

THE FORMATION OF CONSCIENCE IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION

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Abstract

Conscience is the 'voice of God' that demands obedience. It inspires us with the ways of the Lord, revealing the "Will of God" in a here and now situation. Most unfortunately, this 'voice of God' is often not heard, disobeyed and tampered to echo the voices of the forces of the world. Globalization, a context in which we are living, is a most influencing force with its negative ideologies of 'profit alone' that permeates into all walks of human life, orientation and moral decision. Craving for economic advantages, political power and worldly pleasures – the 'voice of God' go faint. While making moral decisions, it is the voice of the former than the latter which gets priority, often leading to violence in various forms. To counter this, one has to unlearn what is wrongly learnt to relearn the right life principles according to the 'voice of God.' This article is an effort to point out some of these areas which are to be unlearned and also shows life principles that are to be inculcated in one's life in order that the conscience is formed well, adheres to the voice of God sincerely.

Keywords: Conscience, Cross, Erroneous Conscience, Formation of Conscience, Globalization, Solidarity, Subsidiarity, Voice of God

Introduction

Conscience is the 'voice of God,' 'the divine in the person' as Vatican II calls it (GS, 16). While on the one hand, it is defined as the 'voice of God,' on the other hand it also points out that *it can* err. It reads, "Conscience frequently errs from invincible ignorance without

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losing its dignity." Being under the realm of 'invincible ignorance,' the human person may not be culpable of his/her act. Yet "the same cannot be said for a person who cares but little for truth and goodness, or for a conscience which by degrees grows practically sightless as a result of habitual sin" (GS, 16).

This explains:

- i. that as a 'voice of God' Conscience has an immediate access to universal moral principles;
- ii. yet when interpreting those principles while making moral decisions at a here and now situation, a person can make a misjudgement influenced by various factors (factors like family, culture, one's philosophy of life, religion, emotions, environment and the like). "Human moral action is conditioned by the social, familial and personal experiences that mould and give structure to the values a person accepts as his or her own";¹
- iii. that every individual therefore has to diligently take efforts to make sure that one's own conscience is formed well while making judgements and decisions using its practical reasoning.

The Formation of conscience can have two parts, (i) initial formation (which begins from childhood); (ii) corrective formation (Here the person realizes that over the years his/her conscience has been under the influence of various factors (especially those that are negative and destructive), 'vincibly' or 'invincibly'. Therefore, the conscience makes erroneous judgement/decisions, and that it needs to be corrected to what is right). It is a kind of a movement from what is not-correct to what is right, from being erroneous to being correct.

In this paper we will discuss only on the second part of the formation, i.e., corrective formation, especially from the context of (economic) globalization which is one of the major (negatively) influencing factors when it comes to the matters of judgements/decisions by conscience.

1. The Emergency Call for Corrective Formation of Conscience in the Context of Globalization

Globalization has made the world a 'village'. The main features of globalization are: it is transnational, multinational, that which cuts

¹Donald W. Wuerl, "The Bishop, Conscience and Moral Teaching," in *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation: Proceedings of the Tenth Bishops' Workshop Dallas, Texas*, Russell E. Smith, ed., Connecticut: The Pope John Center, 1991, 123-139, 129.

across any geographic, political and cultural barriers. Pope Benedict XVI recognizes globalization as a process, in which the “humanity itself is becoming increasingly interconnected; it is made up of individuals and peoples to whom this (globalizations process) should offer benefits and development. The breaking-down of borders is not simply a material fact: it is also a cultural event both in its causes and its effects” (*Caritas in Veritate* [CV], 42). The benefits of globalization are undeniable, and they are many: the free flow of money, materials and products have made the life of the people even those from the “under developed countries” a better one, which otherwise would have not been so. Joseph E. Stiglitz who was the World Bank Chief Economist (between the year 1997-2000) gives his opinion on the positive side of globalization thus, “I believe that globalization-the removal of barriers of free trade and the closer integration of national economies- can be a force for good and that it has the potential to enrich everyone in the world, particularly the poor.”²

While the word ‘globalization’ seems generic and gives a positive connotation, it actually refers only to the economic realm and is therefore mere profit oriented. It is in this particular view that I refer to ‘globalization’ in this paper. It involves trade, business and uncontrolled hunger for profit. Liberalization and privatization which are considered to be wings of globalization sustain this hunger for profit over moral norms and ethics in business.

Liberalism in its economic-industrial philosophy proposes an almost totally unfettered autonomy of the economic system, with free enterprise, particularly in unhampered trade and exchange. It rejects any and every far-sighted planning on the part of higher economic or industrial authority or of the state. In fact, it even repudiates the imposition of any unchanging moral standards. Characteristic of the spirit of *liberalistic capitalism* is its refusal to recognize any social problem as a moral problem.³

➤ First of all the negative results of globalization is, the widening gap between the rich and the poor. When globalization projects itself to be the effective means to connect people, resources and products, why then is the widening of the gap between the rich and the poor? Because it is solely oriented towards the profit of the investor.

²Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, ix.

³Bernard Häring, *The Law of Christ: Moral Theology for Priests and Laity Vol. III: Special Moral Theology: Man's Assent to the All-Embracing Majesty of God's Love*, Edwin G. Kaiser, trans., Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1977, 515.

Therefore, immoral ways and means are promoted to assure a fat profit. "The competition that is promoted by the free market economy is unfair since a tiny minority has a 'head-share' in other words; globalization not only perpetuates the gap between the rich and the poor but enlarges it."⁴ So what is more disgusting is that the alarming rise of the number of poor and the way they are neglected and pushed to the peripheries. The mind-set that is revealed here is: might is right and the 'don't care attitude.'

➤ Secondly, Globalization promotes the amassing of wealth and profit in an aggressive manner. While, profit can be a driving force for one's involvement in investment of money in business, an acute concentration on making profit brings with it some ethical problems. On the altar of business, the well-being of humanity or *bene commune* is sacrificed. In his Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI points out how, "once profit becomes the exclusive goal, if it is produced by improper means and without the common good as its ultimate end, it risks destroying wealth and creating poverty" (CV, 21). This is one of the major reasons why globalization has turned out to be an unjust/unethical economic system.

➤ Thirdly, it has created a consumerist society in which the materials possessed make the quality of life: the more one buys, the better person he/she is. Globalized market system makes it sure that we remain ever consumers⁵. This gives rise to, 'use and throw' or 'throw away culture' (*Laudato Sí* [LS], 22) leading to 'culture of death' (*Evangelium Vitae* [EV], 28). Pope Francis points out in *Laudato Sí* that what we have done to our 'common home' is only the reflection of our wounded-ness by sin (cfr. LS, 2).

These are some of the evil effects of Globalization that have already influenced our mind and have created life principles that are variant to the Gospel values (moral values), therefore they are very harmful to human society. It affects the human person both as an individual

⁴Vimal Tirimanna, "Moral Theological Implications of Globalization from a Third World Perspective," *Vidyajyothi* 65 (2001) 285-300, 292.

⁵Pope John Paul II in his Social Encyclical, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* describes how our society is made a consumerist society leading to 'throwing-away' culture: "This super-development, which consists in an excessive availability of every kind of material goods for the benefit of certain social groups, easily makes people slaves of 'possession' and of immediate gratification, with no other horizon than the multiplication or continual replacement of the things already owned with others still better. This is the so-called civilization of 'consumption' or 'consumerism,' which involves so much 'throwing-away' and 'waste'" (SRS, 28).

and as a society not only in areas of business but in all the areas of human context. Some of the prevalent principles in the context of globalization are: might is right; profit is the goal; cut-throat completion as a business strategy; liabilities and responsibilities in life are to be avoided as much as possible; one can use and exploit the privileges as much as possible; individual 'will' and 'freedom' is the ultimate authority; 'common good' has to be catered to if and only if it is in some way profitable; 'the other person' need not be my neighbour and therefore I don't (should not) look into his/her needs and plights which is waste of time.

Now, therefore when a person is placed at a situation of making a moral decision, these principles play a vital role. And when one makes a decision in line with these principles, the result is sure to be something evil and destructive, not only to the individual but also to his/her family, to his/her neighbours, and to his/her society at large.

This evokes, therefore an emergency call for corrective formation of conscience in the context of Globalization. In the world of globalization, where business and profit are given more importance than morality and righteousness, we need to consider some of the necessary ethical movements in formation of one's conscience from incorrect to correct.

2. Process of Corrective Formation of Conscience

2.1. From Erroneous Conscience to Right Moral Conscience: "Being Creative and Responsible Persons"

Being creative does not mean pursuing one's whims and fancies; being creative is about one striving to be whole and integrated: "We can be responsible and creative only to the extent of our wholeness, our inner integrity, the integration of all our energies. (It is) an artistic design that shines through the person's whole being."⁶ We will consider now how the movement from erroneous conscience to right moral conscience can be carried out by persons being creative and responsible at the same time.

Due to social, cultural and individual limitations it is generally accepted that conscience can err in its judgement. Yet the moral precepts are so proximate that they can be arrived at 'with but slight reflection,' because the truth is written in our hearts (Jer 31:33; Rom 2:12-16). There is no excuse then to continue to lead a life according

⁶Bernard Häring, *Free and Faithful in Christ: Moral Theology for Clergy and Laity*, Vol 1 *General Moral Theology*, New York: The Seabury Press, 1978, 87.

to an erroneous conscience, because it is one's duty to always seek the truth and overcome one's defects. "If one's conscience errs because of one's complacency, prejudice, rashness, or self-centeredness, one will be in the wrong whether one rejects or follows its dictates."⁷

This means that a person cannot exempt himself/herself from being held responsible for what he/she has done on the grounds of human limitations. While commenting on the erroneous conscience and the person trying to hide behind it, Pope Benedict XVI (as Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger) says that, "it appears as subjectivity's protective shell into which man can escape and there hide from reality."⁸ And therefore one has the important duty to "work to correct the errors of moral conscience" (CCC, 1793). So mere subjective convictions do not free a person from his/her moral responsibilities.

Ratzinger recognizes what could be called 'silencing the conscience' as a more dangerous attitude, because, "the silencing of conscience leads to the dehumanization of the world and to moral danger, if one does not work against it."⁹ So self-righteousness and subjective justification alone are not sufficient to discern the truth and act justly (cfr. Lk 18:9-14).

The right moral conscience should have the following attitudes to make one creative and responsible.

2.1.1. Searching for Truth

First of all, it is the duty of each person to make sincere efforts to centre one's conscience on truth. When conscience is deeply rooted in truth, then conscience can be creative and responsible.

The sincere intention to do what is good does not suffice. A man simply must have good information in order to make good mature moral judgments. Truth and moral rightness are not autonomous creations of human's mind and conscience. Rather the human person is subject to the authority of the truth and must conform to it.¹⁰

⁷Donald W. Wuerl, "The Bishop, Conscience and Moral Teaching," 131. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* teaches that if the person's ignorance arises from one's lack of interest to find out the truth, and when the conscience is blinded through the habit of committing sin, the person is culpable of the evil done in spite of one's ignorance. Cfr. CCC, 1791.

⁸Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Conscience and Truth," in *Crisis of Conscience*, John M. Haas, ed., New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996, 1-20, 4.

⁹Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, "Conscience and Truth," 7.

¹⁰Karl H. Peschke, *Christian Ethics – Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II: General Moral Theology* Vol.1, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2010, 205

The ultimate authority of moral principles is the authority of the truth; and truth in ethics is known only through the painstaking study of the facts.

2.1.2. Transcending one's Human Limitations

Secondly, over-emphasis on 'human-freedom and individuality' also provides grounds for a person's subjective and narrow understanding of life. In his address on the World Day of Peace (1991), Pope John Paul II said that, "To claim that one has a right to act according to conscience, but without at the same time acknowledging the duty to conform one's conscience to the truth and to the law which God himself has written on our hearts, in the end means nothing more than imposing one's limited personal opinion."¹¹ Being created in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26-27) and being redeemed and empowered by Jesus Christ (Rom 8:2), the person is enhanced with the ability to transcend one's limitations. With a sincere co-operation with God's grace a person can overcome one's own limitations (cfr. Col 3, the New Life in Christ).

2.1.3. Giving Importance to Welfare of the Community

Thirdly, the human person has to give importance in life not only to economic sphere, but due importance should be given to other areas as well — for example interpersonal relationships, common good and the like. A person's erroneous conscience has to turn from profit-oriented pleasure-seeking and individualistic mentality to an 'other-centred,' generous mentality that includes the development and benefit of one and all. In other words, the person has to learn to be creatively responsible in life. His/her creativity recognizes the person's individuality and ability, while responsibility recognizes the individual's duty towards others and society.

2.2. From Ignorant 'Slave Conscience' to Well-Informed Conscience: Fulfilling One's Obligations

In the context of globalization, conscience is tied down to material benefit (profit) and self-centred life (individualism). The passion for the self and desire for pleasure and comfort, enslaves the person to sensual pleasures and a materialistic fulfilment of life. Thus one's vision of life gets shattered. Instead, the vision has to get clearer, and life has to be better oriented towards development of all the aspects of one's life (physical, psychological, spiritual, moral and economic).

¹¹John Paul II, "If You Want Peace, Respect the Conscience of Every Person:" Message for the XXIV World Day of Peace, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1990, no. 3.

For this purpose, one has to be freed of one's enslavements: from being mere profit orientated and over-consumerist, and develop one's conscience towards 'global justice,' 'equality,' 'common good' and the like.

2.2.1. Duty towards Others

Firstly, as Thomas Aquinas affirms, one will act justly only when one fulfils the duty towards others justly. He says, "Indebtedness is most clearly present in matters of justice, since justice has reference to another person... In matters involving other people it is evident that he is under obligation to render to them whatever he owes them."¹²

What are the duties (rights of others) to be recognized and rendered? In his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (PT), Pope John XXIII affirms the rights people have as individuals and as group. "Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services" (PT, 11). Rights function reciprocally, as the mutual complementarities: people as individuals and as society have the right to claim these and others concerned have the duty to recognize and respect these rights.¹³ At the same time, one needs to respect and give these rights to one's neighbor. That is the duty of the individual person and society — to give to each other what is their due (right). But "to claim one's rights and ignore one's duties, or only half fulfil them, is like building a house with one hand and tearing it down with the other" (PT, 30). Rights are essentially coupled with duties.

This sense of justice is very important in the context of globalization. In 'ignorant slave conscience' the person can tend to look into mere rights of the self and not respect the others.' But in well informed conscience, "duties reinforce rights and call for their defense and promotion as a task to be undertaken in the service of the common good" (CV, 43).

2.2.2. Being Rooted in Social Justice

Secondly, in the context of globalization it is essential that a person is rooted in the concerns of social justice in order to have a 'well-formed conscience.' Anyone can be free in choosing his/her manner of acting, but always in accordance with social justice that keeps relationships right: namely, 'distributive justice' (rights received), 'contributive

¹²Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiæ: Virtues of Justice in the Human Community*, II-II, 101-122: q. 122.2, London: Black Friars, 1972.

¹³Cfr. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (CSDC), 156.

justice' (duties executed) and 'commutative/contractual justice (procedures followed).' The instruction of Pope John Paul II shows striving for global justice and common good as important responsibilities and duties of conscience. He says, "The globalized economy must be analysed in the light of the principles of social justice... and the requirements of the international common good."¹⁴ "The more we strive to secure a common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbours, the more effectively we love them" (CV, 7) says Pope Benedict XVI. Accordingly,

➤ **Commutative justice** seeks to ensure that human dignity and social responsibility are the basis of all economic transaction, contracts, and promises...

➤ **Contributive justice** recognizes the responsibility of individuals to the common good, which means that people have a duty to look out not only for their own welfare but also for that of others...

➤ **Distributive Justice** seeks the well-being of all members of a community, which means one's basic rights must be safeguarded and protected. It also puts special emphasis on protecting society's weaker members, advocating a greater solidarity with the poor.¹⁵

2.3. From Destructive Social Attitudes to Constructive Social Attitudes: Applying the 'Principle of Subsidiarity'

In the world of globalization, poverty, economic imbalances, marginalization of the poor and insensitiveness to others are some of the destructive social attitudes. One of the main reasons for these negative effects is that power is not decentralized, it rests with the few and that powerful few control the many powerless. In order that the person may have more and more of constructive social attitudes, the individual, the government and the corporate sectors have to realize the 'principle of subsidiarity' as the norm.

The 'principle of subsidiarity' means, "a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good" (*Centesimus Annus*, 48).

¹⁴John Paul II, *Ecclesia in America: Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation on the Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ: The Way to Conversion, Communion and Solidarity in America*, Vatican: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999, no. 55.

¹⁵Daniel G. Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice: Navigating the Path to Peace*, New York: Orbis Books, 2009, 100.

The principle of subsidiarity is one of the best working solutions to the crisis in the world where the poor and the powerless are neglected. "It is an efficient counterweight to the tendencies of centralization, to bureaucratization and depersonalization."¹⁶ In the pastoral letter on Catholic Social Teaching, *Economic Justice for All*, the United States Catholic Bishops write: "justice demands that social institutions be ordered in a way that guarantees all persons the ability to participate actively in the economic, political, and cultural life of society."¹⁷

Empowerment of people, especially those who are affected, will be a great means of achieving justice in society, "a corrective against the concentration of power and resources in the hands of privileged elite" (*Quadragesimo Anno*, 79). Accordingly, when power is de-centralized, people at the lower strata will also have been empowered to protect themselves from possible oppression by the more powerful organizations.

2.3.1. Empowering the Individual Person to be Self-Reliant

The empowerment of the individual person and the mobilization of the self-reliance of the poor is one of the genuine starting points to execute the principle of Subsidiarity. It makes each one a contributor to the betterment of the society. It is an efficient effort because "it issues from the concerned people themselves, that is to say from those whose dignity and existence are thoroughly affected by the negative effects of development, not in an abstract or statistical way but in a concrete way both individually and as a community."¹⁸ The principle of subsidiarity thus recognizes the individual person's dignity as always "capable of giving something to others" (CV, 57).

2.3.2. Respecting the Role and Contribution of the Local Civil Society

Society is made up of individuals, but still, it is an inter-dependent collective body.

As globalization puts more and more decisions into the hands of high-level political and economic leaders (of the developed nations), and more people (of the developing countries) feel left out of the economic, social,

¹⁶Theodor Herr as quoted in Karl H. Peschke, *Christian Ethics: Moral Theology in the light of Vatican II*, 562.

¹⁷United States Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy*, Washington: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1986, no. 78.

¹⁸Horst Sing, "Emerging Alternatives to Globalization and Transformative Action," in *Globalization and its Victims*, Michael Amaladoss, ed., Delhi: Vidyajyoti Education & Welfare Society/ISPCK, 1999, 194-205, 199-200.

and political forces that dominate their lives, the notion of involvement (participation) becomes increasingly important.¹⁹

The people in the Government have to make policies that move towards holistic development of its people. And that is possible if, and only if, the process of making policies is democratic and people of all walks of life are allowed to participate in the discerning of it. Participation is vital, because these are the policies of the rulers of the world that determine the mode of operation. And if they make rules and laws that favour only economic promotion, this is going to create further havoc. The principle of subsidiarity empowers all especially the marginalized to participate and contribute.

2.4. From Globalized Market-Centered Conscience to Globalized Human-Centered Conscience: Applying the 'Principle of Solidarity'

Globalization should put on more of a human face. "The greatest challenge is not just in the institutions themselves but in mind-sets: Caring about the environment, making sure the poor have a say in decisions that affect them, promoting democracy and fair trade are necessary if the potential benefits of globalization are to be achieved."²⁰ Basically, a concrete commitment to solidarity and charity is what required.

To combat crass profit oriented attitude, a change of orientation is needed — a change of heart from market-centered mentality to something broader, to something bigger, and greater and nobler. And that would be the principle of solidarity. "This concept of human solidarity is not a passive mental construct, born out of a 'vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes' of the people... Rather it is a 'virtue', evolving moral and social attitude that is born as the correlative response."²¹

2.4.1. Solidarity as a Virtue

Solidarity as a virtue is a "firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all" (*Solicitududo Rei Socialis* [SRS], 38). It is the determination that an individual or a society will look at itself from the broader perspective as belonging to a broader spectrum rather than mere subjective

¹⁹Daniel G. Groody, *Globalization, Spirituality, and Justice*, 114-115.

²⁰Joseph E. Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2003, 216.

²¹Raphael Karekatt, "Global Market Meltdown: A Moral Audit II," in *Vidyajyoti Journal of Theological Reflection*, 6, 73 (2009) 443-461, 449.

existence of the self, or of the society which one belongs to. This human-centered conscience helps combat those elements or mentalities that hinder holistic development, that are driven by “desire for profit and that thirst for power” (SRS, 38). In fact, the virtue of “Solidarity helps us to see the ‘other’ — whether a person, people or nation — not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our ‘neighbour,’ a ‘helper,’ to be made a sharer, on par with ourselves, in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God... Thus the exploitation, oppression and annihilation of others are excluded” (SRS, 39).

2.4.2. Solidarity as Essence of Humanity

In the words of Bernard Häring, “Solidarity is a part of the very essence of our humanity, of being created in the image of God, being loved by the Father of all, and being enabled by the Spirit to love all.”²² And Peschke recognizes that, “Without solidarity the social body disintegrates into individual groups and private interests. Justice, cohesion and social peace rest upon the solidarity of the members of the society.”²³ The Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace sees ‘solidarity’ as the

need to recognize in the composite ties that unite men and social groups among themselves, the space given to human freedom for common growth in which all share and in which they participate... It translates into the willingness to give oneself for the good of one’s neighbour, beyond any individual or particular interest (CSD, 194).

During his address to a group of Accountants on 14.11.2014, Pope Francis envisages the danger if life is carried out around ‘profit alone.’ He says,

When money becomes the end and the reason of every activity and initiative, the utilitarian optic and the savage logic of profit, which does not respect persons, prevails, with the resulting widespread fall of the values of solidarity and respect for the human person... We are called to take up the responsibility to work for a globalization of solidarity... Solidarity is a duty that springs from the same network of interconnections that are developed with globalization.²⁴

²²Bernard Häring, *Free and Faithful in Christ: Moral Theology for Clergy and Laity – Light to the World* Vol. 3, New York: Crossroad, 1981, 280.

²³Karl H. Peschke, *Christian Ethics: Moral Theology in the Light of Vatican II: Special Moral Theology* Vol.2, Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 2010, 560.

²⁴Cfr. “Pope to Accountants: Work for a Globalization of Solidarity,” in http://en.radiovaticana.va/news/2014/11/14/pope_to_accountants_work_for_a_globalization_of_solidarity/1111144 (as accessed on 29.11.2016).

Therefore, solidarity means moving from being self-centred to other-centred.

3. The Paschal Mystery of Christ as the Foundation for Corrective Formation of Conscience

The Paschal Mystery of Christ empowers humanity to overcome the limitations especially those that globalization brings forth. F.X. Durrwell sees the Paschal Mystery of Christ as a moment of the birth of new morality that transcends human limitations leading the person to a higher platform. He says, "The new morality is governed by the paschal mystery; it is a law of death and resurrection. What happened at Easter now orders all moral activity by transplanting the faithful from the carnal level to the sphere of the Spirit (cf. Rom 6:2-5; Col 3:1ff)."²⁵

In the Gospel we see the kind of morality Jesus reveals as being part and parcel of the divine morality: sharing (Mt 14:13-21; Mk 14:22-25), caring (Mt 9:36) and loving (Jn 3:16). He invites us to be the same (Mt 5:48), and shows us the example in himself (Phil 2:6-8). Through his passion, death and resurrection, he empowers humanity to transcend its human limitations, moving from what is erroneous to what is morally sound and righteous (cf. Gal 5:13-26; Col 3:1ff) resulting in a close relationship with the Lord.

The Paschal Mystery of Christ reveals a morality in a more exemplary manner, and the spirituality of the Cross is its centre. The spirituality of the Cross leads us to right formation of Conscience in thus manner.

- On the Cross of Christ, we see his obedience to the Divine Will of God the Father even unto death (Mt 26:39-42; Phil 2:8: His Creative Responsibility).
- On the Cross of Christ, we see his self-sacrifice for *bene commune* (Jn 10:10-11: Fulfilling one's Obligations);
- On the Cross of Christ, we see the self-emptying of Jesus from his Divine nature to human nature (Jn 1:14; Phil 2:6-9: respecting and honouring the principle of Subsidiarity and coming down to the realm of the common people);
- On the Cross of Christ, we see his compassion for others (Mt 9:36: the spirit of Solidarity) and above all the salvation of the world.

²⁵F.X. Durrwell, *The Resurrection: A Biblical Study*, New York: Sheed and Ward, 1961.

The spirituality of the Cross of Christ thus provides ways and means to corrective formation of the Conscience.

Conclusion

In his letter to the Colossians, St Paul talks on the 'New life in Christ' (Col 3:5-17). Here Paul speaks of the need to put to death what is earthly in the person and put on Christ. The grace of 'new life in Christ' is gratuitous gift of God. But it has to be a 'human act' to receive it. As the globalized context in which we are living, posts a great threat to moral norms the corrective formation of Conscience can/should take place from the scope of 'put to death what is earthly and put on Christ.' This indeed is a lifelong process, "The education of the conscience is a lifelong task... (And) the education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart" (CCC, 1784). It is not once and for all effort to have perfected in that capacity. But every time when one finds the self at a critical moment to make a decision in conscience, one has to diligently take care to make sure that the conscience is not carried away by the negatives of globalization. In the process, if one has identified the negative influences present in one's philosophy of life, one has to take diligent care to make sure that they are meticulously corrected to live righteously, especially in today's context of globalization.