to the significance of BHNs. This chapter demonstrated that there is a robust dialogue not only between this theory and Catholic Social Teaching but also between the concept of the gift. Like CST, BHNs' Theory is appropriate for war reasoning, non-violence or pacifism, and social justice and accompaniment. Also, it alluded to Benedict's concept of the gift by sharing its characteristics, namely voluntary activities, generosity and so forth.

The conclusion drawn in this chapter is that BHNs' Theory is a dialogue partner to the models of peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching and Benedict's concept of the gift. Accordingly, it proffers supplemental or extended discussion carried out in the previous chapter. The next chapter returns to the Catholic teaching on peacebuilding in Pope Benedict and Pope Francis to see how the discussion has evolved recently.

## CHAPTER SIX

### Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis on Peacebuilding

#### 6.1 Introduction

Chapter three of this study concluded that Benedict XVI's logic of the gift is a moral framework of encounter, which can engage peacebuilding efforts. Chapter four reserved Benedict XVI's and Francis's treatment of peacebuilding for this chapter. This chapter, therefore, presents the culmination of the argument on Catholic peacebuilding. It addresses how Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis respond to violence and situate themselves in Catholic Social Teaching on peacebuilding.

The chapter is divided into two significant sections. The first focuses on Benedict XVI's presentation of Catholic Social Teaching's vision of peace, highlighting the force of the logic of the gift, which, in essence, is his original contribution. The second presents Francis' vision of war and peace, particularly in *Laudato Si* (2015) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020), showing how he carries forward the teachings of Catholic peacebuilding, using and mentioning Benedict's logic of the gift implicitly and explicitly.

#### 6.2 Benedict XVI on Peacebuilding

In his inaugural message of the Celebration of World Day of Peace in 2006, Benedict stated:

In a variety of situations and in different settings, the Holy See has expressed its support for this humanitarian law and has called for it to be respected and promptly implemented out of the conviction that the truth of peace exists even in the midst of war. International humanitarian law ought to be considered as one of the finest and most effective expressions of the intrinsic demands of the truth of peace.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Benedict XVI, "In Truth, Peace," *Message of the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2006, no. 7, accessed on March 10, 2021, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

As already noted, Benedict was deeply impacted by the economic depression and the Cold War tensions caused by World War II on the lives of people in Europe.<sup>2</sup> These experiences set the context for him to write about peace, which this thesis aims to explore. Therefore, this section seeks to do three purposes: firstly, to present his understanding of peace; secondly, to consider his approaches to peace; and thirdly, to show how his *Caritas in Veritate* and Messages of Word Day of Peace outline his practical discussion of peacebuilding.

### 6.2.1 Benedict XVI's Notion of Peace

Benedict presents his view of peace from two angles: one, peace is a gift and responsibility; two, it is well-being and flourishing. These two definitions imply that peace comes from God, but the human task is crucial. In other words, peace means making personal and communal efforts to promote the “fruit of an order” while accepting that peace is the act of a divine founder. Humans participate in God’s gift of peace and become co-givers of peace when they are involved in human acts of justice and other forms of agency.<sup>3</sup>

With regards to the first view of peace, he writes: “Peace is a gift of God and at the same time a task which is never fully completed. A society reconciled with God is closer to peace, which is not the mere absence of war.”<sup>4</sup> In this respect, he conceptualises peace in the same manner as his predecessor, John Paul II, referring to it as a divine gift that demands moral responsibility for its actualisation.<sup>5</sup> However, unlike his predecessor, Benedict does not rely heavily only on the philosophical natural law approach to explain this notion of peace. As related in chapter three, while Benedict acknowledges the significance of the natural law approach, he adopts an alternative approach that utilises theological discourse, arguing that peace is a gift of God and responsibility. However, it is important to note that for him, without God, the human task is baseless. He consolidates peace as a gift and as a responsibility in a single whole. Reflecting on St. Paul during a general audience, he asserts:

It is precisely because of this experience of relationship with Jesus Christ that Paul henceforth places at the centre of his Gospel an irreducible opposition between the two

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<sup>2</sup> Peter Seewald, *Benedict XVI's Last Testament in his Words* (London: Bloomsbury 2016), 58.

<sup>3</sup> Benedict XVI, “The Human Person, the Heart of Peace” in *Message of the Celebration of the World Peace Day*, 2007, nos. 2 and 3, accessed on March 11, 2020, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>4</sup> Benedict XVI, “Religious Freedom, the Path to Peace,” in *Message of the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2011, no. 15, Accessed on March 12, 2021, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>5</sup> Despite explaining that peace is the fruit of truth, love, justice, and freedom, John Paul II rigorously maintains that peace is a divine establishment of God. See John Paul II, “*Pacem in Terris: A Permanent Commitment*” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2003, no. 10, accessed on April 12, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

alternative paths to justice: one built on the works of the law, the other founded on the grace of faith in Christ.<sup>6</sup>

In 2006, he asserted that all human effort depends on God's providence (Peace as a gift)<sup>7</sup> while we can achieve peace through human endeavour: "If it is true that peace between individuals and peoples – the ability to live together and to build a relationship of justice and solidarity – calls for unfailing commitment on our part, it is also true, and indeed more so, that peace is a gift of God."<sup>8</sup> Although the tradition before him already discussed peace in such a manner, Benedict's amalgamation of peace as God's gift and human task led him to his second notion of peace.

Concerning his second view of peacebuilding, he writes:

To respond adequately to this question, we must realize that peace cannot be reduced to a simple absence of armed conflict, but needs to be understood as the fruit of an order which has been planted in human society by its divine founder, an order which must be brought about by humanity in its thirst for ever more perfect justice.<sup>9</sup>

Peace, then, is not just the absence of war. It involves providing a safe environment for people to achieve their potential. This view of peace comes close to the notion postulated by the Institute for Economics and Peace in Sydney, Australia, in 2018. According to the institute, peace is providing a milieu for people to achieve their goal – human flourishing.<sup>10</sup> Sen and Burton, as highlighted in chapter five when discussing the Basic Human Needs (BHNs) theory of peace, also mirror this vision of peacebuilding. However, there is a difference. While the Institute for Economics and Peace in Australia, including BHNs Theory, considers only the social perspective of human well-being, Benedict incorporates both social and transcendent dimensions since he believes peace has implications for the whole human person. Benedict writes:

One of the most important ways of building peace is through a form of globalisation directed towards the interests of the whole human family. In order to govern globalisation, however, there needs to be a strong sense of *global solidarity*...globalisation eliminates certain barriers, but is still able to build new ones; it brings peoples together, but spatial and temporal proximity does not of itself create the conditions for true communion and authentic peace.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Benedict XVI, "The Doctrine of Justification: From Works to Faith," *General Audience* (19<sup>th</sup> November 2008). Accessed on February 17, 2022. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>7</sup> Benedict XVI, "In Truth, Peace," no. 11.

<sup>8</sup> Benedict XVI, "The Human Person, the Heart of Peace," in *Message of World Day of Peace* (2007), no. 3.

<sup>9</sup> Benedict XVI, "In Truth, Peace," no. 3.

<sup>10</sup> Institute for Economics & Peace. *Positive Peace Report 2018: Analysing the Factors that Sustain Peace*, Sydney, October 2018, 3, accessed on March 2, 2019, available from: <http://visionofhumanity.org/reports>.

<sup>11</sup> Benedict XVI, "Fight Poverty to Build Peace," in *Message for the Celebration of World Day Message for Peace* (2009), no. 8, accessed on April 18, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).



It is the claim that solidarity and globalisation build and support the human person and contribute to well-being and peacebuilding efforts.

Besides, Benedict's vision of peace corresponds to the understanding of the common good advanced by the fathers of the *Second Vatican Council*, who defined it as:

The Common good, that is, the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfilment, today takes on an increasingly universal complexion and consequently involves rights and duties with respect to the whole human race (GS, 26).<sup>12</sup>

Indeed, the intimate connection between Benedict's two definitions is highlighted in *Gaudium et Spes*:

This peace on earth cannot be obtained unless personal well-being is safeguarded and men freely and trustingly share with one another the riches of their inner spirits and their talents. A firm determination to respect other men and peoples and their dignity, as well as the studied practice of brotherhood are absolutely necessary for the establishment of peace. Hence peace is likewise the fruit of love, which goes beyond what justice can provide (GS, 78).<sup>13</sup>

The phrase "beyond what justice can provide" suggests that peace is a gift of God. In a similar vein, John Paul highlights this fundamental connection between peace and human flourishing, stating:

The good of peace should be seen today as closely related to the *new goods* derived from progress in science and technology. These too, in the application of the principle of the universal destination of the earth's goods, need to be *put at the service of humanity's basic needs*.<sup>14</sup>

Benedict's notion of peace is a development of CST's notion of peace. In other words, he reiterates the idea of peace in the evolving tradition of the CST, arguing that peace is not just the surrender of arms and weapons but the gift of God and the flourishing of human relationships in every sphere of society.

### 6.2.2 Benedict XVI's Approaches to Peace

The context for Benedict's approach to peace is a backdrop of many threats: genocide in Rwanda, atomic weapons, and other crimes against humanity, and, most of all, the Second World War. He denotes peacebuilding through social justice, forgiveness, and other means.

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<sup>12</sup> This definition of the common good is in John XXIII's work. See John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra*, no. 65

<sup>13</sup> Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium Et Spes* (1965), no. 78.

<sup>14</sup> John Paul II, "Do not be Overcome by Evil but Overcome Evil with Good," in *Message for the Celebration of World Day Message of Peace*, (2005), no. 7, accessed on January 15, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

This section explores three categories he deploys while reflecting on peace: moral principles, evangelisation, and dialogue. They are significant to his definition of peacebuilding and the principle of gratuitousness.

### 6.2.2.1 Moral Principles

Benedict's subtle approach to peace and conflict resides in his teaching of moral truth, sin, and repentance. In 2005, during an interview in his native country, Germany, he responded to a question about wars in Lebanon and the Middle East, using moral principles to reflect on peace.

The reply deserves referencing here:

We do want to appeal to all Christians and to all those who feel touched by the words of the Holy See, to help mobilise all the forces that recognise how war is the worst solution for all sides. It brings no good to anyone, not even to the apparent victors. We understand this very well in Europe, after the two world wars. Everyone needs peace. There's a strong Christian community in Lebanon, there are Christians among the Arabs, there are Christians in Israel. Christians throughout the world are committed to helping these countries that are dear to all of us. There are moral forces at work that are ready to help people understand how the only solution is for all of us to live together. These are the forces we want to mobilise: it's up to politicians to find a way to let this happen as soon as possible and, especially, to make it last.<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, Benedict focuses on moral integrity to explore peace. Reflecting on the conflicts in Lebanon, Syria and Iraq during his general audience on September 19th, 2012, he states:

It was a moving ecclesial event and, at the same time, a providential occasion for dialogue in a country that is complex but also emblematic for the whole region...I am thinking in particular of the terrible conflict that is tormenting Syria, causing, in addition to thousands of deaths, a stream of refugees pouring into the region in a desperate search for security and a future. And I have not forgotten the difficult situation in Iraq...I thank the Lord for this precious gift which promises hope for the future of the Church in those regions: young people, adults and families enlivened by the tenacious desire to root their lives in Christ, to stay anchored to the Gospel, to walk together in the Church.<sup>16</sup>

The above quotation indicates his lines of thought on peace. Interpreting Benedict's mode of writing and speaking about peace, Kim Lawton sees the pontiff pleading for reciprocity in the

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<sup>15</sup> Benedict XVI, *Interview with Bayerische Rundfunk (ARD), ZDF, Deutsch and well Vatican Radio*. Accessed on October 5, 2022, [idsinger.stjohnsemediu/@magist/2005\\_ben16/0608\\_interview.htm](mailto:idsinger.stjohnsemediu/@magist/2005_ben16/0608_interview.htm).

<sup>16</sup> Benedict XVI, "Apostolic Journey to Lebanon." *General Audience of 19<sup>th</sup> September 2012*, accessed on February 17, 2022, available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

sense of granting equal rights, irrespective of where one lives.<sup>17</sup> He always returns to what he thinks is the fundamental duty of the Church: that is, articulating and presenting the truth of revelation to people. He states: The Church has a mission of truth to accomplish, in every time and circumstance” (CV, 9). This is not to say that he entirely disregards Just War Theory because, in his address to the members of the United Nations, he speaks of the responsibility to protect (R2P) when he uses just war reasoning.<sup>18</sup>

In 2006, Benedict’s message of peace was delivered within the context of religious extremism and fanaticism that led to violence in many places. In the message, he made it clear that moral truth is the way to peace. According to him:

The theme chosen for this year's reflection—*In truth, peace* — expresses the conviction that wherever and whenever men and women are enlightened by the splendour of truth, they naturally set out on the path of peace...Mankind will not succeed in ‘building a truly more human world for everyone, everywhere on earth unless all people are renewed in spirit and converted to the truth of peace.’<sup>19</sup>

He categorises truth as having its peace and being planted in every human heart. Given this conviction about the truth of peace, he encourages everyone, especially those saddled with military responsibility to fight terrorism and other violent conflicts, to view peace accordingly.<sup>20</sup>

Like John XXIII, Paul VI, and John Paul II, Benedict considers sin as a major trigger of conflict and war. For instance, John Paul II states: “At the same time sin, which is always attempting to trap us and which jeopardises our human achievements, is conquered and redeemed by the ‘reconciliation’ accomplished by Christ” (SRS, 31). Given that sin affects all creation, including the environment, it has the potential to obstruct the process of

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<sup>17</sup> Another example of Benedict’s approach to peace is his address to the UN in 2008 when he speaks about the responsibility to protect people from pending and actual attacks, genocides, and ethnic cleansing without going into the just war analysis. See Benedict XVI, Address to the United Nations in 2008, Accessed on October 5, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va); Interpreting Benedict’s mode of writing and speaking about peace, Kim Lawton sees the pontiff pleading for reciprocity in the sense of granting equal rights, irrespective of where one lives rather than a reference to just war initiatives. See Kim Lawton, “Pope Benedict VI’s U.N Address April 18, 2008,” in *Religion and Ethics Newsweekly*, accessed October 5, 2022, <https://www.pds.org/wnet/religionandethics/2008/4/18/april-18-Pope-benedict-xvi-u-n-address/54561>.

<sup>18</sup> The term responsibility to protect is a concept of international relations which insists that nations and those who engage in humanitarian intervention have the duty “to protect citizens and ensure their basic rights by preserving their dignity, well-being and safety.” See Semegnish Asfaw, “Introduction,” in *The Responsibility to Protect: Ethical and Theological Reflections*, eds., Semegnish Asfaw, Guillermo, and Peter Weiderud (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 2005). Tobias Winright shed more light on this elsewhere. See his “Just Policing and the Responsibility to Protect,” *Ecumenical Review* 63, no.1 (2011): 84-95. Benedict XVI encouraged and challenged members of the United Nations and its authority to establish rules that protect human dignity and promote the common good. This is typical reasoning of the responsibility to protect and just war reasoning. See Benedict XVI, Address to the United Nations in 2008, Accessed on October 5, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>19</sup> Benedict XVI, “In Truth, Peace,” no. 3.

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 8.

peacebuilding. Despite John Paul II's discussion of social and structural sin in *Sollicitudo rei Socialis*, he speaks of reconciliation through Jesus Christ only (SRS, 36). Curran observed that there was an absence of an in-depth discussion of the role of sin in CST. According to him:

*Pacem in Terris* involves the failure to recognise sin and its effects. By basing the whole teaching on reason, and the order that the author of nature has put into the world, *Pacem in Terris* and similar documents [of course not Benedict XVI's encyclicals] suffer from natural law optimism that often fails to explicitly acknowledge the harsher reality of human existence... Failure to appreciate the reality of sin and its effects also influences substantive issues such as conflict and power. Sin does not destroy the goodness of creation, but it certainly affects all creation and human endeavours in the world.<sup>21</sup>

Benedict XVI is convinced that evangelising the message of the risen Christ, including reconciliation and conversion from sin and encounter with the other and the incarnate word, the giver of peace, leads people to do the work of peace.

In Africa's present situation, the Church is called to make the voice of Christ heard ... For the sake of Christ and in fidelity to the lesson of life which he taught us, she feels the duty to be present wherever human suffering exists and to make heard the silent cry of the innocent who suffer persecution, or of peoples whose governments mortgage the present and the future for personal interests ... True peace comes from Christ (cf. *Jn* 14:27). It cannot be compared with the peace that the world gives. It is not the fruit of negotiations and diplomatic agreements based on particular interests. It is the peace of a humanity reconciled with itself in God, a peace of which the Church is the sacrament.<sup>22</sup>

Benedict's treatment of the role of sin in peacebuilding can offer hope. This can be gleaned from his constant call on the significance of repentance and reconciliation among people. He not only speaks of reconciliation with God but also with oneself and others. Responding to the report of the Second Synod of African Bishops in Rome (2009), a report that captures the conflict situation in Africa at that time, he writes:

Reconciliation, then, is not limited to God's plan to draw estranged and sinful humanity to himself in Christ through the forgiveness of sins and out of love. It is also the restoration of relationships between people through the settlement of differences and the removal of obstacles to their relationships.<sup>23</sup>

In this way, Benedict finds a subtle way of speaking about his core theological anthropology: that Christian life, which is also human existence, is about conversion or encounters. This leads us to the third moral truth he deploys to write about peace, namely repentance.

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<sup>21</sup> Charles E. Curran, *Catholic Social Teaching: A Historical, Theological and Ethical Analysis* (Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 30.

<sup>22</sup> See Benedict XVI, *Africae Manus: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: On the Church in Africa: In Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace*, no. 30. Accessed on March 11, 2020. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

<sup>23</sup> Benedict XVI, *Africae Manus*, no. 20.

Benedict emphasises the need for moral conversion while discussing peace from the perspective of climate change. His reflection on conversion suggests his implicit discussion of sin and peacebuilding because, like reconciliation, one cannot speak of conversion without sin. In the context of peacebuilding, environmental issues are gaining growing attention. It is not unusual to find scholars commenting on the effect of drought, caused by climate change, on well-being. Some scholars connect the natural environment with peacebuilding efforts from a sociological standpoint.<sup>24</sup> Benedict frames the discussion of climate change and peace from a moral perspective and international law, citing repentance. In the opening paragraph of his Message of the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, 2006, he maintains:

Man's inhumanity to man has given rise to numerous threats to peace and to authentic and integral human development – wars, international and regional conflicts, acts of terrorism, and violations of human rights. Yet no less troubling are the threats arising from the neglect – if not downright misuse – of the earth and the natural goods that God has given us. For this reason, it is imperative that mankind renew and strengthen that covenant between human beings and the environment, which should mirror the creative love of God, from whom we come and towards whom we are journeying.<sup>25</sup>

In sum, this section asserts that Benedict draws on his central theological anthropology, that is, his teaching on moral values, to discuss peacebuilding. For instance, he writes: “It is necessary before else to provide peace with other weapons – different from those destined to kill and exterminate mankind. What are needed above all are moral weapons, those which give strength and privilege to international law.”<sup>26</sup> Paramount among these moral values are truth, sin and reconciliation/conversion to treat peacebuilding.

It is interesting to know that Benedict is not the only scholar who reflects on peacebuilding from the perspective of moral evaluation of our attitudes towards the environment. Matthew Shadle writes on the spiritual and moral roots of violence and environmental destruction. In his view, Military actions have caused severe damage to the environment. He reports that they burn forests and divert water sources. These are the issues that Benedict considers when reflecting on peacebuilding.

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<sup>24</sup> See Robert Schreier, “The Future Direction in Catholic Peacebuilding,” in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, eds. Robert Schreier, R. Scott Appleby, and Gerald Powers (Maryknoll, New York: Orbis Books, 2010), 447; J. Milburn Thompson, “Treating Nature Non-violently: Developing Catholic Social Teaching on the Environment Through Nonviolence,” in *Violence, Transformation, and the Sacred: They shall be Called Children of God*, eds., Margaret R. Pfeil and Tobias Winright (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012).

<sup>25</sup> Benedict XVI, “If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation,” in *Message of the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2010, no 1, accessed on March 11, 2020 [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>26</sup> Benedict XVI, “Religious Freedom, the Path to Peace,” in *Message for World Day of Peace*, 2011, no. 15.

### 6.2.2.2 Evangelisation

Benedict's overarching desire to discuss the vocation of the Church, namely the proclamation of the message of salvation, provides a context for him to reflect on peace. While he deploys just war reasoning, Benedict exemplifies optimism that proclaiming salvation, hope, and dialogue is the most appropriate way of achieving peace; other virtues he suggests include the Responsibility to Protect and carry out works of charity and justice in the public domain. For him, to evangelise or proclaim peace, these concepts must be brought to the fore. The evangelising of hope and salvation is considered here as his primary interest in peace.

Benedict maintains that hope, at once a gift and a responsibility, has the potential to lead to well-being and flourishing. In his first post-synodal apostolic exhortation, titled *Sacramentum Caritatis* (2007), he states: "The Church gives voice to the hope for peace and reconciliation rising up from every man and woman of good will, directing it towards the one who 'is our peace' (*Eph 2:14*) and who can bring peace to individuals and peoples when all human efforts fail."<sup>27</sup> Proclaiming this message, Benedict assumes, can deliver peace. His interest in the concept of hope led him to publish and name his second encyclical, *Spe Salvi* (2007), which means we are saved by hope. In the context of peacebuilding, it could mean we flourish by hope.

Closely related to hope is salvation.<sup>28</sup> His prioritisation of the work of salvation can be understood through his contributions to debates. News reporters who follow his trajectory on violence and peace attest to that fact. For instance, according to a Vatican correspondent, John Allen:

Ratzinger's attitude during the council [Second Vatican Council] can be gleaned in part through the public statements of Cardinal Frings. During the debate over *Lumen Gentium* in the second succession, Frings applauded the 'ecumenical spirit' of the document and its irenic approach to non-Christians [that is, Christian unity]... Yet it is clear that Frings and Ratzinger were not prepared to abandon Christianity's claim to being true in a sense superior to other faith, nor to lessen evangelising efforts.<sup>29</sup>

Clearly, and on the evidence of Allen, the work of evangelisation, especially proclaiming hope and salvation, dominates his writings.

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<sup>27</sup> Benedict XVI, *Post Synodal Apostolic Exhortation: Sacramentum Caritatis* (2007), no. 49.

<sup>28</sup> See Chapters Two and Three of this dissertation.

<sup>29</sup> John Allen, *Pope Benedict XVI: A Biography of Joseph Ratzinger* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2000), 219 (Parenthesis are mine).

Furthermore, Benedict's post-synodal exhortation, *Africae Munus* (2011), subtitled *In Service to Reconciliation in Justice and Peace*, emphasises evangelising salvation.<sup>30</sup> In the exhortation, he employs African theologians to speak of peace through evangelising the content of salvation – theology of the Trinity, God's grace, and hope. He exhorts:

While earnestly desiring to help implement the directives of the synods on the burning issues as reconciliation, justice and peace, I express my trust that [African] theologians will continue to probe the depth of the trinitarian mystery and its meaning for every African life. Since the vocation of all men and women is one, we must not lose our zest for the reconciliation of humanity with God through the mystery of our salvation in Christ.<sup>31</sup>

Here, Benedict speaks on the roles of the theology of grace and salvation and alludes to the critical role of evangelisation in peacebuilding. For example, he explained to Africans the value of safeguarding their culture as they work for peace through evangelisation. He writes:

Various syncretistic movements and sects have sprung up in Africa in recent decades. Sometimes it is hard to discern whether they are of authentically Christian inspiration... These many sects take advantage of an incomplete social infrastructure, the erosion of traditional family solidarity and inadequate catechesis in order to exploit people's credulity... They shatter the peace of couples and families through false prophecies and visions. They even seduce political leaders. The Church's theology and pastoral care must determine the causes of this phenomenon, not only in order to stem the haemorrhage of the faithful from the parishes to the sects, but also in order to lay the foundations of a suitable pastoral response to the attraction that these movements and sects exert. Once again, this points to the need for a profound evangelization of the Africans.<sup>32</sup>

Given the critical importance of evangelisation to peacebuilding, Benedict does not leave out the laity in the African continent. He admonishes African laity, particularly the elderly, to view the work of evangelisation as another tool of reconciliation and peace.<sup>33</sup> Also, reflecting on the violent situation in Africa, including violence against women, Benedict echoes:

Once more, I say: 'Get up, Church in Africa...because you are being called by the heavenly Father...Set out on the path of a new evangelisation with the courage that comes to you from the Holy Spirit...' Evangelisation today takes the name of reconciliation, an indispensable condition for instilling in Africa justice among men and women, and building a fair and lasting peace that respects each individual and all peoples.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Benedict XVI is emphatic that evangelisation is the way to peace. In his *Post-Synodal Exhortation: Africae Manus*, he exhorts African elders to focus on proclaiming the gospel of Christ in public sphere. The gospel of Christ in his thought, as we explain in chapters two and three, is about the contents of the logic of the gift, the theology of the Trinity. He urges Elders to apply this theology to peace, reconciliation, and justice.

See Benedict XVI, *Post Synodal Exhortation: Africae Manus. In Service to Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace*, no 50, accessed on May 23, 2022, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 72.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, no 38.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 50.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 172.



According to Charles Curran, this approach to peacebuilding is a new development. Before Benedict, CST did not adequately mention evangelisation, especially when proclaiming the message of Christ's passion, death, and resurrection as a tool for peacebuilding. As noted, appeal to the natural law was the norm. For instance, while responding to issues of the market and the universal end of created goods, Leo XIII describes humans as having reason capable of mediating the law of God and governing themselves (RN, 6 & 7). Benedict's predecessor, Paul VI, points out that the right to own property has been given to humans by nature (QA, 42-43). John XXIII had the chance to situate the theology of the passion and resurrection of Christ in *Pacem in Terris* but did not. The only time he mentioned the theology of the passion of Christ was at the end of his discussion of peace as human cooperation or globalisation (PT, 15). On this critical point, Curran remarks:

*Pacem in Terris* does not entirely neglect the role of grace and the Gospel, however. After describing the order in which peace can be established, the conclusion points out that human resources alone are not enough to bring about such a notable exultant task but help from on high is necessary. By passion and death (no mention is made of the resurrection), Jesus overcame sin, the root of all discord and reconciled human beings to the graciousness of God.<sup>35</sup>

The Synod of African bishops marks a significant turning point. It did mention this aspect regularly, citing Benedict in the immediate aftermath of the release of *Caritas in Veritate*. This is not to assert that the natural law approach is not proper for peacebuilding but to tease Benedict's unique approach to peace: to preach hope, Christ's incarnate word, passion, and resurrection.

### 6.2.2.3 Dialogue

Benedict's emphasis on the importance of dialogue has been one of his most valued contributions, whether in his treatment of the logic of the gift, moral truth, or peacebuilding.<sup>36</sup> His predecessor, John Paul II, combined multiple dimensions of peacebuilding, such as prayers, forgiveness, apologies, solidarity, and dialogue. Prayer, for example, was an important

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<sup>35</sup> Curran E., *Catholic Social Teaching: A Historical, Theological and Ethical Analysis*, 29.

<sup>36</sup> Benedict writes: "...terrorism motivated by fundamentalism, which generates grief, destruction and death, obstructs dialogue between nations and diverts extensive resources from their peaceful and civil uses" CV, 29). Elsewhere, he demonstrated how people can enter a dialogue that can lead to peacebuilding: "If the parties to cooperation [peacebuilding] on the side of economically developed countries – as occasionally happens – fail to take account of their own or others' cultural identity, or the human values that shape it, they cannot meaningfully dialogue with the citizens of poor countries. If the latter, in their turn, are uncritically and indiscriminately open to every cultural proposal, they will not be in a position to assume responsibility for their own authentic development" (CV, 59). For more information on dialogue and peacebuilding, see *Caritas in Veritate*, no. 26.



initiative in the encounter and dialogue between different traditions at the Assisi. Called “the Spirit of Assisi,” it provided another contribution to the restoration of peace in the former Yugoslavia in 1992. It served as a response to the September 11 attack in 2002 and the Afghanistan invasion.<sup>37</sup>

Benedict did not devote as much attention to this initiative, as he was cautious about interfaith meetings where, in his view, some religious leaders and adherents did not demonstrate an attitude of reciprocity. This was questioned during his pontificate.<sup>38</sup> Drew Christiansen remarked how:

Early in his pontificate, Pope Benedict had taken a series of steps that Vatican journalists presented as evidence of a new hard-line towards Islam. Most importantly, he had set ‘reciprocity’ as a goal of the Vatican Islamic Policy and demanded that Christians be allowed the same rights in Muslim countries that Muslims are allowed in the West.<sup>39</sup>

In short, Benedict promotes dialogue in the framework of reciprocity rather than prayers and apologies alone as a better response to violence. While he does not devalue prayers as an instrument of peace, he prioritises ‘dialogue-in-reciprocity’ in his writings on peace.<sup>40</sup> In his message of peace to African bishops, laity, and politicians, he noted that the absence of dialogue triggered multiple conflicts and wars in Africa and globally. Citing John Paul II, Benedict writes:

‘Despite the modern civilization in the ‘global village’, in Africa as elsewhere in the world the spirit of dialogue, peace and reconciliation is far from dwelling in the hearts of everyone. Wars, conflicts, and racist and xenophobic attitudes still play too large a role in the world of human relations.’ The hope that marks authentic Christian living reminds us that the Holy Spirit is at work everywhere.<sup>41</sup>

Referring to the importance of ‘dialogue-in-reciprocity,’ he calls on humans to extend their attitude beyond dealings with fellow humans to the natural environment, reminding them that it is more readily found in human society.

There exists a certain reciprocity: as we care for creation, we realize that God, through creation, cares for us. On the other hand, a correct understanding of the relationship

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<sup>37</sup> Drew Christiansen, “Catholic Peacemaking, 1991-2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs*, 4, no. 2 (September 2006), 25.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid. See also, Christiansen, “Benedict XVI: Peacemaker,” *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 5, no. 4 (December, 2007), 17.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 18-19.

<sup>40</sup> Benedict went as far inviting people to raise their hands in prayer for economic development to find its root in society (CV, 79). That suggests that he does not relegate prayers to the background while writing about peacebuilding, but ensures that is not the only means of responding to violence.

<sup>41</sup> Benedict XVI, *Africa Munus*, no. 12.

between man and the environment will not end by absolutizing nature or by considering it more important than the human person.<sup>42</sup>

Benedict would not find a better term to describe interreligious and intercultural dialogue than reciprocity. Writing to the African Continent on reconciliation and peace, Benedict states:

In this anthropological crisis which the African continent is facing, paths of hope will be discovered by fostering dialogue among the members of its constituent religious, social, political, economic, cultural and scientific communities. Africa will have to rediscover and promote a concept of the person and his or her relationship with reality that is the fruit of a profound spiritual renewal.<sup>43</sup>

He is convinced that the lack of reciprocal dialogue is the cause of much violence and wars and, indeed, an obstacle to peacebuilding.

Having briefly reviewed Benedict's three critical approaches to peace – moral principles, evangelisation, and dialogue – and demonstrated how he developed the tradition before him on the same subject. Attention will now turn to *Caritas in Veritate* and Benedict's messages for the Celebration of World Peace Day to further explore his approach to peace.

### **6.2.3 Peacebuilding in *Caritas in Veritate* and Messages of World Day of Peace**

In chapter three, we mentioned that *Caritas in Veritate* has significant contributions to make for peace, but reserved deeper discussion for this chapter. While he commemorated *Populorum Progressio*, Benedict probed many urgent issues in human society in the encyclical, one of which was peacebuilding. *Caritas in Veritate* can be regarded as a peacebuilding document. In an extended passage on peacebuilding, he writes:

Even peace can run the risk of being considered a technical product, merely the outcome of agreements between governments or of initiatives aimed at ensuring effective economic aid. It is true that *peace-building* requires the constant interplay of diplomatic contacts, economic, technological, and cultural exchanges, agreements on common projects, as well as joint strategies to curb the threat of military conflict and to root out the underlying causes of terrorism. Nevertheless, if such efforts are to have lasting effects, they must be based on values rooted in the truth of human life. That is, the voice of the people affected must be heard and their situation must be taken into consideration if their expectations are to be correctly interpreted. One must align oneself, so to speak, with the unsung efforts of so many individuals deeply committed to bringing people together and to facilitating development on the basis of love and mutual understanding. Among them are members of the Christian faithful, involved in the great task of upholding the fully human dimension of development and peace (CV, 72).

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<sup>42</sup> Benedict, "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation," in *Message for World Day of Peace* (2010), no 13.

<sup>43</sup> Benedict XVI, *Africa Munus*, no. 11.

Here, he stresses the need to listen to the voices of people experiencing challenges and acknowledges the efforts of individuals and organisations who are already committed to listening to narratives about the plights of others. In doing so, he recognises the critical role played by peacebuilders.

Although the document was dominated by the economic recession of 2008, two factors support the point that *Caritas in Veritate* intended to address the violence and human misery that ensues. The first is its consideration of the *Second Synod for Africa* in Rome, 2009. In the apostolic exhortation that followed this synod (*Africae Munus*), Benedict references *Caritas in Veritate* regularly to address conflict and violent issues in Africa. As noted in the introductory section of chapter three, he draws on the most significant themes in *Caritas in Veritate*, including love in truth (“charity in truth”) and fraternal service to reflect on peace in the exhortation, *Africae Munus*.<sup>44</sup> The second ground is his similar use of significant themes featured in the encyclical to compose his World Day of Peace messages.<sup>45</sup>

Three themes directly connected to peace and violence will guide this exposition: climate change, religious dialogue, and integral development.

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<sup>44</sup> For more information, see Benedict XVI, *Africae Munus*, no. 28 & 29. The title of the synod for African bishops is *In Service to Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace*. Two years after the release of *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict published an apostolic exhortation that follows this synod. He named it after the title of the Synod: “In Service to Reconciliation, Justice and Peace.” The timing of the publication of the two important documents, contents, and titles suggests that *Caritas in Veritate* points to peacebuilding. For instance, paragraph eleven speaks of the link between justice and love, and Paragraph thirteen references peace as a gift of God. Also, there is a discussion on the logic of the gift (gratuitousness) in paragraph 27. See *Africae Munus: In Service to Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace*; J.J. Carney and Laurie Johnson recognised this document as peacebuilding material. See J.J. Carney and Laurie Johnson, “A Renouncement of Reconciliation: Mining Catholic Tradition for Social Visions of Peace, Justice, and Healing,” in *The Surprise of Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition* (New York: Paulist Press, 2018), xvi.

<sup>45</sup> These themes include truth, poverty, freedom, natural environment, and religious fundamentalism. In 2006, the theme was “In Truth, Peace”; in 2007, it was on “The Human Person, the Heart of Peace”; in 2008, the theme was on “Human Family, a Community of Peace.” In 2009, he wrote on “Fighting Poverty to Build Peace”; the message for 2010 was “If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation”; in 2011, on “Religious Freedom, the Path to Peace”; “Educating Young People in Justice and Peace” was the message for 2012; and finally, in 2013, he wrote on the theme of “Blessed Are the Peacemakers.” This study asserts that Benedict XVI extracted crucial themes of *Caritas in Veritate* to speak to the world about peace. Some of these themes are the Natural Environment, Religious Freedom, truth, the human person, and the human family. All featured in *Caritas in Veritate*. It is certainly the claim that he places the encyclical on two important positions. One that *Caritas in Veritate* is a resource for peacebuilding. Two, in *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict XVI, albeit using theological terms, made himself a conversation partner in peacebuilding.

### 6.2.3.1 Climate Change

Chapters four and five referenced the link between climate change and peacebuilding.<sup>46</sup> Previously mentioned scholars, namely Matthew Shadle and Milburn Thompson, linked the environment with violence and peace. Drawing on Francis's Encyclical, *Laudato Si*, Tobias Winright argues for the connection between climate change and violence: "The unjust aggressor threatening nature is, in Francis's view, humankind rather than some law of physics (*LS*, 139), the violence that we do to nature is also an attack on our ourselves, especially the poor and the marginalised."<sup>47</sup> He holds that refugees of war and displaced people who seek refuge everywhere, causing humanitarian concerns, are the effects of violence on the environment. Previous popes had written on the same issue. In 1979, Paul VI noted:

Man is suddenly becoming aware that by an ill-considered exploitation of nature he risks destroying it and becoming in his turn the victim of this degradation. Not only is the material environment becoming a permanent menace - pollution and refuse, new illness and absolute destructive capacity - but the human framework is no longer under man's control, thus creating an environment for tomorrow which may well be intolerable. This is a wide-ranging social problem.<sup>48</sup>

These concerns, namely the exploitation of nature, pollution, and destruction of the environment, have caused drought and food scarcity. These issues, in turn, drive humanitarian crises and poverty, leading to violence and conflict. Benedict's writing about peace touches on these problems and may be gleaned through an analysis of his moral evaluation of climate change and the natural environment in *Caritas in Veritate* and his Message of World Day of Peace in 2007.<sup>49</sup> In *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict places concern on the environment within the discussion of integral development, the common good, and options for the poor. These are consistent topics that are linked to peacebuilding in CST (CV, 48). In his message of *World*

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<sup>46</sup> See Section sections 4.5.2.2 and 5.2.2. Aside from what has been explored in this work, there is literature on the connection between climate change and peacebuilding. Richard Matthew argues that climate change triggers humanitarian crises such as hunger as a result of either drought or flood in areas of conflict. Richard Matthew, "Integrating Climate Change into Peacebuilding," *Climate Change* 123 (2014): 83-93; See also Judith Nora Hardt and Jurgen Scheffran, "Environmental Peacebuilding and Climate Change: Peace and Conflict Studies at the Age of Transformation." *Policy Brief* 68 (2019): 1-20.

<sup>47</sup> Tobias Winright, "Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding," in *All Creation is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis's Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo. Winona: Anselm Academic, 2018), 200.

<sup>48</sup> Paul VI, *Apostolic Letter: Octogesima Adventines* (1971), no. 21 Accessed on June 22, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>49</sup> Benedict XVI argues that treating nature as mere data collection can potentially damage the environment and encourage activities that disregard and threatens human dignity. see his *Caritas in Veritate*, no 48; Benedict's *Messages for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2013. Accessed on March 11, 2020. Available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va). For more information, see, Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI, *Selected writings: Faith and Politics*, Foreword by Pope Francis (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2018), 156, 170 and 176.

*Day of Peace*, 2010, he asked: “Can we remain impassive in the face of actual and potential conflicts involving access to natural resources?”<sup>50</sup>

Benedict may be viewed as somewhat prophetic, as environmental issues have been gaining much attention in peacebuilding. He maintains that a lack of proper attention and respect for the natural environment is a major cause of conflict (CV, 27). He states: “Moreover, how many natural resources are squandered by wars! Peace in and among peoples would also provide greater protection for nature” (CV, 51). He is not unusual in commenting on how the effects of drought caused by climate change could lead to violent conflicts. For example, Robert Schreiter states:

The capacity of climate change to exacerbate conflict in the world is already visible in the effects of drought cycles in East Africa, the worldwide problem of food security, migration of people away from Ireland nations and low-laying coastal territories, and the overall effect of rising temperatures around the planet. As the theological literature in the area of climate change has moved from the hortatory to more analytical and programmatic concerns, the relationship between peace and the environment is beginning to gain wider attention.<sup>51</sup>

This shows that Benedict was not unaware of current climate change and its attendant consequences on peacebuilding. *Caritas in Veritate* encouraged peacebuilders to embrace concern for the environment.

He further contends that there is a relationship between social order and the environment. People’s exploitative attitude towards the environment disrupts social cohesion: “environmental deterioration, in turn, upsets relations in society [causes of violence] ...Peaceful agreement about the use of resources can protect nature and, at the same time, the well-being of the societies concerned” (CV, 51 italics added). Two years before the release of *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict reflected on human ecology and peace, maintaining:

Humanity, if it truly desires peace, must be increasingly conscious of the link between natural ecology, or respect for nature, and human ecology. Experience shows that *disregard for the environment always harms human coexistence*, and vice versa. It becomes more and more evident that there is an inseparable link between peace with creation and peace among men. Both of these presuppose peace with God.<sup>52</sup>

He goes on to argue that a lack of proper attention to the natural environment leads to violence and obstructs well-being, stating:

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<sup>50</sup> Benedict, “If You Want Peace Protect Creation,” *Messages for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, no. 4. [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>51</sup> Schreiter J, “Future Direction in Catholic Peacebuilding,” in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics and Praxis*, 447.

<sup>52</sup> Benedict XVI, “The Human Person, The Heart of Peace,” in *Message for World Day of Peace* (2007), no 8.

The destruction of the environment the improper or selfish use, and the violent hoarding of the earth's resources cause grievances, conflicts, and wars, precisely because they are the consequences of an inhumane concept of development. Indeed, if development were limited to the technical-economic aspect, obscuring the moral-religious dimension, it would not be an integral human development.<sup>53</sup>

In this way, he vehemently claims that environmental issues are connected to violence and peace. Consequently, he urges everyone to treat the environment as a gift in the same way life is to be treated as a gift (CV, 48 & 50). It is in this way he explores peace by considering the natural environment from a moral perspective. He writes:

Man's inhumanity to man has given rise to numerous threats to peace and to authentic and integral human development – wars, international and regional conflicts, acts of terrorism, and violations of human rights. Yet no less troubling are the threats arising from the neglect – if not downright misuse – of the earth and the natural goods that God has given us. For this reason, it is imperative that mankind renew and strengthen that covenant between human beings and the environment, which should mirror the creative love of God.<sup>54</sup>

The implication is that, firstly, the natural environment is a gift of God to humanity. Secondly, human attitude towards it causes significant damage to it, and so threatens human flourishing much more than violation of human rights. Thirdly, the basis of this judgement returns to the logic of the gift. It allows him to morally evaluate human treatment of the environment because a gift necessarily invokes a responsibility, which, in this case, is responsibility for the vulnerable and future generations. He states:

The environment must be seen as God's gift to all people, and the use we make of it entails a shared responsibility for all humanity, especially the poor and future generations... On the other hand, seeing creation as God's gift to humanity helps us understand our vocation and worth as human beings.<sup>55</sup>

### **6.2.3.2 Religious Freedom and Dialogue**

Benedict mentions religious freedom when discussing religious peace in *Caritas in Veritate* and the Messages for World Day of Peace. Referring to the conflict caused by religious fundamentalism and extremism in the Encyclical, he reiterates the priority of religious freedom over religious fanaticism, which is a rejection of God, causing further violence.<sup>56</sup> He states:

I am not referring only to the struggles and conflicts that still occur in the world for religious reasons, although sometimes religion is only a cover for reasons of another kind,

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid., no 9.

<sup>54</sup> Benedict XVI, "If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation," in *Message for the World Day of Peace*, 2010, no. 1.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., no. 2.

<sup>56</sup> Benedict XVI, "In truth, Peace," in *Message for World Day of Peace* (2006), nos. 9 & 10.

such as the desire for power and wealth. In fact, today, people are frequently killed in the sacred name of God (CV, 29).

To return to an earlier theme, Benedict insists that fanatics reject dialogue. Recall that he regards dialogue as an important aspect of peacebuilding, holding that only dialogue can manage conflict because only it reveals moral truth.<sup>57</sup>

Two years after the publication of *Caritas in Veritate*, he titled his Message of the World Day of Peace 2011, *Religious Freedom the Path to Peace*, to emphasise the role of dialogue in religious peacebuilding.<sup>58</sup> Reacting to religious fundamentalism and extremism as threats to well-being, Benedict mentions religious freedom four times in paragraph one. Furthermore, in paragraphs nine and ten, he incorporates mutual respect and dialogue into the discussion on peace. In short, he identifies reciprocal dialogue rather than asymmetrical dialogue amongst religions as the most effective means to propose ways of establishing peace. It is the view that he not only considers religious freedom as freedom to express one's religion but also to participate in matters that affect human existence and equality.<sup>59</sup>

### 6.2.3.3 Integral Human Development

*Caritas in Veritate's* discussion of integral development also reflects Benedict's treatment of peacebuilding. On this topic, he aligns himself with Paul VI's view that development is peace and vice versa. During the economic recession of 2008/2009, which forms the background of *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict insisted that individuals, industries, and institutions must not view economic growth and poverty reduction as the only significant aspects of development and peace. Rather, he urged all to be committed to the human good. In other words, Benedict invites those who make economic and development policies to think of serving the human person in their entirety since he and the tradition he represents see the person as the subject and object of development (CV, 21 & 25). Like dialogue, the foundation of development is respect for human dignity

Benedict's understanding of the human person is significant here. His view of the person in *Caritas in Veritate* – that the individual is a transcendent and social being who has received

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<sup>57</sup> Benedict XVI, "The Human Person, The Heart of Peace," in *Message for World Day of Peace (2007)*, no. 11.

<sup>58</sup> He writes: "The Patrimony of principles of values expressed by an authentic religiosity is a source of enrichment for peoples and their ethos. It speaks directly to the conscience and minds of men and women. It calls the need for moral conversion... A healthy dialogue between civil and religious institutions is fundamental for the integral development of the human person and social harmony." See Benedict XVI, "Religious Freedom the Path to Peace," in *Message for the World Day of Peace 2011*, nos. 9 & 15.

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, nos. 1 and 2.

dignity as a gift from God at creation – aligns with his earlier work, as mentioned previously.<sup>60</sup> When he refers to peace, he continually alludes to the person’s dignity. For instance, in his message of peace in 2007, he maintains: “What cannot be admitted is the cultivation of anthropological conceptions that contain the seeds of hostility and violence.”<sup>61</sup> that is, the understanding of the person that does not recognise both the social and transcendent perspectives of the person. Also, aligning himself with the tradition before him, Benedict writes:

Taught by her Lord, the Church examines the signs of the times and interprets them, offering the world ‘what she possesses as her characteristic attribute: a global vision of man and of the human race.’ Precisely because God gives a resounding “yes” to man, man cannot fail to open himself to the divine vocation to pursue his own development (CV, 18).

This statement implies that because God has created the human person in his image with dignity – and this invariably means the person receives dignity from God – God invites every person to build peace from both a divine and human perspective.

Given that a person receives dignity from God and possesses both a social and transcendental perspective of existence, Benedict maintains that every individual should pursue peace. He states:

From this supernatural perspective, *created in the image of God*, one can understand the task entrusted to human beings to mature in the ability to love and to contribute to the progress of the world, renewing it in justice and in peace...consequently, all human beings have the duty to cultivate an awareness of this twofold aspect of the gift and task.<sup>62</sup>

He believes that just as peace is a gift from God, it is also a responsibility; it must be achieved by and for humans in their complete nature.<sup>63</sup> It is important to highlight how he does this. He acknowledges the importance of a type of financial aid that considers the participation of receivers. To do so is to assert the traditional CST principles of solidarity and subsidiarity. But it also aligns with the logic of the gift more correctly. He asserts: “Aid programs must increasingly acquire the characteristics of participation and completion from the grassroots” (CV, 58).<sup>64</sup> This approach to financial aid not only suggests inclusion/participation but also recognises the complete vision of the human person. It also serves as an antidote to the negative impact of financial aid, such as dependence. In essence, it implies that aid receivers must be

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<sup>60</sup> See Chapter 2, Sections 2.3.2, 2.3.2, and 3.2.7 of this work.

<sup>61</sup> Benedict XVI, “The Human Person, The Heart of Peace,” in *Message for World Day of Peace (2007)*, no 10.

<sup>62</sup> *Ibid.*, no 2.

<sup>63</sup> *Ibid.*, no 3.

<sup>64</sup> Andrew Kim, *An Introduction to Catholic Ethics Since Vatican II* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 122 -123.



included in any decision-making to achieve development. One could say that Benedict links gift-giving to development and peace while encouraging participation, a critical aspect of peacebuilding. As Himes observes:

The idea of participation speaks directly to the kind of process that peacebuilding must employ...participation also suggests that the source of conflict is the lack of self-determination in many experiences. When people are excluded from a role in decision-making on matters that affect their well-being, it increases resentments that fester and add to the temptation to violence.<sup>65</sup>

However, as shown in chapter three, financial aid, which seeks development and peace, must be dispensed based on the morality of authentic encounters, not just inclusion and participation. A framework of authentic encounters is essential.<sup>66</sup>

The reference to participation also points to Benedict's vision of peace as task and responsibility, action, and activism. Prior to the release of *Caritas in Veritate*, he refers to peace using the language of responsibility and commitment, which is also the principle of gratuitousness. In his 2007 *Message of World Day of Peace*, he writes:

If it is true that peace between individuals and peoples – the ability to live together and to build relationships of justice and solidarity – calls for unfailing commitment on our part, it is also true, and indeed more so, that *peace is a gift from God*. Peace is an aspect of God's activity, made manifest both in the creation of an orderly and harmonious universe.<sup>67</sup>

Also, the document explicitly states that the logic of the gift is a supplement to the many responses to terrorism, especially one triggered by fundamentalism. An already cited passage of the encyclical deserves attention:

It is true that *peace-building* requires the constant interplay of diplomatic contacts, economic, technological, and cultural exchanges, agreements on common projects, as well as joint strategies to curb the threat of military conflict and to root out the underlying causes of terrorism. Nevertheless, if such efforts are to have lasting effects, they must be based on values rooted in the truth of human life (CV, 72).

The phrase 'truth of human life' has always been his idea of the gift. On many occasions, as shown in chapters two and three, he would say the truth of human life is that everyone is made for the gift.<sup>68</sup>

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<sup>65</sup> Himes, "Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching," 276. Also, in this article, Himes footnoted Benedict's *Caritas in Veritate*, referring to it as a peacebuilding document.

<sup>66</sup> For detailed explanation of authentic human encounters, see Chapter 3, sections 3.4.1 and 3.4.5 of this work.

<sup>67</sup> Benedict XVI, "Human Person, the Heart of Peace," no. 3.

<sup>68</sup> We earlier discussed how Benedict XVI conceptualises the human person as made for the gift. See Chapter 2, sections 2.3 and 2.3.2 of this study.

#### 6.2.4 An Overview of Benedict XVI's Vision of Peace

This section places Benedict's idea of peace alongside the four models of peacebuilding identified in chapter four: just war, pacifism/non-violence, social justice, and pastoral accompaniment.

It has been well established that the presumption against war is at the heart of Catholic Social Teaching. Benedict follows the new approach to peacebuilding, which is vehemently opposed to war and favours non-violence. His emphasis is on observing moral principles, development, and dialogue within the rules of moral truth. His non-violence approach differs from that of John Paul. While John Paul focuses more on solidarity based on prayers, forgiveness, and dialogue, Benedict concentrates more on 'dialogue-in-reciprocity.'<sup>69</sup> It is the view of this thesis that Benedict's prioritisation of non-violence is slightly different from previous popes in that he sees dialogue as an expression of moral truth. He teaches that peacebuilding is not passivism and does not entail a passive acceptance of the other's perspective. For him, dialogue is a give-and-take engagement.

Prior to becoming Pope, he was asked to comment on the United States's invasion of Iraq in 2003. He stated:

First of all, it was clear from the very beginning that proportion between the possible positive consequences and the sure negative effect of the conflict was not guaranteed. On the contrary, it seems clear that the negative consequences will be greater than anything positive that might be obtained. Without considering then we must begin asking ourselves whether as things stand, with new weapons that cause destruction that goes well beyond the groups involved in the fight, it is still licit to allow a "just war" might exist.<sup>70</sup>

Benedict is very cautious about using just war theory, even though he acknowledges that it is part of the tradition and its criteria, namely, proportionality, just intention and the possibility of success. In *Caritas in Veritate* and *Message of World Day of Peace*, he alludes to the norms of just war. In the former, Benedict calls on the global community to reaffirm international humanitarian laws and apply them to armed conflict and terrorism, development, and environmental issues (CV, 43, 49, and 57). Also, writing about the war in Southern Lebanon in his 2007 *Message of World Day of Peace*, he calls on the international community to

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<sup>69</sup> It was observed that John Paul II's interreligious dialogue was basically carried out through the promotion of the Assisi interfaith Prayer. Benedict shows less commitment to that. In short, he was less enthused to continue with the effort of John Paul II on the area of the Assisi interfaith prayer despite the achievements made in the area. See Drew Christiansen, "Catholic Peacemaking, 1991-2005: The Legacy of Pope John Paul II," in *The Review of Faith & International Affairs* 4, no. 2 (2006), 25.

<sup>70</sup> Ginni Cardinale, "Interview with Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger: The Catechism in a Post-Christian World: 30Days in the Church and the World," in *International Monthly Magazine Directed by Giulio Andreotti from 1993-2012*. Issue April, 2013. [http://www.30giorni.it/articoli\\_id\\_775\\_13.htm?id=775](http://www.30giorni.it/articoli_id_775_13.htm?id=775) Accessed on November 13, 2023.

establish rules and codes of conduct for defending innocent people and limiting any damage that war may cause in Southern Lebanon.<sup>71</sup> It is certainly a call for the responsibility to protect (R2P), as a result of just war reasoning.<sup>72</sup> Mentioning the norms of war, namely legitimate authority, noncombatant immunity, and probability of success, is evident. As Winright observed: “Benedict XVI simultaneously called for the establishment of ‘clearer rules’ and ‘norms of conduct’ for defending the innocent, reducing ‘the damage as far as possible,’ while repeating the papal refrain that ‘war always represents a failure for the international community and a grave loss for humanity.’”<sup>73</sup> For him, wars exist because of the failure of the international community to implement these norms and hold on to moral values. It could be argued that Benedict, like the previous pontiffs, endorses just war criteria while stopping short in applying it as a preventative measure in real-world scenarios. As Tobias Winright states:

With regard to the “clearer rules” or “norms of conduct” for which he [Benedict] urged, though, what might they look like? Here, Benedict footnoted the section of the Catechism (§§2307–2317) that lists “the traditional elements enumerated in what is called the ‘just war’ doctrine” (§2309), which he regarded as offering “strict and precise criteria” (§16, endnote 7).<sup>74</sup>

Most recently, while commenting on the statement of the participants of the mentioned conference that appealed to the Catholic Church to hold onto nonviolence, Winright and Maria Power observe: “Too often the “just war theory” has been used to endorse rather than prevent or limit war.”<sup>75</sup> However, while he implicitly deploys just war reasoning, Benedict explicitly emphasises evangelisation, moral truth, and dialogue in light of his logic of the gift as the path to peace.

### 6.3 Pope Francis

Benedict unexpectedly resigned on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2013. The Argentinean Jesuit Jorge Bergoglio succeeded him on the 13<sup>th</sup> of March. He was the first Jesuit to become pope and the first to take the name Francis. But before his appointment, people wondered what he would bring to the Catholic faithful and humanity. As Winright puts it, “The international Catholic periodical *The*

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<sup>71</sup> Benedict XVI, “The Human Person, the Heart of Peace,” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace 2007*, no 14 and 16.

<sup>72</sup> I have cited R2P elsewhere in this work. However, there is a need to mention it explicitly. See Semegnish Asfaw, Guillermo Kerber, ad Peter Weiderud, eds. *The Responsibility to Protect: Ethical and Theological Reflections* (Geneva: World Ecumenical Council); Winright, “Just Policing and the Responsibility to Protect,” *Ecumenical Review* 63, no.1 (2011): 84-95

<sup>73</sup> Winright, “Introduction,” in *Can War Be Just in the 21st Century?*, xxiii.

<sup>74</sup> Winright, “Why I Shall Continue to Use and Teach Just War Theory,” *Expositions* 12, no. 1 (2018), 147.

<sup>75</sup> Winright and Maria Power, *Current Roman Catholic Ethics on War and Peace Vis- a-Vis The Ukraine-Russia War* (William Temple Foundation, 2023), 3.

*Tablet* asked theologians what qualities they hoped his successor [Francis] would have.”<sup>76</sup> His messages to different audiences after the elections explain his sense of direction. At his first media audience, Francis explained his choice by referring to St Francis of Assisi as “the man who gives us this spirit of peace, the poor man”, adding, “[h]ow I would like a poor Church and for the poor”.<sup>77</sup>

Francis’s pontificate is enveloped with different major wars necessitated by various reasons, human-made and natural disasters that threaten human lives and dignity. The covid 19, Russia’s invasion of Ukraine, and the Israel and Gaza War are the major contexts. Others are internal crises and conflicts, especially the Islamic Jihadists in Northern Mali and Al Shabaab in Somalia. Libya, and Boko Haram in Nigeria. There is also the war in DR Congo. In the words of Elias Opono, this conflict involves different nations.<sup>78</sup> It is the point that human miseries, in the present, are apparent. Francis’s response to them could be gleaned through his involvement with different categories of people, including the marginalised, immigrants, and the poor. Others are engaging with topics such as abolishing capital punishment, climate change, fraternal solidarity and sending apologies.<sup>79</sup>

### **6.3.1 Francis on Peacebuilding**

Francis published two major social encyclicals, namely *Laudato Si* (2015) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020). He also writes messages on peace, especially on the *Celebrations of World Day of Peace*. These documents represent the already mentioned activities that characterised him.<sup>80</sup> The discussion here focuses on them as it teases his responses to violence and contribution to peacebuilding. He brings these topics to cases of actual wars like the one between Russia and Ukraine (2022) and Israel and Gaza (2023-). He also links his teaching on peacebuilding to the

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<sup>76</sup> Tobias Winright, “Peace on Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding,” in *All Creation is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis’s Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo (Winona: Anselm Academic, 2018), 195.

<sup>77</sup> Francis, “Audience to Representatives of The Communications Media,” in *Address of The Holy Father Pope Francis, Paul VI Audience Hall, Saturday, 16 March 2013*, accessed on November 25, 2023, available at [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>78</sup> Elias O. Opono, “Just War and Its Implications for African Conflicts,” in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Ethicists Engage the Tradition*, eds., Tobias Winright and Laurie Johnston (Maryknoll. NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 143.

<sup>79</sup> Francis sends apologies to Indigenous people in Quebec, Canada, for the Church’s Role in the Injustice they suffered. See “Meeting with a Delegation of Indigenous Peoples in Quebec,” *Apostolic Journey to Canada*, July 29, 2022.

<sup>80</sup> In *Laudato Si*, Francis demonstrates a desire for human flourishing by focusing on the natural environment. (LS, 36 and 43). In the same encyclical, he showed interest in the condition of the poor. (LS, 49). In *Fratelli Tutti*, he condemns every death sentence or capital punishment. See FT, 265 and 267.

pandemic, which he describes as a natural cause of human misery in his 2023 *Message of World Day of Peace*.

### 6.3.2 Peacebuilding in *Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*

Francis continued the Church's commitment to both non-violence and endorsement of just war theory in *Laudato Si* (2015) and *Fratelli Tutti* (2020). He opens his discussion in *Laudato Si*, a document that connects violence, peace, and the environment, with a strong condemnation of war, referencing John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*. He teaches that he [John XXIII] "not only rejected war but offered a proposal for peace" amidst nuclear war (LS, 3).<sup>81</sup> This reference to *Pacem in Terris* suggests that Francis intended to speak of peacebuilding in *Laudato Si*. He does so through the lens of his connection between the natural environment and violence when he calls not only Christians but the public to heed the cry of the earth and avoid damaging or causing violence on it. He states: "The violence present in our hearts, wounded by sin, is also reflected in the symptoms of sickness evident in the soil, in the water, in the air, and in all forms of life" (LS, 2). As pointed out in this chapter already, Benedict connects the environment with peacebuilding. In his 1990 Message of World Day of Peace, John Paul II pointed out that World peace is threatened not just by injustices and regional conflict but also by lack of respect for nature.<sup>82</sup>

Francis, in this document, reasons that violence committed to the earth is an aggression on the human person. He is explicit on this when he informs us that "there has been a tragic rise in the number of migrants seeking to flee from the growing poverty caused by environmental degradation" (LS, 25). This means that violence on the human person comes in different forms, as John Paul already teaches when he says that apart from violence through injustice, attitudes towards the environment can be an act of aggression. Winright makes sense of this connection between violence and the environment in *Laudato Si*, observing:

Just as there are refugees of war, innocent people displaced by conflict who seek refuge everywhere, Pope Francis recognises that there now are many environmental refugees, innocent people who have done little to cause ecological harm but are forced to move because of ecological degradation.<sup>83</sup>

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<sup>81</sup> See also John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, no 3

<sup>82</sup> John Paul II, "Peace with God The Creator, Peace With all of Creation," *World Day of Peace Message*, 1990, no 1, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>83</sup> Winright, "Peace on Earth, Peace With the Earth," 200; and Laurie Johnston, "Just War Theory and the Environment," 98.

It is clear to Francis, his predecessors, and those who follow his trajectory and present reality, like Winright, that apart from poverty and population displacement, which causes war and conflict, climate change leads to human misery because it damages the resources people rely upon. For Francis, peacebuilding entails protecting people and the planet and paying particular attention to all that affects both. To carry these activities into practice, he calls on people to “ecological conversion” (LS, 217) that is capable of leading people to reconcile with God and creation (LS, 218) through fraternal love, which he describes as “harmony with creation” (LS, 225).

In 2020, Francis released his second social encyclical, *Fratelli Tutti* (FT, 2020). In the document, he widens the Catholic Church’s commitment to nonviolence, using the term fraternity. Francis draws from well-recognised religious leaders who reject war – Malik-el-Kamil in Egypt and Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyep in Abu Dhabi – arguing that solidarity impacts social interaction and fraternity. Peacebuilding is the objective of such a discussion for two reasons: one, he understands fraternity as thinking, acting, and combating poverty and injustice (FT, 29 & 109), and two, he teaches that peace is possible when we express fraternal love and live out social friendship (FT, 3 & 29).

Chapter seven of the *Fratelli Tutti* concentrates on peacebuilding, identifying causes of violence and paths to peace.<sup>84</sup> This chapter of the encyclical sustains the Church’s vision of peace in the framework of pacifism or non-violence when it emphatically condemns war, re-echoing the phrase of Paul VI, which he alluded to in *Laudato Si*, “Never again war.” (FT, 528). Francis continues to create an image of peace in solidarity and fraternity, contending that we cannot achieve peace if we do not “incorporate the experience of those sectors that have often been overlooked” (FT, 231).<sup>85</sup> *Fratelli Tutti* seems to be one of his social encyclicals in that he expresses his closeness to nonviolence. Bearing in mind the impact of Covid 19, Francis calls on Leaders to avoid all kinds of war and focus on all that can deliver humanity from the pandemic and other global issues.

### **6.3.3 Peacebuilding in Messages on World Day of Peace**

Like his predecessors, Francis’s discussions on peacebuilding are enshrined in his encyclicals and messages for the *Celebration of World Day Peace*. As expected, his peace teachings also

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<sup>84</sup> The causes of war include unnecessary migration (FT, 39) and an intolerant attitude towards others (FT, 42). Francis points out that mutual commitment (FT, 245), reconciliation (FT, 246), forgiveness, and truth-telling, which represent encounters with victims of conflict in their suffering (FT, 227), are the paths to peace.

<sup>85</sup> The different sectors *Fratelli Tutti* refers to are the vulnerable, less privileged, and poor (FT, 179).

cover areas such as the environment and economic development. In 2014, Francis delivered his first message of peace, titled *Fraternity, the Path to Peace*, outlining the critical role played by fraternity in peacebuilding efforts. He writes: “Fraternity is an essential human quality, for we are relational beings. A lively awareness of our relatedness helps us to look upon and treat each person as a true sister or brother; without fraternity, it is impossible to build a just society and a solid and lasting peace.”<sup>86</sup>

In 2017, he began his *message on World Day of Peace* by describing the world as broken, reporting that it is not easy to differentiate between the situation of the world in the past and now. He writes:

While the last century knew the devastation of two deadly World Wars, the threat of nuclear war and a great number of other conflicts, today, sadly, we find ourselves engaged in a horrifying world war fought piecemeal. It is not easy to know if our world is presently more or less violent than in the past.<sup>87</sup>

He does not implicitly mention any of the criteria of war as a solution. Instead, he states: “Violence is not the cure for our broken world. Countering violence with violence leads, at best, to forced migrations and enormous suffering...At worst, it can lead to the death, physical and spiritual, of many people, if not of all.”<sup>88</sup> With this comment, he proved to be a supporter of non-violence since, like William Ury, he admires non-violent pacifists like Mahatma Gandhi, Khan Abdul Ghaffar Khan in the liberation of India and Dr Martin Luther King Jr.<sup>89</sup>

Also, his 2020 message for the *World Day of Peace* features core concepts of the principle of gratuitousness, including truth-telling, hope, and forgiveness.<sup>90</sup> He explains:

The peace process thus requires enduring commitment. It is a patient effort to seek truth and justice, to honour the memory of victims and to open the way, step by step, to a shared hope stronger than the desire for vengeance...This is a social undertaking, an ongoing work in which each individual makes his or her contribution responsibly at every level of the local, national and global community.<sup>91</sup>

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<sup>86</sup> Pope Francis, “Fraternity the Foundation and Path Way to Peace,” Message of World Day of Peace 2014, no. 1, accessed on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)

<sup>87</sup> Francis, “Non-violence: A Style of Politics for Peace.” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day Message of Peace*, 2017, no. 2.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid., no. 4.

<sup>90</sup> *Fratelli Tutti* seems to be a summary of Francis’s first Message of World Day of Peace. In paragraphs 54, 55, and 231, Francis uses hope to speak of peace. In paragraph 192, he deploys tolerance and dialogue. He speaks of commitment in paragraph 226. He dedicates chapter seven to peacebuilding. In the chapter, he focuses on encounter as expressed in actions, including truth telling, reconciliation, dialogue, forgiveness, other social and moral actions.

<sup>91</sup> Francis, “Peace as Journey of Hope: Dialogue, Reconciliation and Ecological Conversion,” in *World Day Message of Peace 2020*, no. 2, accessed May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2023, [www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va).

In his most recent *Message for the World Day of Peace* (2023), Francis speaks to the war in Ukraine and writes extensively about Covid 19. In his view, except for the human cause (that is, Vladimir Putin choosing to invade Ukraine), the Ukraine war is similar to Covid 19 in terms of its effects on human life, killing of innocent victims and spreading insecurity.

### 6.3.4 Evaluating Francis's Vision of Peacebuilding

In keeping with the tradition before him in John Paul and Benedict, Francis focuses on building peace through nonviolence. The use of the tenets of the same logic (fraternity, conversion, gratuitousness) to reflect on peacebuilding in *Laudato Si, Fratelli Tutti*, and messages of *World Day of Peace* by Francis implies two elements: one, the relevance of Benedict's principle of gratuitousness to the non-violent style of peacebuilding, and two, that Francis has also employed the technique used by Benedict, applying the principle of gratuitousness to peacebuilding efforts.

It is, however, significant that Francis endorses Benedict's principle of gratuitousness /the logic of the gift as his non-violent approach to peacebuilding. Although he does not explicate the logic of the gift like Benedict, he does utilise the principle of gratuitousness. He frequently cites it directly or uses it in his reflections. For instance, in *Fratelli Tutti*, Francis includes nineteen citations of this principle of gratuitousness and other themes related to it, including fraternity. This compares to twenty-six references to other popes. In Paragraph 139 of the encyclical, he explicitly utilises the principle of gratuitousness in a passage entitled 'openness to others', from the stranger to the aggressor. As intended by Benedict, the principle is meant to counter utilitarian cost-benefit type analysis. Francis writes:

There is always the factor of "gratuitousness": the ability to do some things simply because they are good in themselves, without concern for personal gain or recompense. Gratuitousness makes it possible for us to welcome the stranger, even though this brings us no immediate tangible benefit (FT, 139).

In the principle of gratuitousness, Francis recognises the capacity to create a space for unconditional giving and action – doing that which is good for its own sake.<sup>92</sup> The paragraph that follows provides an in-depth explication of the theme. It goes as follows:

Life without fraternal gratuitousness becomes a form of frenetic commerce, in which we are constantly weighing up what we give and what we get back in return. God, on the other hand, gives freely, to the point of helping even those who are unfaithful; he

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<sup>92</sup> Compared with Benedict's notion of the principle of gratuitousness/logic of the gift in chapter three of this study, entitled: '*Caritas in Veritate's* in-depth Discussion of the Logic of the Gift' and 'The Logic of the Gift as An Actual Human Encounter.' It is certainly the view that the logic of the gift is unconditional services, as Francis understands it.



“makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good” (*Mt* 5:45). There is a reason why Jesus told us: “When you give alms, do not let your right hand know what your left hand is doing, so that your alms may be in secret” (*Mt* 6:3-4). We received life freely; we paid nothing for it. Consequently, all of us are able to give without expecting anything in return, to do good to others without demanding that they treat us well in return. As Jesus told his disciples: “Without cost, you have received, without cost, you are to give (*FT*, 140).

Francis certainly echoes Benedict, connecting the logic of the gift, which is the dynamic of the principle of gratuitousness, with fraternity. Firstly, as noted, the logic is intrinsically anti-utilitarian. Secondly, the pure gift or absolute gift, by which all gift is authentically understood as God’s self-gift, is giving freely. Thirdly, he reiterates Benedict’s connection of the gift with unconditional or unmerited forgiveness. Fourthly, Jesus is the expression of God’s gift in his words and his actions. Fifthly, we are to give as we have received, or in Benedict’s phrase, be “co-givers”.<sup>93</sup> This is what it means to live in a fraternity – a relationship of free giving without recourse to compensation.<sup>94</sup> To build fraternity where it is lacking and outline his vision of peace, Francis links the principle of gratuitousness to forgiveness. He writes: “If forgiveness is gratuitous, then it can be shown even to someone who resists repentance and is unable to beg pardon,” including the perceived enemy (*FT*, 250 and *LS*, 228).<sup>95</sup> This thesis claims that in *Fratelli Tutti*, Francis uses Benedict’s articulation on the gift to tease out the dynamic and implications of fraternity, essential to his notion of peacebuilding.

According to him, the response to these human miseries is human fraternity. He states:

For it is together, in fraternity and solidarity, that we build peace, ensure justice, and emerge from the greatest disasters. Indeed, the most effective responses to the pandemic came from social groups, public and private institutions, and international organizations that put aside their particular interests and joined forces to meet the challenges. Only the peace that comes from fraternal and disinterested love can help us overcome personal, societal, and global crises.<sup>96</sup>

For John XXIII, it was human rights. For Paul VI, it was development, and for John Paul, it was solidarity. In Benedict’s case, this thesis argues that he prioritises the logic of the gift. Francis’s non-violence touches upon human rights, development, and solidarity but draws largely on fraternity, which can embody Benedict’s principle of gratuitousness. Indeed, such is

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<sup>93</sup> See Chapter 2, Section 2.4 of this study.

<sup>94</sup> Compare with *Caritas in Veritate* nos. 36, 37 and 38.

<sup>95</sup> See also Winright, “Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding,” in *All Creation Is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis’s Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo (Winona: Anselm Academic, 2008), 203

<sup>96</sup> Francis, “No one can be saved alone. Combatting Covid-19 together, embarking together on paths of peace,” in *Message for the Celebration of World Day of Peace*, 2023, no. 3.

the use of the word fraternity in his yearly messages. Francis intended to make the principle of gratuitousness, an expression of fraternity, a tool for peacebuilding. He aligns himself with Benedict, not only on the gift but also on peacebuilding, because of two reasons. One, his discussion of integral ecology, a theme that is related to Catholic peacebuilding, is predicated on the principle of gratuitousness (*LS*, 228).<sup>97</sup> Two, like Benedict, he invokes nonviolent reasoning and also “limited or restricted” legitimate armed defence in his approach to peacebuilding.<sup>98</sup> Francis and Benedict differ in theological style. Where Benedict utilises complex and systematic theology, Francis is pastorally minded. As Kevin Irwin points out: “These documents (*Laudato Si* and *Fratelli Tutti*) are not “in house” theological find-tuning.”<sup>99</sup>

Despite the methodological differences, from Leo XIII to Francis, the Catholic Church is committed to peacebuilding by creating positive peace through some Just war norms and active nonviolence. It renounces passivity. At the same time, it proclaims the peace that Christ gives, Shalom. Shalom is calmness and serenity and could be referred to as the peace that God meant for all creation in Jesus Christ: my peace I give you.<sup>100</sup> It is not just the absence of war. It could be seen as eschatological peace because it brings humans and non-humans together. Winright puts it when reading Norman Wirzba: “Shalom upholds and promotes the integrity of all creation.”<sup>101</sup> The point is that while maintaining this vision of peace, Catholic tradition accepts, if necessary, the demands of just war, such as the responsibility to protect the vulnerable and legitimate defence. In this way, in line with this tradition, Benedict’s vision of peacebuilding, which combines his concept of the gift, is present in the growing effort towards a new thinking about peacebuilding, namely “just peacekeeping.”<sup>102</sup> Or what Power and

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<sup>97</sup> See also Winright, “All Creation Is Connected,” 2003.

<sup>98</sup> Winright and Power, *Current Roman Catholic Ethics on War and Peace vis-à-vis the Ukraine-Russia War*, 3.

<sup>99</sup> Kevin W. Irwin, “Forward,” in *The Encyclical Letter: Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship* (New York: Paulist Press, 2020).

<sup>100</sup> For further reading on biblical shalom, see Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision of Creation Care*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2010).

<sup>101</sup> Shalom is the peace that God mean for humanity in Jesus Christ. It is not the absence of war. It could be seen as eschatological peace because it brings humans and non-humans together. As Winright puts it, while reading Norman Wirzba: “Shalom upholds and promotes the integrating of all creation.”

<sup>102</sup> Just peacekeeping is a concept in peacebuilding developed mainly by Just war scholars, but gains the attraction of pacifists. It is carrying out practical steps towards peacebuilding, such as supporting nonviolent actions, taking initiatives to reduce threats to human dignity, use of cooperative conflict resolution, seeking repentance and forgiveness, fostering just and sustainable economic development, advancing democracy, human rights, and interdependence, reducing offensive weapons and weapons trade, encouraging voluntary association and so forth. See Glen Stasses, ed., *Just Peacekeeping: New Paradigm for the Ethics of Peace and War* (Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2008) Power and Hrynkow developed this reasoning to what they called Just peace. See their “Qualified Advocacy for justPeace,” 339-365.

Hryn timer describe as “integral just peace”.<sup>103</sup> More still, it is in Winright’s “integral peacebuilding”.<sup>104</sup> However, like the tradition before Benedict, these scholars of Catholic peacebuilding did not explicitly mention the logic of the gift. For instance, Winright declares that he endorses the argument made by Pope Benedict XVI and Pope Francis on integral ecology and peacebuilding in his integral peacebuilding – an argument that prioritises the logic of the gift – but does not mention it, as does Pope Francis.<sup>105</sup> Recently, the mentioned Hollenbach alluded to the logic of the gift without explicitly saying it when writing about Francis’s culture of encounter. In his broader analysis of Francis’s culture of Counter, Hollenbach speaks of political love, the capacity of self-transcendence, recognition of the other community’s rights, “recognition of the sacredness” and “worth of persons”, and love of the other persons.<sup>106</sup> When this encounter happens, Hollenbach argues, it “will contribute to the promotion of justice and peace within communities and among nations.”<sup>107</sup> It is the claim that the new vision of peacebuilding proposed by these authors embraces the value of Benedict’s logic of the gift, but there is not sufficient mention of it.

#### 6.4 Conclusion

While rooted in the tradition that began even before Leo XIII, Benedict emphasised that peace is a gift of God and our response to the misery of both human and nonhuman creatures. It could be said that Catholic peacebuilding is a task that involves everyone and the generosity of God. In describing this responsibility, he alluded to just war thinking but explicitly expressed support for active non-violence. In this way, the growing effort towards supporting justpeace takes a lead from him and the general tradition. However, while Benedict intelligently discussed peacebuilding in light of what he identified as the principle of gratuitousness within CST, those

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<sup>103</sup> Power and Hryn timer developed this reasoning to what they called Just peace. See their “Qualified Advocacy for JustPeace,” 339-365. They also alluded to the features of the gift in their discussion of integral justpeace when they write: “When combined with their [Christian] desire to fully live out the teachings of Jesus [eschatological peace and by extension the logic of the gift since it is intrinsic to Christ’s message of love] with their focus on nonviolence, nourished a constructive tradition, of which JustPeace is an essential recovery, now firmly grounded in concern for this world.” Ibid., 359.

<sup>104</sup> For Winright, “Integral peacebuilding” includes elements of nonviolence, integral ecology, just peacekeeping, and just peacebuilding.” See his, “Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: Laudato Si and Integral Peacebuilding,” in *All Creation Is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis’s Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo (Winona: Anselm Academic, 2008), 209. Interestingly, Benedict’s logic of the gift is present in Winright’s integral peacebuilding because it suggests Pope Francis’s “integral ecology,” which is based on fraternal love and unconditional sacrifice. Ibid., 203.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>106</sup> David Hollenbach, “Religious Nationalism, a Global Ethic, and the Culture of Encounter,” *Theological Studies* 83, no. 3 (2022), 373-378.

<sup>107</sup> Ibid., 376.

who follow and support his views on peacebuilding, climate change, and the economy almost avoided mentioning the principle of gratuitousness explicitly.

Interestingly, Francis follows Benedict's reasoning on peacebuilding by explicitly embracing active nonviolence and limited just war reasoning and by appropriating the logic of the gift in the area. This means that the logic of the gift is a qualified concept in peacebuilding but receives little attention, even by the proponents of just peacekeeping (Glen Stasses), integral peace (Winright), and integral justpeace (Power and Hrynkow). Even Hollenbach's analysis of Francis's Culture of Encounter suggests the value of the logic of the gift in the practice of justice and peace. The last chapter of the work presents the theoretical and practical values of the gift in peacebuilding efforts.

## **CHAPTER SEVEN**

### **The Practical Implications of Benedict's Logic of the Gift and Peacebuilding**

#### **7.1 Introduction**

This chapter draws together strands that run through the entire study. It will present the practical implications of Benedict's logic of gift and peacebuilding, with specific regard for Nigerian society, which motivated the research. It seeks to answer the question: how may Benedict XVI's logic of the gift, mainly as situated in Catholic Social Teaching, be a resource for considering the theory and practice of peacebuilding efforts? It presents the research findings and central arguments before proposing practical implications.

It begins by listing the findings of each chapter. It then summarises the argument. The argument is built on the link between Benedict's concept of the gift and the drivers of Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching or principles of Catholic Social Teaching: human dignity, economic development, climate change, justice, solidarity and nonviolence. The chapter then explores the potential contribution of the argument to the challenge of peacebuilding by engaging the concept of the gift with models of peacebuilding. It concludes by proposing some practical implications of the gift in the field.

#### **7.2 Recounting the Argument**

The first chapter provided a survey of philosophical and sociological accounts of the gift, exemplified in the works of Marcel Mauss, Jacques Derrida, Jean-Luc Marion, and Rene Girard. It turned on the argument that the logic of the gift may have a positive or negative interpretation and function. It is positive when it is free, enhances social cohesion, and supports a moral vision. It is negative when the gift is not free, when it leads to competition, social status, and conflict and when it leads to exploitation of the vulnerable. In short, the gift can be toxic, a poison that allows givers to control their beneficiaries. Accordingly, people may be afraid to receive gifts

or be abused by them. The gift, therefore, is ambiguous: it may lead to either social breakdown or social upbuilding. It provided the intellectual backdrop for later arguments of the thesis, which contends the real possibility of a positive interpretation and function.

Chapter two turned to the work of Joseph Ratzinger, prior to becoming Pope Benedict XVI, who presented what we termed a positive interpretation of the function of the gift. It was argued that the dynamic of the gift is central to Ratzinger's theology: God as a giver, and human beings as receivers and co-givers, salvation and freedom as a gift. The framework establishes a theocentric anthropology based on his notion of the gift as grace and responsibility. The chapter highlighted Ratzinger's conviction that everything is a gift apart from sin and how it frames his overarching theologies of the Trinity, human creation, and human dignity. God is the absolute Giver who gives freely of God's self. It acknowledged the criticism of being idealistic and lacking connection with human experience. The thesis argues that this criticism is directly answered in his contributions to Catholic Social Teaching, outlined in the following chapter.

Chapter three demonstrated how Benedict unpacked the logic of the gift, namely as grace and responsibility expressed in practical and authentic encounters with God, humans, and other beings, within Catholic Social Teaching. Named the principle of gratuitousness, this view of the gift was applied to human realities, such as the natural environment, terrorism, human rights, and solidarity, to address the question of human experience. This chapter also argued that by situating the logic of the gift within Catholic Social Teaching, Benedict broadened and deepened the theological discourse of the tradition. Some questioned the efficacy of linking justice and charity, claimed by Benedict to be the result of this logic. Instead, the chapter asserts that the logic of the gift is a moral framework of encounter that can further inform the tradition's reflections on social concerns, such as conflict and peacebuilding.

Peacebuilding is a vital and core component of the tradition. In chapter four, the thesis turned to trace the history of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of the Catholic Social Teaching. It drew on the canonical writings from Leo XIII to John Paul II and documents from regional bishops' conferences. Differing strategies were identified, with some favouring human rights language and others emphasising solidarity. The chapter utilises Theodora Hawksley's numbering of four models of peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching: just war theory, pacifism, social justice, and pastoral accompaniment. Central to the argument here is that the tradition prioritises nonviolence without abandoning just war reasoning. It admits some criticisms of the Catholic social tradition, such as the inadequate use of the theological approach to natural law and an abstract or idealistic approach to social engagement, such as

peacebuilding. It argues that Benedict's logic of the gift is linked to the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, which are significant to the tradition's teaching on peacebuilding. These and other observations allowed us to argue that Benedict's logic of the gift can play an essential role in the general vision of peacebuilding.

Chapter five was an exploration of the Basic Human Needs Theory of peacebuilding. It placed the previous discussion of peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching in context and dialogue. It presented three exemplars of this Theory: John Burton, Amartya Sen and William Ury. In common, they assert the primacy of the basic needs of people. The obstruction of these needs is the fundamental cause of conflict, and so is the source of its overcoming. Each, in turn, builds their model on this central insight: 'controlled communication', 'capabilities', and 'ten roles of the third side'. This chapter contends that there is a substantial overlap between the approach of Catholic Social Teaching and Basic Human Needs Theory and that Benedict's logic of the gift is intrinsic to them. As such, it can be an important bridge of dialogue with practitioners and theorists in the field of peacebuilding. On the one hand, the Basic Humans Needs Theory can be a resource for Catholic reflections on peacebuilding. On the other hand, and essential for this thesis, it implies that Catholic Social Teaching – and specifically the principle of gratuitousness (the logic of the gift) – can be a resource for peacebuilders to reflect on.

Chapter six completes the undertaking of chapter four by presenting Pope Benedict's and Pope Francis' visions of peacebuilding. It argues that Benedict's approach consistently emphasises that peacebuilding necessitates a commitment to moral principles, evangelisation, and integral development based on the logic of the gift. To this end, it studies *Caritas in Veritate*, *Messages for The Celebration of World Peace Day*, and *Africae Munus*. Active nonviolence without total departure from legitimate defence is his position. The recent documents of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si*, *Fratelli Tutti*, and his *Messages for the Celebration of World Day of Peace* were also considered. The chapter argues that while differing in style and prioritising 'social fraternity,' Francis draws upon the principle of gratuitousness first articulated by Benedict. He also concludes, like Benedict, that nonviolence is preferred over just war theory. Some central Catholic Theologians and Ethicists of the Christian tradition – such as Tobias Winright, Kenneth Himes, Lisa Sowle Cahil, and Maria Power – draw upon the principle of gratuitousness to write about different concepts that facilitate peacebuilding efforts without explicitly mentioning it. These concepts include integral peacebuilding, just peacemaking, and integral justpeace.

To summarise the basic argument of this thesis: the logic of the gift, or the principle of gratuitousness, is an under-utilised – and indeed under-valued – principle in contemporary discussion on peacebuilding in the Catholic tradition and praxis, in comparison to its use in reflection upon economic development, climate change, human dignity and justice. The logic of the gift can offer new perspectives, different priorities, fresh motivation, and active engagement. This thesis argues that it can be a vital resource because the gift explicated by Benedict is grace and responsibility in an authentic encounter. Accordingly, it reveals a complete vision of the human person in its transcendent, anthropological, and social character and can inform the moral evaluation of human endeavours such as peacebuilding.

### **7.3 Defending the Argument**

This thesis maintains that Benedict's concept of the gift correlates with visions of peacebuilding in CST and other secular theorists of peace. Here, six themes are deployed to present the arguments that the gift can contribute to peacebuilding, including human dignity, economics, climate change, justice, solidarity, and nonviolence. They are selected because they can be points of contact between CST and secular theories of peacebuilding.

#### **7.3.1 Human Dignity**

The concept of the gift revolves around human dignity because the person's dignity is recognised by acts of gift-giving, including loving the other unconditionally, encountering others, fraternity, and reciprocity. It means we treat everyone with justice and build social cohesion and community. Benedict's logic of the gift is clear: humans are made for the gift, that is, to live in a community and encounter God and others, including the environment. This relationship of encounters, in turn, enhances negotiation and dialogue, upbuilding to the proper understanding of the person's dignity and peacebuilding.

It is also true that, as previously mentioned, violence and war are the results of negative attitudes to human dignity, such as oppression, inequality, and discrimination against others because of religion or ethnicity. These acts threaten human dignity and the community and are ultimately the causes of violence and wars. As J Milburn Thomson aptly says, "Violence is counter to human dignity and community."<sup>1</sup> Therefore, to speak of eradicating such an attitude, even if not wholly, means insisting, in strong terms, on the responsibility to respect and

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<sup>1</sup> J Milburn Thompson, "Treating Environment through Nonviolence," in *Nonviolence, Transformation, and the Sacred: They Shall Be Called Children of God*, ed., Margarite R. Pfeil and Tobias Winright (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2012), 321.



promote that dignity. Benedict's logic of the gift is set up to perform such a function. This is because, from the perspective of encounter or relationship with the other and the entire community of living things, it stimulates unconditional love that pays attention to the terrible conditions of persons, such as homelessness, hunger, and immigration caused by war, climate change and invasion, without expecting reimbursement. It is the claim that the gift affirms the person's intrinsic value as made for giving and receiving. This means living in harmony and community with others. Also, the logic of the gift recognises that human beings are meant for relationships and encounters with other humans and the environment. If violence is counter to human dignity, and the logic of the gift recognises the value of the person's dignity, utilising the framework of the gift can potentially diffuse violence and contribute to peacebuilding.

### **7.3.2 Economics**

Drew Christiansen's observation of the relationship between gift-giving and the economy was the starting point of the argument for this thesis. Most of the literature on gift-giving refers to economic activity. The discussion pointed out that economic issues are an essential focus for peacebuilders or institutions that contribute to peacebuilding.<sup>2</sup> Although Benedict pointed out that his pontificate would promote peacebuilding efforts, he has written only a little in the area. His major contribution to CST is his articulation of the gift within the economic domain, namely, the market, state, and civil society. At the same time, he is aware that these are spheres where violence and conflict occur because they can be unjust and create inequality. Pope Francis concurs when he argues that economic systems open doors to inequality, leading to violence (*EG*, 59 and 60). The suggestion is that economic issues can be a driver of violence, and violence leads to further economic crises. If this connection between the gift and economic activity is intrinsic, economic institutions and peacebuilders can utilise the logic of gift-giving to draw out what is virtuous in the economy and build peace.

### **7.3.3. Climate Change**

It has been proven that there is a connection between conflict and climate change. The connection is cyclical. On one hand, environmental destruction is a side-effect of violence and war.<sup>3</sup> On the other hand, ecological destruction can cause violence and war. Both have

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<sup>2</sup> See Amartya Sen in section 5.2.2 of this work; and the General introduction (the rationale of the thesis).

<sup>3</sup> For more information on environment and war, see Pope Francis, who teaches that conflict and death are caused by the shortage of natural resources (*LS*, 48). See also Matthew Shadle, "No Peace on Earth: War and the Environment," in *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, ed. Tobias Winright (Winona: NY: Anselm Academic, 2011), 411-419.

detrimental effects on people's basic needs. For example, floods, drought and armed war drive people away from their homes and create hunger. The effects of these acts are enormous. Writing about the Vietnam War, Laurie Johnston reported that the US forces damaged the environment for selfish interests, resulting in different kinds of diseases such as cancer, congenital disabilities, and biodiversity.<sup>4</sup> Tobias Winright writes when reflecting on *Laudato Si*: "Since humans are part of nature (LS, 139), the violence that we do to nature is also an attack on ourselves."<sup>5</sup> Therefore, to speak of peacebuilding, one must be active in the restoration of the environment. Benedict's logic of the gift alluded to the attitudes that can help restore the environment. Such virtues are not only social but moral and spiritual. Pope Francis followed suit when he stated that the solution to the problems caused by climate is not just political but moral and spiritual, that is, making sacrifices to treat humans well (LS, 200). The logic of the gift embraces all these; it is fraternal love, reciprocity, and sacrifices that do not seek repayment.<sup>6</sup> Here, it is argued that the gift can contribute to peacebuilding from the point of view of ecology because it is intrinsic to the discussion that promotes environmental restoration.

#### **7.3.4 Justice**

This thesis has demonstrated how the gift can be a prism for understanding justice and that justice is a practical tool for peacebuilding. The gift is articulated in the discourse on justice. Justice, especially in negotiation and peacebuilding, is widely understood as giving what is due to people, akin to reciprocity, truth-telling and encounter inherent in the concept of the gift. When people's dues are granted or given, trust is improved, dialogue is stabilised, and peacebuilding continues. From this perspective, it makes sense to say that gift-giving is an intrinsic and inherent component of justice and can so impact peacebuilding activities.

#### **7.3.5 Solidarity**

Solidarity embodies unity, taking action to address issues and cooperation among groups and individuals. It is the willingness to understand and support others, especially in the face of

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<sup>4</sup> Laurine Johnston, "Just War Theory and Environmental Destruction," in *Can War Be Just in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Ethicists Engage the Tradition*, eds. Tobias Winright and Laurine Johnston (Maryknoll: MN: Orbis Books, 2015), 98.

<sup>5</sup> Tobias Winright, "Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding," in *All Creation Is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis's Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo (Winona: Anselm Academic, 2008), 200.

<sup>6</sup> For more information, see Francis, *Laudato Si*, no. 228; Winright, "Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding," 203.

challenges such as injustice and war and frustration of basic needs. Its focus is the sharing of resources and the common good. The thesis has pointed out that solidarity is one of the significant principles of Catholic Social teaching on peacebuilding. John Paul II's notion of peacebuilding is characterised by it. Other secular theorists and practitioners of peacebuilding, such as William Ury, a central figure in Basic Human Needs Theory, emphasise the value of solidarity in peacebuilding efforts. Benedict's logic of the gift can contribute to peacebuilding efforts that make solidarity its focus because of two reasons: one, it is characterised by the generosity and willingness to support others without envisaging present or future rewards, and two, it is activism, advocacy, and taking of responsibility to address social issues such as injustice and marginalisation.<sup>7</sup>

### 7.3.6 Nonviolence

This thesis has shown that nonviolence is a widely accepted approach to peacebuilding. Nonviolent activists outlined practices for what they believe. For instance, drawing from Gandhi's idea of nonviolence, Martin Luther King Jr. offers four principles and practices of nonviolence.<sup>8</sup> These principles are closely connected to the principles of CST and, consequently, the logic of the gift. The first is that nonviolence is active, not passive.<sup>9</sup> This means working for peace, building community, resisting injustice, and doing justice. It also means the principle of participation. The second is reconciliation. Nonviolence tries to restore and build community and make friends even with the enemy. Thirdly, it refuses harm and hate. In this way, it aligns with fraternity, forgiveness, and love. Fourthly, nonviolence holds that means are ends created, or they are intrinsically connected to ends. This principle of nonviolence suggests that peace is the means and end of peace. Put differently, peace is the way to peace.

The gift should be mentioned and added to this list because its nature is non-violent peace, activism and active participation or being a co-worker, especially in protecting the innocent and the less privileged by carrying a task.<sup>10</sup> It is about doing something, being a co-worker, such as forgiving and making enemies friends, and showing fraternal love for the

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<sup>7</sup> For more information on Benedict's logic of the gift, advocacy, and activism, see Paulinus I Odozor, "A Theology of Gratuitousness," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life: An Extension and Critique of Caritas in Veritate*, ed., Daniel Finn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 30.

<sup>8</sup> Martin Luther King Jr., *Stride Towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper and Row, 1958), 83-88.

<sup>9</sup> See section 4.6 of this thesis,

<sup>10</sup> See sections 2.4 and 2.5 of this thesis.

other.<sup>11</sup> This category of nonviolence alluded to the message of peace proclaimed by Jesus Christ through love: “My peace I give you John” (14: 27). Christians are expected to do the same as they await the eschatological reward of life after here. As Gregory M. Reichberg, Henrick Syse and Endre Begby observe: “As Christians, they were certainly in this world, as Jesus himself had been, aiming to spread the gospel and set an example of peacefulness and love. But they were also living in eschatological expectation of a life outside this world.”<sup>12</sup> It could be said that nonviolence is gift-giving. Therefore, it is worth pointing out that integrating the gift into the nonviolent approach to peace and, by extension, CST can improve theory and practice in the field since it embraces love, forgiveness, participation, and other features of nonviolent ethics.

#### **7.4 Engaging Benedict XVI’s Logic of the Gift with Models of Peacebuilding**

This section examines Benedict’s logic of the gift and Catholic models of peacebuilding to explore potential contributions to the challenges of peacebuilding. It engages the gift with the four models of peacebuilding – just war, pacifism, social justice, and accompaniment – referencing Basic Human Needs Theory. This engagement is the culmination of the argument that Benedict’s logic of the gift provides a resource for models of peacebuilding.

##### **7.4.1 Just War Theory**

As highlighted in chapter four, just war theory and pacifism are the earliest models of peacebuilding in the documentary heritage of CST.<sup>13</sup> Just War Theory is about accepting the legitimacy to defend oneself from an unjust aggressor and seeking criteria by which war and violence may be ethically evaluated. Garry Simpson outlines ten criteria for judging war: just cause (self-defence), legitimate authority, right intention, end of peace, last resort, proportionality end, probability of success, public declaration, non-combatant discrimination, and proportionality of means. While the first eight belong to the *jus ad bellum* criteria, the last two guide *jus in bello*.<sup>14</sup> Maryann Cusimano Love sticks to five criteria: non-combatant immunity, legitimate authority, right intention, the proportionality of success, and last resort.

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<sup>11</sup> See section 3.4.3. of this thesis.

<sup>12</sup> Gregory M. Reichberg, Henrick Syse and Endre Begby, *The Ethics of War Classic and Contemporary Readings* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2006), 60.

<sup>13</sup> See Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2.1 of this thesis.

<sup>14</sup> Garr M. Simpson, *War, Peace, and God: Rethinking the Just War Tradition* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Fortress, 2007), 27-28.

However, she argues that non-combatant immunity involves much more than moral and legal law. It has a political perspective.<sup>15</sup>

*Jus post bellum* also has rules and principles. We mentioned earlier that Michael Shuck proposed three principles for this phase of the theory. Among these are repentance, surrender and restoration.<sup>16</sup> Later, Louis Iasiello outlined seven, including a healing mindset, just restoration, safeguards for the innocent, respect for the environment, post-war justice, warrior demobilisation, and learning the lessons of war.<sup>17</sup> Writing on the promotion of justice for victims, Brian Orend proposes fair standards of rehabilitation and punishment and ensuring public, proportional settlements.<sup>18</sup> Mark F. Allman and Tobias Winright accept these norms of *Jus post bellum* but advise that they should be included in the discussion of *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* to boost the general concept of Just War Theory.<sup>19</sup> Even Ury's ten roles accept the roles of just war.

Just War Theory deals with laws and norms, aspiring to hope that rules can help respond to human misery and violence. This is also the case for *jus post bellum*.<sup>20</sup> It may be said that apart from practice, it is rule or principle-orientated, that is, deontological. However, the theory often raises far more questions than it answers. To take just the responsibility of reparation, Kenneth Himes lists many questions:

Who in the aggressor state should pay, and what sort of system should be created to extract reparations? Is it sensible to demand reparation while also speaking of the duties of victors to assist the defeated in rebuilding their own country? Can a long-term plan of taxation be put in place once a defeated is back on its feet, so that reparations come from a generation that may not have approved a war of aggression or fought in it? ...what of the compensation claims of truly innocent victims of state aggression? What are the too rarely addressed issues of restoration and of the environment damaged by war?<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Maryann Cusimano Love, "Morality Matters: Ethics and Power Politics in the War on Terrorism," *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs* 3, no. 2 (2002), 10-11.

<sup>16</sup> Michael Schuck, "When the Shooting Stops: Missing Elements in *Just War Theory*," *Christian Century* 101 (1994): 982-983.

<sup>17</sup> Louis, Iasiello v. (2004). *Jus Post Bellum: The Moral Responsibilities of Victors in War*. *Naval War College Review*, 57 3-4 (2004): 33-52, accessed on April 22, 2023 Retrieved from <https://may.idm.oclc.org/login?url=https://www.proquest.com/scholarly-journals/jus-post-bellum-moral-responsibilities-victors/docview/60602926/se-2>.

<sup>18</sup> Brian Orend "Justice after War," in *Ethics and International Affairs* 16, no. 1 (2002), 43-44. Accessed on May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1747-7093.2002.tb00374.x>.

<sup>19</sup> Allman, Mark and Tobias Winright, "Growing Edges of Just War Theory: Jus Ante Bellum, Jus Post Bellum, and Imperfect Justice," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32, no, 2 (2012), 174.

<sup>20</sup> See Chapter 4, Section 4.5.2.1.

<sup>21</sup> Keneth Himes, "Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching," in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, eds., Robert J. Schreiter, R. Scott Appleby and Gerard F. Powers (Maryknoll. NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 286.

At the heart of these questions is an overlap between retributive and distributive justice. However, while justice cannot take place without laws (the logic of obligation), something more profound is required, namely a trust that is engendered by genuine social encounters (logic of gift). Despite their significance, laws and rules do not stand on their own. Policies for restoration, addressing climate disasters, and economic rebuilding of the victim's country always require a supplementary force.<sup>22</sup>

It is precisely here that Benedict's logic of the gift becomes germane. It puts the fostering and protecting of trust at the centre, suggesting a supplementary set of actions, policies, and structures: transparency and accountability. The logic of the gift also implies a virtue ethic, paramount to Benedict, which includes charity and truth, reciprocity, and hope (CV, 34-35), which were unpacked in detail in this study.

It is the position of this thesis that how the norms of Just War Theory, especially *Jus post bellum*, can be rearticulated in accordance with the logic of the gift. Of the many criteria proposed above, the logic of the gift would prioritise – or at least include – those actions that would engender trust in the receiver. These policies would focus on civil society rather than on the economy or state bureaucracy, as important as they are. Indeed, building these aspects of society after defeat in a war requires attention to the civil, as concluded by the logic of the gift. A full explanation would be for another work. For now, this thesis suggests that, in line with Benedict's insight, the key policies and principles could focus on establishing truth, reciprocity and hope. To take each in turn:

- Truth: establishment of a truth and reconciliation commission; a healthy media; dialogue; transparency; and consequently accountability.
- Reciprocity: equitable redistribution; participation in the power structures such as democratic practices, creating a network of social and communal bonds.
- Hope: conditions for individual flourishing such as education, health care, respect for human dignity and family, commitment to the common good, solidarity and subsidiarity, and, of course, the person's transcendent and social nature, volunteering and an act of philanthropy.

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<sup>22</sup> See Chapter 3, Sections 3.4.1 of this work. Habermas justified this claim when he argues that laws need to be supplemented by moral behaviour. For him, the imposition of rules to solve problems is not enough. See Chapter 3, section 3.5 of this work.

### 7.4.2 Pacifism

Like the Just War theory, pacifism is one of the earliest models of Catholic peacebuilding. As observed in chapter four, the first position of Catholic Social Teaching is the promotion of peace through the promotion of nonviolence.<sup>23</sup> To take current wars, particularly the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the Catholic Church advocates strongly for non-violent responses.<sup>24</sup>

Pacifism has become a significant model, particularly since the examples of Martin Luther King and Mahatma Gandhi.<sup>25</sup> Underlying various pacifist positions are common themes: justice, love, and forgiveness. The Mennonite theologian John Howard Yoder understands pacifism in contemporary Christianity to mean obedience to God's teaching, including forgiveness and love.<sup>26</sup> He also influenced Stanley Hauerwas, who later called for dependence on God's protection amid the challenge of peace and conflict.<sup>27</sup>

David Hollenbach encouraged the Church to incorporate pacifist and just war approaches to serve justice and peace.<sup>28</sup> Following the experience of the South African *Truth and Reconciliation Commission*, a commission that promoted non-violence, theologians have argued that forgiveness and truth-telling lead the way in peacebuilding efforts.<sup>29</sup> These themes or virtues – love, forgiveness, and truth-telling – have been presented by Benedict as a gift.<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> See Chapter 4, section 4.1 of this work. Read The Council Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace Pax Christi International, *Conference for Nonviolence and Just Peace: Contributing to the Catholic Understanding of and Commitment to Nonviolence* Rome, April 11-13, 201, accessed on May 15, 2023, PDF; Steve Chase, "Review of Works: The Catholic Church Returns to the Gospel of Non-violence by Mary Dennis," *International Journal on World Peace* 36, no. 4 (2019): 92 – 96; Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Just War Pacifism, Just Peace," *Theological Studies* 80, no 1 (2018), 171.

<sup>24</sup> Pope Francis' response to the Ukraine War reflects and narrows the Catholic Church's nonviolence. See this chapter, section 6. 3.

<sup>25</sup> See Hiroaki Kuromiya, *Conscience on Trial: The Face of Fourteen Pacifists in Stalin's Ukraine, 1952-1953* (New York: University of Toronto Press, 2012), accessed on April 23, 2023, doi:10.3138/9781442661073 accessed on April 23, 2023; Stanley Hauerwas, *The Peaceful Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1981); John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus Vincit Agnus Nostra* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972) and the second edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1994); Richard Hays, *Moral Vision of the New Testament: A Contemporary Introduction to New Testament Ethics*: (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1996); Hauerwas, *Matthew* (London: SCM Press, 2006), 181-222.

<sup>26</sup> John Howard Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1990). He is critical of the overreliance of Just War theory on history for its argument on the "rightness" or "wrongness" of war. He thinks that this procedure undervalues dimensions of the conflict." See Yoder, "Just War Tradition: Is it Credible?" *Christian Century* 108, no. 9 (March 13, 1991): 296.

<sup>27</sup> Stanley Hauerwas presented a radical view of pacifism, arguing that only God makes peace, not humans. See his *The Peaceful Kingdom: A Primer in Christian Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1981).

<sup>28</sup> See David Hollenbach, *Nuclear Ethics: A Christian Moral Argument* (New York: Paulist Press, 1983), 86.

<sup>29</sup> See Brandon Hamber, "A Psychological Perspective on Political Strategies for Dealing with the Legacy of Political Violence," in *Burying the Past: Making Peace and doing Justice After Conflict*, ed., Nigel Biggar (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2003), 155-174; Marie Smyth, "Putting the Past in Its Place," in *Burying the Past: Making Peace and doing Justice After Conflict*, 125-153. David Hollenbach, "The Promise and Risk of Charity," in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic life*, ed., Daniel Finn (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 41.

<sup>30</sup> See Chapter 3, section 3.4.2 of this Study.

Pacifism focuses on activism rather than policy. The story of Maggy Barankitse, Daniel Philpott's experience of forgiveness in Uganda, and Desmond Tutu's vision of forgiveness and the Rwandan genocide are two good examples. Barankitse established peace for children and some orphans by inculcating the virtues of love and forgiveness in them and those who massacred people.<sup>31</sup> Emmanuel Katongole reported her experience of the importance of love to peacebuilding, saying:

If in Maggy's sorrowful laments, she had questioned God's identity and love, now in the crucified God she began to glimpse the full extent of God's love, not simply as an action, but as the very identity of God, as well as our identity. For as children of God, she realised, human beings are created by God and for love. Love is both our identity and destiny...This is how Maison Shalom [Maggy's NGO] was born, beginning with Maggy's seven children and twenty-five other orphans that had survived the massacre.<sup>32</sup>

To think that human beings are created for love suggests the centrality of authentic encounters that encapsulate forgiveness and love, even with the enemy, at the core of the logic of the gift. In Uganda, Daniel Philpott reports on how love and forgiveness contributed to peace:

Virtually no one argued that forgiveness was beyond the pale, unthinkable, or outside the boundaries of possibility in milieus where war had taken place, contrary to the views of even those Western analysts favourable to a reconciliation paradigm. In Uganda, forgiveness is a normal part of the regular practice of ordinary people in the wake of war.<sup>33</sup>

Philpott's submission confirms Katongole's report on Maggy. The renowned South African peacemaker Desmond Tutu deserves a place in this discussion. While reflecting on love as a gift, he says: "Even if there is not one in your life who has demonstrated the pattern of acceptance to you [love and forgiveness], it is a pattern that you can discover for yourself. It is a gift you give to yourself."<sup>34</sup> Tutu seems to imply that humans must understand that love and forgiveness are, first and foremost, gifts, and we must recognise them as fundamental to reconciliation.

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<sup>31</sup> Maggy Barankitse, "Maggy Barankitse continuous the Work of Peace after Fleeing her home Country," in *Faith and Leadership*, and *A Public Lecture at The Lutheran World Federation*. See also her Interview with the author, Ruyigi, Burundi, in January 17, 2009. For more information about Barankitse on love, see Emmanuel Katongole, *The Sacrifice of Africa: A Political Theology of Africa* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), 171 and 229; Katongole, "Memoria Passionis as Social Reconciliation in Eastern Africa," in *The Surprise of Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*, eds., J.J Carney and Laurie Johnston (New York: Paulist Press, 2018): 268-287.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 273.

<sup>33</sup> Daniel Philpott, "The Surprise of Forgiveness in Modern Catholic Teaching and Practice," in *The Surprise of Reconciliation in the Catholic Tradition*, 302.

<sup>34</sup> Desmond Tutu, *Made for Goodness* (London: Rider, 2010), 183.



Pacifism bears a different dynamic to Just War Theory.<sup>35</sup> It is guided by love, forgiveness and truth-telling. It is then primarily a virtue ethic and aligns itself with the gift concept. The judgements and efforts of peacebuilders are on the practices that upbuild these virtues. At the same time, pacifism requires some deontological principle(s) by which to evaluate and judge between actions. As Reinhold Niebuhr observes: "... it is a mistake to assume that nonviolence is intrinsically good."<sup>36</sup> Tobias Winright writes: "Even nonviolent methods can harm others."<sup>37</sup> Virtues need rules.

But virtues can also be weak. The danger to pacifism is that it can collapse into passivity or indifference. While it is possible to point to exemplars of virtue in pacifists such as Maggy Barankitse, for pacifism to be an effective model of peacebuilding, it requires a profound virtue of a whole people or at least a very significant proportion of the people. This thesis contends that pacifists – as peacebuilders – can be guided and enhanced by Benedict’s logic of the gift because it involves taking responsibility in a nonviolent manner. Again, note the centrality of trust. As he wrote in the central text of his work *Caritas in Veritate*: "And today it is this trust which has ceased to exist, and the loss of trust is a grave loss" (CV, 35). He argues that the primary space for this to occur is in civil society, that is, places of intimate and local encounters such as family, church, school, volunteer organisations, sports, and so on. Two practices in Benedict’s account may be helpful to the deepening of the virtues that can sustain pacifism: social responsibility and prayer.<sup>38</sup>

To take the former: social responsibility. The principle of gratuitousness is an explicit statement of an underlying commitment to the social, inspired by grace, that is, Catholic Social Teaching. Although CST does not provide an explicit roadmap, it does provide a set of principles and a basic orientation.<sup>39</sup> Above all, it is an expression of the necessity for social responsibility for the other, especially the marginalised and the vulnerable. He writes:

The primordial truth of God's love, grace bestowed upon us, that opens our lives to gift and makes it possible to hope for a 'development of the whole man and of all men', to hope for progress 'from less human conditions to those which are more human', obtained by overcoming the difficulties that are inevitably encountered along the way (CV, 8).

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<sup>35</sup> See Chapter 4, section 4.5.2.2 of this dissertation.

<sup>36</sup> Reinhold Niebuhr, *Moral Man, and Immoral Society: A Study in Ethics and Politics* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1932), 172.

<sup>37</sup> Tobias Winright, "Why I Shall Continue to Use and Teach Just War Theory," *Expositions* 12, no. 1 (2018), 150.

<sup>38</sup> For Benedict on social responsibility, See Chapter 3, section 3.4.5 of this study and *Caritas in Veritate*, no. 5; on prayer, see chapter section 3.4.2.3 of this work.

<sup>39</sup> See chapter 4, Section 4.5.2.4 of this thesis.

A healthy society that can upbuild pacifism enables people to take personal responsibility for others rather than sublet responsibility to the State (and laws) or the economy (and its capital). It counters the danger of passivity, which is a withdrawal from responsibility. Active pacifism requires a practised responsibility.

To take the latter: prayer. Prayer is a personal and social practice – whether it be worship, devotion or interior reflection. From a Christian perspective, it is letting God change us and the world through us. In his reflection on prayer and peacebuilding, Cardinal Cahal Daly, former Archbishop of Armagh and a principal actor during the violent period of Northern Ireland’s history, states in the context of peace: “Prayer is in fact God working in us ... Prayers is, something God is doing for us ... When we pray, God is allowing us to share in his power, to share in his work.”<sup>40</sup> In other words, in prayer, we are “co-givers”. To practice prayer is to inculcate the virtues vital to a pacifist model, such as love, forgiveness, and mercy. In other words, it can provide a base for active pacifism and an antidote to passivity.

### 7.4.3 Social Justice

As observed in previous chapters, Catholic social justice is a call for social change arising from an awareness of the presence of God and in response to human needs. The tradition of Catholic Social Teaching developed many principles – justice, solidarity, options for the poor, and promotion and respect for human rights – by emphasising the connection between the *Imago Dei* and human dignity while keeping consistent with the message of salvation.<sup>41</sup> Of CST, Thomas Massaro writes:

There are other examples that illustrate how Catholic Church’s response to poverty and injustice has shifted in recent decades. Older approaches have been retained, but have been supplemented with newer ones. There are certainly many points of continuity with the past, such as the Church’s constant concern for well-being of the least advantaged, its call for other personal conversion and care of others, and the willingness to perform direct services to the poor in moments of crisis and deer need. But there are also striking elements of change. For example, contemporary observers now enjoy an expanded view of what is needed to foster total human integral development.<sup>42</sup>

Chapter four outlined the development of the Catholic documentary tradition on peacebuilding, placing the Church at the service of human dignity and the flourishing of the human person,

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<sup>40</sup> Cahal B. Daly, in *Maria Power, Catholic Social Teaching and Theologies of Peace in Northern Ireland* (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2021) 31.

<sup>41</sup> Robert J. Schreiter, “A Practical Theology of Healing, Forgiveness and Reconciliation,” 389.

<sup>42</sup> Thomas Massaro, *Catholic Social Teaching in Action: Living Justice* (Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012), 12.

which is integral to human development. Alongside it, chapter five presented a set of models that can be broadly termed Basic Human Needs Theory. This theory, it was argued, coheres quite strongly with Catholic Social Teaching's emphasis on the basic goods required for integral human fulfilment.<sup>43</sup>

A corollary of this approach is that this thesis argues against specific models of social justice, such as a social contract model in line with John Rawls. Rather simply put, the Rawlsian model of social justice begins with abstract reasoning that attempts to work out basic requirements prior to social engagement.<sup>44</sup> Instead, social justice in the Catholic tradition – and Basic Human Needs Theory – begins with the identification of the current and essential needs of people in their concrete situation before moving to social engagement.<sup>45</sup> The historical roots of this approach in the Catholic tradition are in the natural law tradition, sourced in Aristotle and Greek philosophy and exemplified by Thomas Aquinas.

The logic of the gift may provide several resources for this approach. To take two: firstly, it can provide a means to supplement and direct Basic Human Needs Theory. BHNs' Theory has been criticised for how it identifies basic human needs.<sup>46</sup> On one side, the basic needs articulated by people (the receivers and even givers) may be strongly coloured by individual self-interest or family, tribal or national identity. For example, a basic need for security may be identified with the refusal to allow strangers, foreigners, into a people's land or country or a basic need for freedom will only allow for expression of one's own culture and not another. On the other side, the altruism motivating the giver may be misguided. It may hide neo-imperial power structures that all too often disempower the receivers. For instance, an NGO's funding of resources to respond to the basic human need for education may be connected to certain values and ideologies offered in the curriculum. A more implicit example would be the insistence on using English as the only language in education where it is not the first language. While it appears to facilitate a basic need, it can also draw a culture into globalised values.

The logic of the gift insists that altruism must be authentic. It serves as an antidote to neo-imperial power structures that too often disempower the receivers. It calls for the practitioners of this approach to be continually vigilant for types of giving that do not fully

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<sup>43</sup> See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.3 of this dissertation.

<sup>44</sup> The individual, as a participant in society or concrete situation people, received little or no attention in Raw's idea of justice. He writes: "...fairness [is a] theory of Justice that generalises and carries to a higher level of abstraction the traditional conception of the social contract." It is the "virtue of a social intuitions, as truth of a system of thought." See John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1990), 3.

<sup>45</sup> See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.3 of this work.

<sup>46</sup> See Chapter 5, Section 5.3.2 of this thesis.

adhere to the logic of the gift. For Benedict, giving must not be done for social status, competition, or control or to draw a culture into globalised values. For instance, altruism must be authentic and allow receivers or beneficiaries to bring their ideas and worldviews into whatever is offered. Recall again the debates on the ambiguity (Mauss), aporia (Derrida) and horizon (Marion) of the gift in the first chapter. Rather, it must be done to recognize real needs, most deeply recognising the dignity or value of another person. It may then provide a framework for BHNs' Theory to evaluate its own approach and practices.

Secondly, the BHN theory has been criticised for not emphasising and building the responsibility of the receiver. Indeed, this may sometimes be true because the givers are supporting a status quo that disempowers people, making them immune to change. Instead, the logic of the gift – especially as articulated by Benedict XVI – insists that authentic gift-giving, giving of self, makes us all “co-givers”. In receiving authentically, a person becomes responsible for the gift, or in his words, “responsible reception”.<sup>47</sup> Receiving comes with an implicit imperative to return and pass on to others, especially those in need.

As was proposed, BHNs' theory shares many characteristics with Catholic Social Teaching, including a starting point in the concrete realities of people, as insisted upon in Thomistic philosophy. Therefore, it may be argued that the above points made of BHNs' Theory may also be applied to Catholic Social Teaching, especially when it relies too heavily on a natural law approach. This thesis contends that this is a crucial motivation behind Benedict's logic of the gift. That is, he wished to supplement the natural law approach.<sup>48</sup> This dissertation pointed out that the Catholic Church's framing of social justice can lack adequate focus on the roles of grace, passion, and the resurrection of Christ. Recently, Theodora Hawksley expressed concern about such an approach:

In focusing on the essential unity of humanity and our vocation to cooperation and harmony, it [CST] arguably leaves us without adequate theological resources for addressing situations in which what ought to be has exploded into a thousand broken, violent, and suffering fragments...In engaging more with natural law than with scripture and Christology, Church teaching on solidarity arguably lacks a vital connection to the practice and prayer of Catholic and other Christian peacebuilders.<sup>49</sup>

Benedict's logic of the gift is theologically and Christologically coded. It provides a narrative of self-giving that refers to the theology of the Trinity, a story of human relationships (CV 54).

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<sup>47</sup> See Chapter 2, Section 2.4 of this study.

<sup>48</sup> Chapter 3, Section 3.3.1 of this work.

<sup>49</sup> Theodora Hawksley, *Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching*, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020. 121-122.

In this sense, human dignity is constituted not just by natural order but by how we give ourselves to others for the love of Christ in us. Hawksley writes: “Christological understanding of solidarity shows how the Church’s teaching might speak more directly to and support those caught up in the risk, ambiguity, and cost of peacebuilding in situations of violent conflict.”<sup>50</sup> This act of self-giving is Christological, speaking strongly and without limitation about options for the poor, human rights, justice, and solidarity. It involves God using us to speak out for the victims of injustice. Gift-giving is justice itself because it is about giving oneself and also giving to others what belongs to them. It is our response to the love of God in political order (CV, 6). Put differently, the logic of the gift fully authentic is an encounter of love with people in situations of violence. As Paulinus Odozor comments:

Gratuitousness is also a call for Christian witness within the Church...In the first place, it is a call for a more intense response to the love of God that is made manifest through the stunning deed of God in Jesus Christ. It calls every Christian to a life of generosity that borders on prodigality like that of the father who gives all for nothing and asks nothing in return.<sup>51</sup>

Therefore, the gift’s logic is intrinsically linked to social justice.

Some theologians separate the role of charity from justice in social engagement. For instance, Gustavo Gutierrez argues that “the poverty of the poor is not a call to generous relief action, but the demand that we go and build a different social order.”<sup>52</sup> On the other hand, Benedict’s logic of the gift brings together charity and justice.<sup>53</sup> On this point, Odozor writes:

Ethics of gratuitousness summons the Church to intensify its effort in the work of advocacy for those who are voiceless regardless of their faith, ethnicity, or other affiliations, in response to the God whose love for us is boundless...If Catholicism in America appears sometimes to be a lone voice among other Christian groups, it is precisely because, like the rest of the Catholic Church, it is grateful for ancient, profound, and transcendent gifts and not simply for recent things. Gratuitousness, as the Pope describes it, presupposes a long but often interrupted memory of God’s gracious action in history.<sup>54</sup>

Benedict himself asserts that political charity, which also means activism that is geared to granting people their due, is a complete gift, as is the Christian charity that serves the neighbour in an authentic encounter (C.V 70).<sup>55</sup> This study argues that logic can be the missing link

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<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 107.

<sup>51</sup> Paulinus I Odozor, “A Theology of Gratuitousness,” 30.

<sup>52</sup> Gustavo Gutierrez, *The Power of the Poor in History*, trans., Robert R. Barr (London: SCM, 1979), 44.

<sup>53</sup> See Chapter 3, Section 3.3.3 of this dissertation.

<sup>54</sup> Odozor, “A Theology of Gratuitousness,” 30.

<sup>55</sup> Hollenbach, “The Promise and Risk of Charity,” in *The Moral Dynamics of Economic Life*, 39.

between Church teaching on solidarity and the practice of Christian peacebuilders, which Hawksley observed.

#### 7.4.4 Pastoral Accompaniment

As noted in chapter four, pastoral accompaniment in the context of this thesis is a commitment to be with and encourage victims of violence, injustice, and other forms of deprivation. The same chapter presented how social encyclicals and Messages on World Day of Peace called for solidarity and accompaniment.

An example is Colombia: Paul VI visited Colombia in 1968 during the armed conflict that began in 1964 and lasted for over six years. John Paul II visited the same country in 1986. These visits consolidate the role of pastoral accompaniment as a significant priority of the Church's tradition.<sup>56</sup> That initiative rests on the claim that the Catholic Church prefers to "become a moral influencer rather than an equal partner within the political sphere".<sup>57</sup> This approach is brought to the fore in Power's account of Catholic peacebuilding. Reflecting on the moral imagination needed for Catholic peacebuilding, she states: "One of the main functions of a bishop is to assist the community in carrying out this task [Moral imagination of the Catholic Church], taking the role of a teacher by developing such a vision and supporting the laity as they use their expertise to translate this into the real temporal realm."<sup>58</sup> This model of peacebuilding offers the Christian hope that people need to survive violent crimes. Hawksley writes on hope to encourage peacebuilders:

Such context [situations of violent conflict] challenge peacebuilders to keep alive hope for change but also demand that it is a real hope, capable of holding all the suffering and the setbacks, compromise and complexity, risk and sacrifice entailed in grassroots peacebuilding work.<sup>59</sup>

The hope that the Church offers as it accompanies people is not 'hope in passivity.' It is a hope rooted in Christian teaching, that is, active rather than passive hope. Lisa Sowle Cahill explains this hope, writing:

In Christian theological tradition, hope is a practical virtue. It is a virtue of the will that disposes us to act for a future good that is difficult to attain but not impossible. Hope is

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<sup>56</sup> Richard John Neuhaus, "Sollicitudo Behind the Headlines," in *Aspiration to Freedom*, ed., Kenneth A Myers (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1978), 134-144; Hawksley, *Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching*, 106.

<sup>57</sup> Power, *Catholic Social Teaching and Theologies of Peace in Northern Ireland*, 106.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>59</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding and Catholic Social Teaching*, 76.

not blind trust that ‘everything will work out for the best’ despite all evidence to the contrary. It is more than the expectation of reward in eternal life.<sup>60</sup>

The logic of the gift can be a supplement to pastoral accompaniment. The point here is like previous points: pastoral accompaniment often lacks a deeper theological rationale. Although as a practice and method, it does not stand on its own, but requires a means of articulation that utilises theological discourse and doctrine. As Hawksley argues: “The Catholic Social Teaching on peace needs to develop theological resources that support this practice [pastoral accompaniment].”<sup>61</sup> She acknowledges the need for accompaniment but offers, as a supplement to it, theology of consolation: “It [theology of consolation] offers both a strong theological framework for pastoral accompaniment and the beginnings of a spirituality that might help sustain those engaged in it.”<sup>62</sup>

This thesis argues that Benedict’s logic of the gift can also perform a similar function as the theology of consolation because it is fundamental and intrinsic to pastoral accompaniment. Put in another way, pastoral accompaniment is the giving of self; it is already an act of giving oneself to people in complex and violent situations because it involves encountering the other, which could be a friend, an enemy, a victim of abuse, or all kinds of deprivation. The logic of the gift is not just about giving money or clothes to victims of violence or about sending basic needs, but also about being with these people and offering them hope.<sup>63</sup>

In the context of being with people and advocating for them, the logic of the gift can offer ‘a theologically informed spirituality’ that is open to encounters with others, leading to the sharing of material and non-material gifts, such as being a voice for victims of deprivation, injustice and attacks. The sharing of material and non-material things – such as money and presence – without envisaging any rewards is Benedict’s logic of the gift (CV 9). Being a voice for the voiceless and vulnerable is also described as Benedict’s logic of the gift.<sup>64</sup> In other words, the logic of gift can offer an intense spirituality and morality that can help victims of injustice or the attacked – such as the people of Southern Kaduna Nigeria, as related in the general introduction – to help themselves and extend their hands and hearts of dialogue and forgiveness to negotiators and mediators, including the aggressor.

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<sup>60</sup> Cahill, A Theology of Peacebuilding,” in *Peacebuilding: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Praxis*, 324.

<sup>61</sup> Hawksley, *Peacebuilding in Catholic Social Teaching*, 80.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> This study has explained in chapter two and three that Benedict’s logic of the gift is not just about sending money and financial aid. It is also about visiting beneficiaries of financial aids. See Chapter 2, Section 2.5 of this work.

<sup>64</sup> See Chapter this Chapter, Section 6.4.3.

When this morality of encounter is recognised, a genuine friendship among the attacked or victims of deprivations and any perceived enemy, including the aggressors, can be built. As Mona Siddiqui, a Professor of Islamic and Interreligious Dialogue, states:

Friendship is not a private matter, something we do in our own time and space. Cultivating meaningful friendships has an immensely powerful social worth and I think is essential to a good society, and to human flourishing. The classical philosophers knew this because many of them regarded friendship as the most important ingredient of a worthwhile and happy life.<sup>65</sup>

This category of friendship can potentially help victims advocate for themselves because the logic of the gift does not seek compensation. It is a communion, Christian love and reciprocal relation that exists among friends and facilitates encounters (CV, 36). It is a force that builds society (CV, 34). This friendship of encounters, which is enshrined in Benedict's logic of the gift, calls us to a dialogue that can potentially lead to holding open space for peacebuilding activities.<sup>66</sup> It can enable a victim of attack to enter a discourse that seeks to discover the truth about co-existence amid social differences. Given that it is an encounter, the logic of the gift could help the accompanying parties or peacebuilders to reach out to the most dangerous opponent and become involved in a problematic situation of peacebuilding because it provides a belief and hope that assures them that someone is with them in all that they do. Spirituality of the logic of the gift reveals to the accompanier and accompanied that it is God that is working in them. It insists that their achievements do not characterise them but are individually gifted by God.<sup>67</sup> It tells them that they are persons open to the transcendent and to the whole of history rather than self-sufficient persons who offer themselves to another out of selfish interest, as pointed out in Marcel Mauss.<sup>68</sup>

The logic of the gift is intrinsic to pastoral accompaniment: "Charity is not an added extra, like an appendix to work already concluded in each of the various disciplines: it engages them [in this sense, pastoral accompaniments and the earlier mentioned models of peacebuilding], in dialogue from the very beginning" (CV, 30). It is part and parcel of the Church's responsibility since the Church considers itself as the voice of the voiceless, helping

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<sup>65</sup> Mona, Siddiqui, *Hospitality, and Islam: Welcoming in God's Name* (London: Yale University Press, 2015), 235.

<sup>66</sup> The gift is an acceptance of and communion with the other (CV, no. 3) that leads to authentic dialogue among different cultures and people. Benedict writes: "In all cultures, there are examples of ethical convergence, some isolated, some interrelated, as an expression of the one human nature (that is, made for the gift), willed by the Creator; the tradition of ethical wisdom knows this as the natural law. This universal moral law provides a sound basis for all cultural, religious, and political dialogue" (CV, 59).

<sup>67</sup> See Chapter 2, Sections 2.4 and 2.5 of this work.

<sup>68</sup> See Chapter 2 Section 2.6 of this work



victims of injustice and other deprivations to advocate for themselves.<sup>69</sup> Like pastoral accompaniment, the logic of the gift aims to transform society, bringing people together regardless of ethnic, political, or social barriers (CV, 34). One cannot be with other people or share in another's suffering without first and foremost offering oneself. In other words, as a fundamental aspect of the Church's accompaniment, the logic of the gift must not be ignored. The conclusion of this thesis is that the recognition and practice of the logic of the gift can enhance peacebuilding.

Having exemplified that gift-giving can contribute to peacebuilding in various ways, attention will now turn to how it can also improve practice in the area.

## **7.5 Practical Implications of the Logic of the Gift in Peacebuilding Efforts**

When applied to peacebuilding activities, the logic of the gift can have wider practical implications across multiple aspects of life, such as cultural, political, religious, and social spheres. This section outlines these implications according to themes, such as philanthropic activities, addressing corruption, the practice of *jus ante bellum*, community bond and social cohesion, the practice of nonviolence, and Care for our common home. Others are the practice of justice, prayer, the practice of reconciliation, volunteer and civic engagement, the practice of legitimate self-defence, and finally, the promotion of human dignity. Conscious of the motivation that began this research, particular regard will be given to the Nigerian context.

### **7.5.1 Philanthropic Activities**

The lack of educational opportunities and the loss of micro and macro businesses are major causes of poverty and violence in many societies, such as Nigeria. The practice of gift-giving can help in this situation. In other words, philanthropic activity is an aspect of the logic of the gift and can help businesses alleviate poverty and even address environmental concerns. The logic of the gift encourages philanthropic activity because it is about unconditional generosity. It calls to wealthy and generous individuals to donate or help many victims of poverty and less privileged students continue their education. These gestures promote human dignity and support peacebuilding efforts by fulfilling basic needs since philanthropists are motivated only by the logic of the gift – gift-giving that does not insist on a reward or reimbursement. Also, their gesture can promote peacebuilding because it performs the role of provider by indirectly educating young people, creating jobs and economic opportunities, and enhancing

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<sup>69</sup> Power, *Catholic Social Teaching and Theologies of Peace in Northern Ireland*, 105.

sustainability. Additionally, they offer support that potentially helps in preventing conflict caused by scarcity of resources and illiteracy.

The practical work of this category of people could include one, granting scholarships and access to education amongst the less-privileged members of Nigerian society without seeking favour or social status; two, supporting artisans and businesses to achieve economic stability and young people to employ themselves; three, encouraging gift items sourced in Nigeria by patronising local investors, ensuring that job opportunities align with cultural preferences and are available to people; and four, contributing money towards the publication of peace messages and other messages that can inform the attacked of their duty and responsibility in the area and drive aggressors away. To this end, leadership in Nigeria could develop programmes and celebrations that could foster acts of philanthropy, such as cultural and sports festivals.

At the same time, despite contributing towards creating economic opportunities, philanthropists must guard their attitude against controlling and imposing their ideas and cultures on their receivers and beneficiaries. The one argument about the benefit of these practices of Benedict's logic of the gift is that if generous people invest in poverty, education, and businesses, there could be a massive reduction in poverty and joblessness. What this means is that people will be empowered and their well-being improved.

### **7.5.2 Addressing Corruption**

This thesis has demonstrated how corruption damages trust and causes violence. It can generate more issues, including economic crisis, underdevelopment, doubts about economic policies, and loss of hope in the public towards leaders and government officials. In corrupt societies like Nigeria, despite policies and codes of conduct for officials, people languish in poverty, enmity and hostility heightened, and conflict is commonplace. Integrating Benedict's logic of the gift into such a society can contribute to peacebuilding because it is contrary to corruption. This can be done by establishing economic and other policies that build trust and hope in the public. The practice can be carried out in many ways. Firstly, leaders must be transparent by presenting actual income and gifts received and between expenses and gifts given. Secondly, there should be checks and balances, headed by elected officials, for every contract or financial activity. This can be done when government officials and individuals who are directly involved in monetary and physical policies sacrifice sufficient time without expecting immediate or future rewards to review and evaluate policies and awarded contracts regularly and also regularly work towards receiving feedback from those who are directly connected to policies,

contracts and other financial transactions. Additionally, these ministries can perform practical giving by organising workshops for leaders, citizens, and students in colleges on the difference between corruption and gift-giving.

### **7.5.3 Practice of *Jus ante Bellum***

This aspect of just war refers to ways of preventing or eradicating causes of violence. In Nigerian society, major causes of violence include economic inequality, illiteracy, religious fanaticism, poverty, ecological degradation, and all kinds of injustice.<sup>70</sup> The thesis points out that respect for the natural environment, education, dialogue and economic development pre-empt violence. Economic interventions, dialogue, conventions, and publications on peacebuilding have been identified as ways of preventing violence in Nigeria.<sup>71</sup> However, do they stimulate commitments? Here, Benedict's logic of the gift can offer something because it encourages reciprocity-in-dialogue, philanthropic and voluntary activities. These practical commitments can potentially eradicate poverty, illiteracy, and environmental sustainability. If the practice of *jus ante bellum* must be sustained, there is a need to be generous toward low-income people, education programmes, and economic interventions. Beneficiaries of such activities must be proactive and not cross their hands in waiting to receive. In other words, they must be committed to fighting poverty and responsible towards the environment by performing simple actions like picking waste material and planting trees. The government must stop being lopsided. There is a need for government officials to dedicate sufficient time to visit, support, and engage people in areas or regions prone to conflict. Government policies must stop favouring a particular set of people and businesses. It must ensure economic equality. It can make gift-giving a public discourse as well as a theological one. Accordingly, its goal is to encourage people to become co-givers. These practices can potentially serve as preventive measures against violence.

### **7.5.4 Community Bond and Social Cohesion**

Benedict's logic of the gift can benefit a society that is highly polarised across religious and ethnic backgrounds. For instance, the case of Fulani herders and farmers, Christians and Muslim communities in Southern Kaduna in Northern Nigeria, as pointed out in the general introduction of the thesis. Benedict's logic of the gift can foster a sense of unity and shared

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<sup>70</sup> Bala, *Self Defence: Permissibility and Legitimacy*, 253.

<sup>71</sup> Bala, *Self Defence: Permissibility and Legitimacy*, 253.

identity within these communities and ethnic groups because its nature is a communal bond, social solidarity, cooperation, fraternity, and, above all, it is unconditional love. Prioritising the logic of the gift by way of love and support that does not seek reward, a conflict-prone society can become resilient in the face of challenges such as systemic injustice. For instance, giving and receiving without expecting present and future rewards can foster a sense of togetherness and strengthen a network of reciprocity among community members. Peacebuilders desire community bonds and reciprocity. These cannot come to us by accident. People need to make sacrifices. The logic of the gift, based on the spirit of love and fraternity, would recognise the need to sacrifice to restore community bonding and reject division. Such a sacrifice will not only begin to reverse togetherness but could potentially reduce social attitudes towards victims of injustice, marginalisation, and even perceived and real enemies.

#### **7.5.5 The Practice of Nonviolence**

Gift-giving can also impact the practice of nonviolence in multiple ways. It has earlier been outlined that the Catholic Church, the already mentioned William Ury, including the famous promoters of nonviolence, Gandhi and Luther King Jr., have always prioritised international cooperation, development, and solidarity. Benedict's logic of the gift, from the perspective of encounters, will likely build a healthier community and enhance the practice of nonviolence. One practical way of doing this is by organising festivals and other celebrations that open opportunities for sharing love and giving gifts, leading to encounters and dialogue. Examples of such festivals in Nigeria include Yam and Fish festivals, sports and religious fiestas, and Christmas and Sallah celebrations (Eid-El-Kabir). Giving and receiving during such periods and festivities can shift people's attention from using force and competition to domestic encounters and cooperation, enhancing trust, dialogue, and reciprocity. Thus, gift-giving should be added to and emphasised at every stage of nonviolent exercise and practice, including negotiation and reconciliation. Other spiritual ways of practising gift-giving could be making unconditional sacrifices to love and protect the other.

#### **7.5.6 Care for our Common Home**

The Catholic Social Teaching invites everyone to care for our common home for the general good of humanity and the well-being of individuals. Care for the environment requires a lifestyle change. This lifestyle change toward the environment and economic activities is a sacrifice that deserves consideration. Winright expresses confidence in this lifestyle when he reflects on *Laudato Si* and supports his integral peacebuilding: "As peacemakers, Christians

should not contribute to the destruction of others, whether people or planet, but should be protective keepers of our kin – both human and non-human.”<sup>72</sup> This thesis agrees with Winright's proposal for caring for our common home, which suggests using Benedict's logic of the gift in peacebuilding efforts. Those who resist violence are willing to sacrifice, love, and protect others, including the environment, without expecting present or future rewards from people. They can make unconditional sacrifices by regularly planting trees and using electric cars or motorcycles. Those who produce batteries for electric vehicles and bikes must try to avoid damaging the environment.

### **7.5.7 The Practice of Justice**

The link between the concept of justice and gift-giving can shed light on the practical implications of gift-giving and peacebuilding for Nigerian society. It has been stated that corruption is a major contributor to violence in countries like Nigeria. It significantly impacts the development and social fabric of the Country. At the same time, many cultures, as pointed out in the general introduction and chapter one of this thesis, have a rich understanding of gift-giving, but it is largely mixed up with bribery, rivalry, competition, and corruption. There is a need to establish anti-bribery laws if Nigeria and other countries believe that justice is peace. When people practice gift-giving by granting others their dues, their sense of encounters, dialogue, and openness towards others could improve. This practice could promote social cohesion and peace by drawing a line between a bribe or the gift that induces the recipient to be partial and the one that builds trust. It can help to safeguard anti-bribery laws and ethical norms from contamination, allowing gift-giving to assume the function of justice, which is creating equality, fairness, social harmony, and peace.

In addition to granting people their due, peacebuilders could organise biannual or annual retreats for government officials and those in public and religious offices to discuss the close link between justice and gift-giving and the difference between bribe and gift-giving. Also, those in the education system may encourage schools and colleges to organise debates and round table discussions on the difference between corruption and gift-giving in the judiciary and public office. This will require sacrificing time, resources, and energy to engage those in the ministry of education and justice. Principals, classroom teachers, judges, and those working in such ministries must guard themselves against corruption that bears the face of a

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<sup>72</sup> Tobias Winright, “Peace on Earth, Peace with Earth: *Laudato Si* and Integral Peacebuilding,” in *All Creation is Connected: Voices in Response to Pope Francis's Encyclical on Ecology*, ed., Daniel R. DiLeo (Winona: Anselm Academic, 2018), 197.

gift. These institutions and those who work there can practice gift-giving from the point of view of unconditional sacrifice. That is, sacrificing time to deliver judgment and convict aggressors on time or ensuring that government officials, pupils and students realise the value of linking justice with gift-giving and separating corruption from gift-giving.

#### **7.5.8 Prayer**

Both Christians and Muslims in Nigeria know the role of prayers in peacebuilding efforts. They also believe that peace has an eschatological dimension. They pray for this peace to come regularly. For instance, the psalmist exclaims: Unless the Lord builds the house, those who build it labour in vain (Psalm 127: 1). In Catholic Social Teaching, prayer is identified as a tool for peacebuilding. This tradition and the southern Kaduna people emphasise the significance of prayers, especially for those who perpetrate evil and threaten human dignity to change and convert; they pray for the survival of innocent citizens or the attacked and for the success of those who volunteer to stand against aggressors. This voluntary work is widely interpreted as faith in action. Benedict's logic of the gift can improve this practice since it is not just an act of faith in action but also intrinsic to prayer. People need to pray and act amid the pending danger of any attacks.

#### **7.5.9 The Practice of Reconciliation**

Most violent activities have historical hatred and animosity. In Nigeria, for instance, it appears that a significant number of people are not ready to forgive since violent attacks are ongoing despite the ongoing dialogue and workshops on reconciliation and peace. Generations upon generations continue to kill innocent lives. Sometimes, dialogue amongst religions and cultures seems to be one-sided. Muslims and Christians tend to distrust each other. The same scenario applies to farmers and Fulani herders in the country, as shown in the general introduction of this thesis. Educating Nigerians, especially young generations, about the cultural importance of giving and receiving gifts, reciprocity-in-dialogue, truth-telling and other features of the gift can be helpful. For instance, Benedict's concept of the gift is also reconciliation, goodwill, and forgiveness. Societies and regions that are prone to conflict can explore these concepts during dialogue, negotiations, or community gatherings. Religious leaders in violent societies must invoke their authority, the Bible and Quaran in the case of Christians and Muslims, respectively, to highlight the value of Benedict's logic of the gift.

### **7.5.10 Volunteer and Civic Engagement**

The theory of Basic Human Needs, especially the Third Side Theory, encourages volunteering work. It invites people to carry out various functions to prevent, contain, and resolve violence. They are to volunteer as providers, teachers, healers and so forth. Catholic Social Teaching also encourages international communities and individuals to carry out such voluntary acts as they translate the message of Christ into temporal order. This engagement can be done by making a heroic stand against aggressors, such as being a member of the vigilante group, publishing news and messages of peace, performing roles such as the ones outlined by Ury, and writing and sharing messages that can inform attackers of their responsibility and scare aggressors. In addition to the work performed by NGOs in conjunction with other peacebuilding institutions, the Nigerian Catholic Church has always encouraged voluntary activities through its commission – namely, *Justice, Development, and Peace Commission* – as it responds to violence and conflict. Such an effort should be sustained. Invoking Benedict’s logic of the gift during workshops and in the writing of CBCN communiques could help. Other practical activities include inspiring Nigerian people to engage in voluntarism by government officials and religious leaders. This could be done by immortalising and praising past and well-known philanthropists, including outlining incentives for those who carry out such services. Finally, government and religious leaders could organise regular discussions and debates on the values of worldly and spiritual rewards accompanying voluntary work. Above all, they should emphasise the place of eschatological rewards of voluntary work in the minds and hearts of their adherents.

### **7.5.11 Practice of Legitimate Self-defence**

In a volatile society like Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, legitimate armed self-defence is necessary. In doing so, the communities and government need an essential arrangement. It will include collaboration between communities in repelling aggressors, identifying possible areas where the aggressor could exploit, keeping an eye on those areas, and making sacrifices by some members to stay awake and alert the community of impending danger as other members are asleep. The discussion on Basic Human Needs Theory, particularly the ten roles of the Third Side, reveals the importance of such activity. The logic of the gift calls for sacrifice that can potentially improve such practice since it stimulates voluntary activities.

Furthermore, while writing on the practice of legitimate armed defence in Nigeria, Benjamin Bala reports that the use of “whistles, alarm bells, alarm doors, alarm padlocks,

C.C.T.V Cameras, surveillance, balloons etc. are recommended as vital instruments for legitimate self-defence.”<sup>73</sup> The value of Benedict’s logic of the gift, from the perspective of sacrifice and generosity, can improve practice in this area because it invites companies and businesses to be generous with their profit. This gracious act and sacrifice can contribute to purchasing CCTV cameras, alarm doors and bells for communities in danger of pending attacks.

### **7.5.12 Promotion of Human Dignity**

The thesis reveals that human dignity is central to the Catholic Social Teaching vision of peacebuilding. This thesis demonstrates that peacebuilding is carrying out tasks that promote human dignity and well-being, and it also links up the concept of the gift to human dignity and, invariably, peacebuilding. Also, the discussion on the Basic Human Needs Theory of Peace shows that the fulfilment of basic needs constitutes the dignity of the human person. The dissertation points out that gift-giving functions mainly in promoting human dignity. It means that the horizon of givenness, which is love for the other, constitutes human dignity.

From the viewpoint of financial aid, speaking out for the marginalised and victims of injustice and war, Benedict’s gift logic can improve practices that promote human dignity. For instance, it is about speaking out for the voiceless and the marginalised; it is a generosity that does not seek future rewards. This thesis shows that generosity stimulates economic growth, encourages respect for the environment, and reduces poverty. Therefore, there is a need for people in privileged positions to speak up for the marginalised and support the weak and victims of injustice, including the natural environment. Schools and universities need to integrate the gift concept into Nigerian schools and university courses and programmes. Churches, Mosques, and public institutions can follow suit by coordinating activities that stimulate unconditional gift-giving, such as food sharing and pleasantries during festive periods. People, groups, associations, and citizens who promote and practice gift-giving should be praised.

By valuing Benedict’s logic of the gift, society can demonstrate its commitment to human dignity. This can be done by conducting workshops and seminars on the positive impact of the gift, requiring feedback and evaluating its impact on society. The central focus will be fostering feelings of the worth of human beings and connection among individuals. This requires that Nigerians, as government officials and as individuals, do more to tackle activities

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<sup>73</sup> Benjamin Bala, *Self Defence: Permissibility and Legitimacy* (Ibadan: St. Paul Publications, 2020), 252.



that threaten human dignity, such as the injustice of homelessness and the distribution of natural resources like crude oil.

More so, valuing the connection between Benedict's logic of the gift and human dignity requires Nigerian society to consider the human person's social and transcendent dimensions in its laws and code of conduct for officials and social engagement. This activity demands that generosity improve job opportunities, living conditions, housing, and better access to healthcare and education for less privileged people and communities in the country rather than neo-imperialism. More so, local communities can create a strong network of reciprocity, which they can fall back on in the event of any threat to human dignity, such as the denial of people's pension, the lack of a social welfare scheme, the impact of injustice and corruption. These activities are central features of Benedict's logic of the gift. In most cases, they account for the flourishing of humans and peace.

Understanding Benedict's logic of the gift and its correlation with teachings on peacebuilding is only a step towards peacebuilding efforts. Integrating it into the general theory and practice of peacebuilding can add significant value in the area because of its connection and value to topics involving peacebuilding efforts.

## **7.5 Conclusion**

David Hollenbach, in an article entitled "*Caritas in Veritate: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice*," reflects on Benedict's logic of the gift, justice, development and peace in Africa, the continent that motivated the writing of this thesis. He has a significant concern that cuts to the heart of this thesis. He writes:

What is needed in these countries is not more gift-giving, but an increase of efficiency, accountability and the rule of law. Moving in that direction will require an approach based on love as equal regard and reciprocity, those forms of love that require and come to expression when norms of justice shape social, economic, and political institutions.<sup>74</sup>

Others also criticise gift-giving for not having enough capacity to influence social development, equality, co-existence, and peacebuilding.

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<sup>74</sup> See David Hollenbach, "*Caritas in Veritate: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice*," *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 8, no. 1 (2011), 178. David Hollenbach added: "Aid provided purely as gift risks reinforcing patterns of governance that can further entrench poverty rather than helping to overcome it." See Hollenbach, "*Caritas in Veritate: The Meaning of Love and Urgent Challenges of Justice*," *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 8, no. 1 (2011), 177.

Acknowledging some of these criticisms, it is the contention of this chapter and thesis that Benedict's logic of the gift moves far more than just giving material goods. It can also take account of the concerns mentioned by Hollenbach, such as accountability, transparency, reciprocity, solidarity, equality, fraternal love that suggests Jesus' teaching on peace, and forms of justice that shape economic laws and political intuitions. It could be said that Benedict provides a positive interpretation of the gift.<sup>75</sup> This vision of the gift is best understood when Benedict's works on the gift are considered holistically.

This chapter revealed that Benedict's logic of the gift facilitates a multi-layered reading that can be fundamental to peacebuilding, combining Catholic morality and spirituality, encouraging dialogue, faith and action or responsibility, providing space for theological discourse, especially in Catholic Social Teaching and practice, offering a criterion for evaluation of activism and social policy, and urging a radical commitment to the vocation and practice of peacebuilding.

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<sup>75</sup> For more information on the distinction between positive and negative interpretations of the gift, which is at the heart of the thesis argument, see Chapter 1, Section 1.6.

## GENERAL CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As stated in the General Introduction, the challenge of peacebuilding facing the Catholic Church and the world, particularly in Africa and Southern Kaduna, Nigeria, remains imperative. The initial insight motivating the research was that gift-giving could be an important contribution to this challenge because it is linked to the drivers of peacebuilding, such as human dignity, economic development, respect for the environment, solidarity and other principles of Catholic Social Teaching. The central question addressed in this thesis was: how may Benedict's logic of the gift – or what he calls the principle of gratuitousness in his contribution to Catholic Social Teaching – provide a resource for models of peacebuilding? Outlined in seven chapters, the thesis concluded that Benedict's logic of the gift is a moral framework of encounter that can offer theologically informed means to consider models of peacebuilding. It is a spirituality, faith in action, active participation, forgiveness, generosity, sacrifice, respect, and the love of Christ (that is, selfless sacrifice). It is evident in other concepts and practices of peacebuilding because it is in tandem with the principles of Catholic Social Teaching, Just War Theory, pacifism, social justice, and pastoral accompaniment.

Without replacing all these peacebuilding models, the gift's logic offers new perspectives, different priorities, fresh motivation, and active engagement. It can contribute to both conceptual and practical discussions on peacebuilding. This is because it is present in the conversation on Catholic peacebuilding, including promoters of just peacemaking of Glen Stassen and others, the nonviolent principles of Martin Luther King Jr., the integral peacebuilding of Winright, and the integral justpeace of Power and Hrynkow. Their writings involve forgiveness, repentance, fraternal love, eschatological peace, Christian hope, and support for nonviolent action. Therefore, this thesis accepts their proposals and adds a dimension, proposing that the mention of Benedict's logic of the gift or the principle of

gratuitousness should be explicitly made since it is a dynamic for forgiveness, advocacy and activism, participation, human dignity, love, and encounter with the other.

Given this conclusion, the central research hypothesis is maintained: Benedict's logic of the gift is a moral framework of encounter that offers theologically informed means to consider models of peacebuilding, both within the tradition of Catholic Social Teaching and in other models such as Basic Human Needs's theory of peace.

This thesis is, therefore, humbly offered as a contribution to the ongoing reflection and praxis of peacebuilding in a world too often marked by human misery. Its contribution is that the logic of the gift is not a substitute for the existing models and concepts of peacebuilding but a supplement and fundamental to them. It is already present in them and must be recognised, mentioned explicitly, and put into practice in the area. Consequently, efforts to consistently and explicitly mention, integrate, and put into practice the logic of the gift in peacebuilding are urgent.

To that end, the recommendations may be summarised under two headings: first, the principle of gratuitousness needs to be rehabilitated in theological discussions in Catholic Social Teaching, especially on peacebuilding; second, models and praxis of peacebuilding should take account of the power of the logic of the gift. In no particular order, the thesis offers the following broad recommendations:

### **Recognition and Inclusion of Logic of the Gift in Peacebuilding Discussions**

The logic of the gift is nuanced and often ambiguous, consisting of positive and negative interpretations and functions. It can help identify reasons for social conflict as well as propose ways for social cohesion. It should then be central to reflections on peacebuilding. Benedict's logic of the gift is positive and so assists peacebuilders and victims of violence, deprivations, and injustice. It is also fundamental to further reflection on peacebuilding in Catholic social teaching and can be offered as a resource for learning other models, such as the Basic Human Needs Theory.

### **Logic of the Gift as Foundational to Peacebuilding**

The study shows that every act of justice is preceded by gift-giving. For instance, justice means granting people their due. In this context, the gift adjudicates true justice and can be a metaphysic or theological basis for peacebuilding. Those who agree that justice, economic development, and ecological sensitivity are drivers of peace can look at Benedict's logic of the gift because of its connection to the economy, justice, and climate change.

### **Logic of the Gift as Supplement to Peacebuilding Efforts**

The thesis highlighted how Catholic Social Teaching and Basic Human Needs agree that peacebuilding efforts are based on understanding human reality, including solidarity, development, well-being, et cetera. It has shown that Benedict's logic of the gift provides a transcendental or ontological understanding of this reality. Put differently, through the praxis of the principle of gratuitousness, one can understand human reality from a transcendent perspective. There is a need to integrate the gift into efforts to understand human realities. Moreover, the laws, policies and actions of peacebuilding efforts require trust. The logic of the gift, through its promotion of truth in love, sincerity, and accountability, can facilitate trust. Benedict's logic of the gift can be a supplement enhancing trust that facilitates or drives sincerity and accountability.

### **Logic of the Gift as Commitment to Human Dignity**

This work holds that the human person is the primary focus in the analysis of gift-giving and peacebuilding. Catholic Social Teaching and Basic Human Needs Theory pay attention to the human person and their basic needs while discussing peacebuilding. If such a discussion is to have real relevance, the proper and integral understanding of the person is required. Benedict's logic of the gift is an authentic encounter that opens possibilities for such an understanding of the person, holding that the human person consists of their dignity and relationships with God, other humans, and non-human creatures. It points out that the person is made for the gift. Stemming from that, institutions, societies, and individuals working for peace can deploy Benedict's logic of the gift since it offers an integral view of the human person and is a commitment to human dignity.

### **The Logic of the Gift: A Guide for Understanding the Teaching of Christ on Peace**

The work argues that active responsibility is the appropriate response to the experience, practice, and realisation of giftedness. The offer of peace by Jesus – “my peace I give you” (John 14:27) – is at stake. It is not offered so that the disciples may passively receive without responsibility. Rather, it reinforces the mission to work for peace. Benedict's logic of the gift encourages active involvement that bears moral imperative and conscience building. The logic of the gift means that people participate in the giving of Jesus when he says, “My peace I give you”, especially amidst impending violence, injustice, and all kinds of deprivations. Benedict's logic of the gift needs to be embraced for proper appropriation of the peace of Christ.

## **Logic of the Gift: A Contribution to Eschatological Peace**

There is an eschatological perspective to peacebuilding. Human beings will always live in an ambiguous and violent world. Violence and conflict will remain an issue in human society. However, as different models of peacebuilding suggest, human efforts can be made to mitigate the effects of violence, providing humans with a glimpse of eternal peace. Benedict's logic of the gift is a 'human effort'. It brings people together through authentic encounters to carry out human tasks since it speaks of a 'belief and action' and service of others and the whole community. This notion of human effort means transmitting God's message through temporal, social, and political order, contributing towards achieving earthly and eschatological peace. Christian faithful and those who believe in Christian values of faith and action and the reality of eschatological peace need to look into Benedict's logic of the gift.

## **The Logic of the Gift and Practical Implications**

The following practical recommendations could serve as starting points for an intense conversation around gift-giving and peacebuilding efforts in the future. Firstly, cultivate a spirit of unconditional gift-giving, in which peacebuilding efforts go beyond national and international borders to serve local areas marked by poverty and illiteracy. Secondly, interdisciplinary groups that focus on what this thesis calls the positive functions of the gift and peacebuilding in Catholic social teaching should be created. These groups should invite the general people to be part of them. Thirdly, awareness of the value of the gift and peacebuilding should be promoted and sustained. Schools, Universities and other institutions where people congregate should encourage and promote study on the link between gift-giving, justice, and peacebuilding. Fourthly, there is a need to analyse local, social, and cultural realities and challenges around gift-giving. Fifth, advocacy groups should be created to strive to integrate gift-giving in schools and other public institutions. Sixth and finally, the government and those who believe in gift-giving should listen to the experience of locals and work on feedback.

## **The Thesis and Future Outcome**

The study is offered as a contribution to peacebuilding, especially to researchers and practitioners, to develop proposals and strategies for a just and authentic ministry that can potentially transform lives and communities. It believes that political and economic organisations, social and Church institutions, individuals, and communities can benefit from Benedict's logic of the gift. It is also offered to future Catholic theological reflection by opening

potential routes for further study. For instance, how may the principle of gratuitousness be applied to other areas? Are there points of comparative analyses to be identified and unpacked? Most importantly, are there further concrete applications to peacebuilding that the logic of the gift can inspire?

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