

GAUDIUM ET SPES IN LIGHT OF FURTHER DEVELOPMENT AND THE PRESENT SITUATION IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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Abstract

This paper presents an analysis of chapter V, "The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations" of *Gaudium et spes*, which discusses "The Avoidance of War" and "Setting Up An International Community." After a short presentation of the historical context and the debate at the Second Vatican Council it focuses on changes in the situation in the following 50 years and on the subsequent developments in Catholic Social Teaching (CST). Special attention is paid to the development of the concept of just war in the light of the present terrorist threat. Following this, implications of CST on the international dimension of human rights, democracy and free economics are discussed. In the subsequent section, CST on the nature and evaluation of the international order, political unification of the world and the idea of *global governance* are analysed. The final part deals with the views of CST, especially of the recent Popes on European integration.

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1. International Relations in *Gaudium et spes*

The Council era is an era of fundamental and revolutionary changes and challenges which must be coped within the international field — the period of the Cold War, nuclear conflict threat, ideology of atheistic communism, fundamental differences between rich and poor countries, emancipation of developing countries. The issue of international relations and related problems is discussed primarily in the last chapter of the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes*, i.e., chapter V: “The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations” (GS, 77-90) of the second part of the document entitled “Some Problems of Special Urgency.” Of the five selected pressing problems of the times this chapter is the most extensive. It includes a discussion of the nature of peace in two sections (1. The Avoidance of War; 2. Setting Up an International Community).

Gaudium et spes does not conceive peace (GS, 78) as a mere absence of war or balance of power, but as “an enterprise of justice,” or even “the fruit of love” to man. Respect for the dignity of all persons and nations, together with the realization of brotherhood, is a presupposition of earthly peace, which even prefigures the peace of Christ’s Kingdom. The criticism of war which follows indicates fear of the even more terrible consequences of possible further conflict than the ones humanity faced in the recent past. The document employs the terms “total war,” “arms race” and “scientific weapons,” which were common at the time. It fiercely condemns the new conception of imminent war, exhorts to embarking on the path of disarmament and gradual elimination of war threat under the auspices of a (newly) established universal public authority. For the purpose of nurturing world peace the document calls for elimination of the causes of discord — it identifies them (besides the usual sinful human inclinations) especially in great economic inequalities, neglect of solidarity, local “overpopulation” and forms of economic dependence. It then presents several suggestions and instructions both to representatives of public power in general and to individual Christians and Christian organizations, concerning the character and orientation of international development aid and construction of international institutions.

2. Contemporary Context and the Debate Preceding the Text Formulation

The balanced text of the chapter “The Fostering of Peace and the Promotion of a Community of Nations” of GS is a result of colourful and fierce debates among the council fathers, whose views on the individual issues as well as character of the whole document differed. Besides the overall effort at a transformation of the attitude of the Church to the world, present throughout the Council, many emphases and challenges raised by Pope John XXIII in his social encyclicals *Mater et magistra* (1961) and *Pacem in terris* (1963) had to be integrated in the document.

In the debate of the fathers the Council sensitively reckoned to what extent it should grant or not grant the more radical views of many issues. Similarly a complex debate was led concerning the extent to which the “devilish” communist ideology should be explicitly condemned (a very strong, though eventually unanswered voice), other views¹ could also be heard concerning the manner and extent of condemning war as such and the extent of identification with “pacifism”. A part of the council fathers were for unconditional condemnation of war and nuclear weapons, with reference to the inapplicability of traditional just war criteria in the context of nuclear conflict threat, others (especially the English-speaking bishops) called for wise discrimination and warned against “immoderate pacifism.” The resulting text condemns war with sufficient force, yet at the same time (against “pacifism”) confirms the legitimacy of armed service and the right to just defence (GS, 79). With respect to the situation of real threat of atomic total war the development of criteria in the tradition of the ethical doctrine of just war was found irrelevant (“All these considerations compel us to undertake an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude” [GS, 80]) and the concept was not developed, not even mentioned.

The object of further specific (though here rather implicit) dispute over the nature of the international order as such was the conception of the autonomy of the individual states and existence of a possible international, supranational, or even world political authority. While the text of *Gaudium et spes*, as well as the broader tradition of ecclesial thinking, usually voices respect for the identity and sovereignty of nations (though not absolute), interesting calls for some sort of political union of the world were also heard. The secretary of the

¹Cf. Karel Skalický, *Radost a naděje: církev v dnešním světě*, Kostelní Vydří, 2000; 129–134, 189–198.

Holy Officium Cardinal Ottaviani in his speech at the Council even stated that “the Council should express the desire that all the nations of the world participate in a single Universal Republic, which transcends the individual characteristics of nations, so that the peace of Christ in the reign of Christ will become a reality.”² Despite blustering agreement and ovations accompanying his speech this idea does not appear in the final text at all. GS mentions the idea of a universal public authority (*publica auctoritas universalis*) as a prospect for the future, not in the spirit of a “world republic,” but only in the limited sense of an institution warranting peace and observation of human rights (GS, 82). Thus with the approved text the council accepted neither the idea of “world republic,” nor the somewhat narrower understanding of global political authority (*generalis auctoritas, publica universalis auctoritas*) with economic, social and cultural competencies, as developed by Pope John XXIII in the encyclical *Pacem in terris* (1963).³

From the point of view of the breadth of debate and of the continuous and final vote on the proposal, the fifth chapter as a whole is the least consensual text of the whole pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes*.⁴ On the other hand, it is a fairly balanced text which has become a determining and powerful voice of the Church towards the world on key topics of peace, war and international relations in general, as well as in the sphere of further development of some topics of Catholic ethics and social teaching of the church.

3. Changes of the Situation and further Development of the Topics in the Social Teaching of the Church

The following 50 years up to the present have brought innumerable events, historical changes and other political and economic factors, which have changed the world from the point of view of international relations. Not all can be mentioned, but for example only from the point of view of population the number of inhabitants of the Earth has more than doubled — in 1965 it was inhabited by not quite 3.5 billion people, in 2015 there are approximately 7.25 billion inhabitants on Earth. The fears of further expansive population growth are not coming true, it is estimated that the population of the Earth in 2050 will not exceed 9 or 10 billion and according to some

²Alfredo Ottaviani, Intervention of October 7, 1965; partially accessible e.g. at http://www.traditioninaction.org/ProgressivistDoc/A_097_Ottaviani_UN.html.

³Cf. *Pacem in terris*, 137.

⁴Cf. Karel Skalický, *Radost a naděje: církev v dnešním světě*, 209–220.

prognoses (projecting to 2150 and 2200) it will become stable at that number and will not grow further.⁵

From the political point of view the key events took place in 1989 —the fall of communism and disintegration of bipolar world, new effort at reformulating the international order and the so-called “third wave” of democratization since 1974, accelerated precisely by the fall of communism. Global economic transformations are not easily briefly described, but they are marked by the phenomenon of globalization, also additionally strengthened by the disintegration of bipolarity, whose roots are normally located in the early 1970s. This period is marked by the multiplication of world GNP, growing communication and exchange of information, movement of persons, goods and capital, migration, weakened role of national states, growing spatial distribution of economic activities, as well as merging and collision of cultural, value and religious systems. The economic development of (some) parts of what was originally so-called “third world” means relative weakening of the concentration of economic power and wealth in Western countries. From the point of view of security the fall of communism led to substantial decrease in the risk of threat of extensive nuclear conflict, but there arose a great number of conflict lines generating conflicts of local character. The question of the forms international order will take is still open, there is talk of the prospect of multi-polar relations of some superpowers and possible collisions among them, of multilateral order, broad application of international law, forms of global government eliminating security as well as other threats. The most acute threat to security at present is generally considered to be transnational religiously motivated terrorism, uncooperative states and the new increase of tension among superpower states and alliances.

3.1. Just War in Light of Terrorist Threat

As indicated above, in the context of the threat of nuclear war the classical doctrine of just war, cultivated and developed in the context of Christian ethical tradition for many centuries, was at the time of the Council found inapplicable. The whole following tradition of Church documents — especially social encyclicals — does not speak on the topic of possible criteria of just war either. The threat of nuclear war led Church representatives to believe that rather than reflect on the conditions and criteria of just war, it is necessary for fear of the great risk of nuclear war to eliminate the potential of conflict

⁵Cf. *The World at Six Billion* (UN); <http://www.un.org/esa/population/publications/sixbillion/sixbillion.htm>.

generation at all cost, since the potential of nuclear weapons to extensive and uncontrollable devastation did not make it possible to stipulate the limits of just defence. This view is already strongly heard in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (1963) by Pope John XXIII, to which *Gaudium et spes* in article 80 refers, in particular to the statement "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."⁶ At the same time the encyclical urgently calls to stop the fervent arms race and ban nuclear weapons.⁷

Of course, the encyclicals that came after the Second Vatican Council also paid intensive attention to the topic of peace, e.g. Paul VI in the encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967) fairly strongly identifies the possibilities of reaching world peace with economic development of poor countries in spirit of the motto "*Development, the New Name for Peace.*"⁸ Paul VI also established World Day of Peace (1 January, The Solemnity of Mary, Mother of God) and in 1968 founded the tradition of the yearly messages of popes for the celebration of the World Day of Peace, which bring urgent calls to peace, as well as valuable incentives to ethical evaluation of war. In the era after the end of the Cold War, at the time of Pope John Paul II, these messages occasionally begin to speak again of the doctrine of just war and other valuable incentives to ethical evaluation of war, peace and security. On the other hand it is necessary to perceive that the popes do not consider it to be their task to evaluate individual war conflicts, to specify or debate the criteria of just war, but are in the role of spiritual shepherds calling to elimination of war conflicts of any kind, including those that could be considered just. An example is the evaluation of Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* (1991), where he speaks on a particular contemporary conflict (1st Iraq War, 1991):

I myself, on the occasion of the recent tragic war in the Persian Gulf, repeated the cry: 'Never again war!'. No, never again war, which destroys the lives of innocent people, teaches how to kill, throws into upheaval even the lives of those who do the killing and leaves behind a trail of resentment and hatred, thus making it all the more difficult to find a just solution of the very problems which provoked the war.⁹

On this example of evaluation of a particular war, which is otherwise fairly consensually considered to be a war in which

⁶*Pacem in terris*, 127.

⁷*Pacem in terris*, 109–119.

⁸Cf. *Populorum Progressio*, 76–80.

⁹*Centesimus Annus*, 52.

fundamentally all traditional and contemporary international legal criteria of just war were met, we can see that the Pope does not intend to judge wars according to certain ethical criteria, but sees his role in exhorting to peaceful solution of all conflicts. The moral criteria for judging the legitimacy of war and its character are primarily guidance for responsible political authorities making particular political decisions, as confirmed by the new *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992): "The evaluation of these conditions for moral legitimacy belongs to the prudential judgment of those who have responsibility for the common good."¹⁰ It is after a long time the first official Church document enumerating and reflecting in that article some traditional moral criteria of just war. Church documents (other than the Catechism) do not develop reflection of the criteria and evaluation of so-called "just war" in any fundamental way and do not consider it to be their primary task, even though in newer Church documents, when the threat of nuclear war had decreased, the concept has begun to appear again. But the debate of Catholic ethicists and committed Catholic laypersons, developed especially in connection with the controversial Second Iraq War (2003), shows that it is not easy to reach some fundamental agreement concerning the evaluation of the nature and ethical dimension of particular conflicts. Let us focus on some interesting incentives from the newer Church documents, which stimulate and affect the debate in some way. As already indicated above, the key source of information concerning reflection of the topic of war, peace and security threats in the era after the end of the Cold War are especially the messages of Popes for the celebration of the World Day of Peace. In their messages the Popes frequently and excellently grasp the character of the transformation of war conflicts as well as the essence of security threats and come up with highly inspiring ethical challenges. Sometimes the messages focus on more general topics, but in some cases they react immediately to the current security situation.

The era of Pope John Paul II was marked by a real as well as symbolic divide in the character of world security threats — the terrorist attack on the WTC on September 11, 2001. Of course the Pope immediately rejects terrorist attacks (especially in speeches during his September pastoral visit to Kazakhstan), in the following "Message for the World Day of Peace 2002" he develops his reflection and evaluation in a more complex manner. He begins with the words: "The World Day of Peace this year is being celebrated in the shadow

¹⁰*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2309.

of the dramatic events of 11 September last. On that day, a terrible crime was committed: in a few brief hours thousands of innocent people of many ethnic backgrounds were slaughtered.”¹¹ He further reflects on the phenomenon of a new form of terrorism as follows:

In recent years, especially since the end of the Cold War, terrorism has developed into a sophisticated network of political, economic and technical collusion which goes beyond national borders to embrace the whole world. Well-organized terrorist groups can count on huge financial resources and develop wide-ranging strategies, striking innocent people who have nothing to do with the aims pursued by the terrorists.¹²

The following text shows that the Pope considers terrorism to be a specific political and military strategy, from the moral point of view he considers it to be “a true crime against humanity” and confirms that “(t)here exists therefore a right to defend oneself against terrorism,” though in observation of moral and legal principles in selection of both targets and means.¹³ Reacting to the religious roots of such type of terrorism the Pope says: “Consequently, no religious leader can condone terrorism, and much less preach it. It is a profanation of religion to declare oneself a terrorist in the name of God, to do violence to others in his name.”¹⁴ In the “Message” for the year 2004 John Paul II, in the eighth article entitled “The Deadly Scourge of Terrorism,” speaks of the problem of fighting against terrorism in broader context. He suggests that the international law established after World War II, warranted by the UN, where the subjects are the individual national states, does not provide satisfactory instruments for maintaining security in the world and fighting globalized terrorism:

Today international law is hard pressed to provide solutions to situations of conflict arising from the changed landscape of the contemporary world. These situations of conflict frequently involve agents which are not themselves States but rather entities derived from the collapse of States, or connected to independence movements, or linked to trained criminal organizations. A legal system made up of norms established down the centuries as a means of disciplining relations between sovereign States finds it difficult to deal with conflicts which also involve entities incapable of being considered States in the traditional sense. This is particularly the case with terrorist groups.¹⁵

¹¹John Paul II, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2002,” 1.

¹²John Paul II, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2002,” 4.

¹³John Paul II, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2002,” 5.

¹⁴John Paul II, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2002,” 7.

¹⁵John Paul II, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2004,” 8.

The Pope in the message further directly calls for an updating of international law and reform of the UN, which would thereby adapt to the new conditions and finally become an effective instrument of world security. The text of the "Message" face to face with terrorism grasps the fact that the character of war has fundamentally changed. Since mid-20th century "regular war," formally declared by a subject of international law — a state, where an army takes part in the fighting, has shifted to "irregular war," to which a weaker opponent usually resort, a non-state participant, in an asymmetrical situation — fighting a stronger party. Here it was again appropriate to use the words of GS, though in different context: "All these considerations compel us to undertake an evaluation of war with an entirely new attitude" (GS, 80). The following text of the message also indicates a shift face to face with the new situation — earlier texts, even the texts of Pope John Paul II, considered the dominant cause of conflicts and wars to be rather economic reasons, where peace-building was persistently identified especially with economic development. Now the Pope says in the message that the causes of terrorism also have political and cultural reasons, they are not merely an expression of the poverty of people in the world. He therefore urges to analysis of the real (even purely ideological and religious) causes and their extermination by political and pedagogical means.¹⁶

In the following "Message for the World Day of Peace 2005" John Paul II even more clearly emphasizes the origin of evil in human freedom, so that its causes cannot be sought in social structures and contingent events: "Evil always has a name and a face: the name and face of those men and women who freely choose it."¹⁷ There are of course numerous roots and causes of evil and violence, but the most essential is human moral choice, terrorism does not primarily stem from world poverty, but from monstrous ideologies and the evil of the human heart.

Benedict XVI in his "Message for the World Day of Peace 2007" even speaks of the dramatic change of the character of warfare which must be faced, whereby he perceives the need to re-think rules and moral criteria. The Pope's exhortation is the first explicit reflection of a fundamental change in the character of conflicts and the first clearly expressed urge to deeper reflection on the ethical boundaries of war, which he does not develop himself:

¹⁶Cf. John Paul II, "Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2004," 8.

¹⁷John Paul II, "Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2005," 2.

Moreover, the scourge of terrorism demands a profound reflection on the ethical limits restricting the use of modern methods of guaranteeing internal security. Increasingly, wars are not declared, especially when they are initiated by terrorist groups determined to attain their ends by any means available. In the face of the disturbing events of recent years, states cannot fail to recognize the need to establish clearer rules to counter effectively the dramatic decline that we are witnessing.¹⁸

The Pope does not disregard the nuclear threat posed by Iran and North Korea, and the members of the “nuclear club” in general, which re-evokes the terrifying eschatological visions of the Cold War period.¹⁹

The present Pope Francis only had occasion to publish two messages for the World Day of Peace (2014, 2015) so far, in which he does not discuss particular war conflicts but topics of more general character. In the first message, entitled “Fraternity, the Foundation and Pathway to Peace,” in which he speaks of the all-human “irrepressible longing for fraternity”²⁰ as the presupposition of peaceful cohabitation, he — following the example of Paul VI — again links peace and the development of nations,²¹ exhorts to the necessity of new reflection on models of economic development and change of lifestyle,²² emphasizes the idea of the “universal destination of all goods” of the social teaching of the Church²³ and even calls for the “disarmament of all parties” (!).²⁴ The second message is devoted to the issue of new forms of slavery and abuse of human by human (prostitution, sexual slavery, migrants, children), whereby the Pope calls for the rejection of “globalization of indifference” and requests “globalization of fraternity.”²⁵

Although the Pope does not speak on particular conflicts in these messages, he does so fairly strongly on various other occasions, in sermons, speeches and media pronouncements. In the homily during mass at the military graveyard Redipuglia²⁶ he condemned the lunacy of wars as well as apathy towards them, the causes of which he considers to be greed, intolerance, power ambitions, “geopolitical interests and plans” and ideologies, even the interests of arms

¹⁸Benedict XVI, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2007,” 14.

¹⁹Benedict XVI, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2007,” 15.

²⁰Francis, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2014,” 1.

²¹Francis, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2014,” 4.

²²Francis, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2014,” 6.

²³Francis, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2014,” 9.

²⁴Francis, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2014,” 7.

²⁵Francis, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2015,” 6.

²⁶Homily of Pope Francis, Military Memorial of Redipuglia, 13 September 2014; http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/homilies/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140913_omelia-sacrario-militare-redipuglia.html.

producers (!), he speaks of the present security situation and local conflicts as of “Third World War.” In his “Message to the Participants in the International Peace Meeting Antwerp”²⁷ Pope Francis says that “(w)ar is never a necessity, nor is it inevitable. Another way can always be found: the way of dialogue, encounter and the sincere search for truth” and in this sense admonishes religious leaders to effectively cooperate in healing wounds and solving conflicts. On some occasions Pope Francis also mentions particular conflicts and wars and calls for peace. An example may be the Easter message “Urbi et Orbi 2015,”²⁸ where the Pope identifies the primary cause of wars to be human pride, he mentions in particular the situation in Syria, Iraq, Palestine, Libya, Nigeria, South Sudan, Kenya and the Ukraine.

As already mentioned above, the Popes generally see their role rather in exhorting to elimination of war conflicts, not in conducting technically-tactical strategic debates over the criteria of war-making. Even so certain differences can be seen for example between the manner of speaking of the messages of John Paul II and Benedict XVI on the one hand and Pope Francis on the other. While e.g. the message of Benedict XVI opens the possibility and inspiration to responsible politicians for certain shifts in reflection on the doctrine of just war in relation to terrorism with respect to the unprecedented change of the character of warfare and agents of violence, whereby he requests seeking clear and effective rules for ensuring security, Pope Francis somewhat retracts this dimension of this legitimate debate for certain very strong and unambiguous statements and appeals — e.g. a certain rhetoric reduction of the causes of war (pride, greed, “arms-producing lobby”), excessive emphasis on the economic dimension of conflicts (poverty, exploitation), the idealistic call for “general disarmament,” and others. However, the papal rhetoric must not be viewed primarily as a contribution to the debate over particular aspects of just war theory, much weakened and delegitimized by the new contexts (nuclear weapons, terrorism), but as effort at normative development of a global “ethics of peace,” as indicated e.g. by the distinguished Catholic ethicist Bernhard Sutor.²⁹

²⁷Message of Pope Francis to the Participants in the International Peace Meeting [Antwerp, 7-9 September 2014]; http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/pont-messages/2014/documents/papa-francesco_20140826_messaggio-sant-egidio-pace-anversa.html.

²⁸Urbi et Orbi, Easter 2015; http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/messages/urbi/documents/papa-francesco_20150405_urbi-et-orbi-pasqua.html

²⁹Cf. Bernhard Sutor, *Vom gerechten Krieg zum gerechten Frieden?* Schwalbach, 2004.

3.2. Insights from CST for the International Dimension of Human Rights, Democracy and Economy

The transformation of the Church's attitude to the world and the new emphases in *Gaudium et spes* were partially a result of preceding shifts and emphases in the theological sphere, partially they of course brought about some changes with respect to the future and also had undeniable impact in the political sphere. When we focus on the international and global impact of the changes of ideals and attitudes on the part of Catholicism, it is first of all necessary to view as crucial the shift in emphasis on the sphere of human rights. While at first in 18th and 19th century the idea of human rights was rather rejected on the part of official Church representatives and then at the end of 19th and in the first half of the 20th century was partially conditionally received, with the era of John XXIII and the Second Vatican Council there occurred an appropriation of the idea of human rights (especially through the declaration *Dignitatis humanae* on religious freedom), which is placed right in the core of the social teaching of the Church. Further development, reception and creative theological interpretation of the idea of human right took place during the following era, especially during the long period of the pontificate of Pope John Paul II, during which the Catholic Church became a key, strongly sounding global defender of human rights. A similar process then occurred in the issue of democratic political system, which was fundamentally received already by Pius XII and in *Gaudium et spes* linked to the idea of human rights (GS, 73-76) and received further dynamic support in the era of John Paul II. This reception of the ideals of human rights and democracy had crucial impact on the development of world politics to such an extent that the Catholic Church is considered to be an important indirect agent of political changes — e.g. Samuel P. Huntington speaks of the so-called “third wave” of democratization in the world (1970s and 1980s, since the fall of South European authoritarian regimes, through South American authoritarian regimes, up to the revolutionary changes linked to the fall of communism) as of a “Catholic” wave and links it to a great extent to the change in emphases in the overall framework of Catholic thinking and theology towards support of freedom, human rights and democracy.³⁰

This reception does not mean, of course, that the social teaching of the Church accepts all developmental trends in the given spheres, or that it loses its prophetic-critical character. Especially in recent years

³⁰Cf. Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Oklahoma, 1993, 72–85.

the social teaching of the Church and pronouncements of popes have been critical to certain unsatisfactory trends — e.g. in the sphere of human rights some deforming contemporary trends are criticised by the Popes, an example being the criticism of rights which are “arbitrary and non-essential in nature” and “can run wild, leading to an escalation of demands which is effectively unlimited and indiscriminate.”³¹ Pope Francis speaks similarly of the deformation of human rights ethos: “At the same time, however, care must be taken not to fall into certain errors which can arise from a misunderstanding of the concept of human rights and from its misuse.”³²

Similarly in other spheres, both the sphere of political order and the economic sphere, the view of the social teaching of the Church is linked to certain value presuppositions, whose absence may act destructively, or even against the sense of the idea itself, as it may be the case e.g. with morally ungrounded democratic order:

Authentic democracy is possible only in a State ruled by law, and on the basis of a correct conception of the human person. (...)It must be observed in this regard that if there is no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activity, then ideas and convictions can easily be manipulated for reasons of power. As history demonstrates, a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism.³³

In the sphere of economic cooperation among nations the social teaching of the Church supports the perspective of free market exchange, though bound by a moral and legal framework. Especially numerous statements by Pope John Paul II evince that on the part of the social teaching of the Church free market exchange is the preferred attitude, both at national³⁴ and international level.³⁵ The last social encyclical — *Caritas in veritate* (2009) by Pope Benedict XVI — despite strong criticism of many problematic trends, imbalances and abuses of global capitalism also sides with freest economic global exchange. It links integral development strongly to freedom³⁶ and even calls for further liberalization of international trade(!) and dismantling regulation barriers:

³¹Cf. *Caritas in veritate*, 2009, 43.

³²Address of Pope Francis to the European Parliament, Strasbourg, France, 25 November 2014; http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2014/november/documents/papa-francesco_20141125_strasburgo-parlamento-europeo.html.

³³*Centesimus annus*, 46.

³⁴ Cf. *Centesimus annus*, 42.

³⁵Cf. *Centesimus annus*, 34.

³⁶Cf. *Caritas in veritate*, 17.

It should also be remembered that, in the economic sphere, the principal form of assistance needed by developing countries is that of allowing and encouraging the gradual penetration of their products into international markets, thus making it possible for these countries to participate fully in international economic life.³⁷

Developed countries often defend and subsidize segments of the market, which are globally uncompetitive — especially agriculture — thereby actively blocking free market exchange which would be beneficial to developing countries: “...such as the high tariffs imposed by economically developed countries, which still make it difficult for the products of poor countries to gain a foothold in the markets of rich countries.”³⁸

Recently there has been much discussion of the change in accents in the contemporary Pope Francis, who with his public statements and especially the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) radically criticizes the existence of the phenomenon of poverty, cult of money and abuses of global capitalism. The Pope calls for the social inclusion of the poor, speaks of abolishing social inequalities,³⁹ criticizes the economy of exclusion and inequality, culture of consumption and luxury, he even believes that there comes “invisible and often virtual” tyranny.⁴⁰ In this it is necessary to recall that Pope Francis in his temporal statements aims at a pastoral vision focused on the extreme and humanly undignified poverty in developing countries (or even the phenomenon of poverty and exclusion in developed countries), but certainly does not mean to call for strengthening the already very strong redistributive mechanisms of developed welfare societies criticized by the social teaching of the Church. Pope Francis’s emphases with respect to interest in the poor and criticism of materialistic and hedonistic conception of the human being are not new in any way, they further develop the continuity of these topics in accordance with the preceding tradition, preaching and the social teaching of the preceding popes. Pope Francis himself does not view his exhortation as a revision of the preceding tradition of the social teaching of the Church, on the contrary he directly notes that “(t)his Exhortation is not a social document, and for reflection on those different themes we have a most suitable tool in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church.”⁴¹

³⁷*Caritas in veritate*, 58.

³⁸*Caritas in veritate*, 33.

³⁹Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 186–216.

⁴⁰Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 50–60.

⁴¹Cf. *Evangelii Gaudium*, 184.

3.3. Insights from CST for International Order — World Political Union, *Global Governance*

Concerning the character of international relations as such, the voice of the Catholic Church is generally a voice promoting a certain cosmopolitan view, grounded in the idea of unity of the human species in respect of nature and dignity, but at the same time the social teaching of the Church also places emphasis on the autonomy, identity, sovereignty and “rights of nations.” However, the sovereignty of states and nations is not conceived as an absolute measure and in the social teaching of the Church it is assumed that states will be subordinate to international law and possibly even to a certain supranational authority. The idea of a global political authority has reference even in *Gaudium et spes*, as mentioned above, though in the limited sense of warrant of security and human rights.

The idea of political unity of the world, or at least the idea of basic rules shared by humanity, is not new and in the course of the history of the Christian era has appeared many times in various forms and in various measure of inspiration by Christian universalism, whether in realistic contexts (renewed Roman empire, Dante Alighieri, the idea of international law, Immanuel Kant), or on the contrary in totally utopian ones (Tomaso de Campanella, Jan Amos Komensky). The idea of global political authority (*generalis auctoritas, publica universalis auctoritas*) was introduced in the social teaching of the Church by Pope John XXIII in the encyclical *Pacem in terris* (1963), as already mentioned above; here is the key passage:

Today the universal common good presents us with problems which are world-wide in their dimensions; problems, therefore, which cannot be solved except by a public authority with power, organization and means co-extensive with these problems, and with a world-wide sphere of activity. Consequently the moral order itself demands the establishment of some such general form of public authority.⁴²

John XXIII further defines certain criteria of such global governance:

But this general authority equipped with world-wide power and adequate means for achieving the universal common good cannot be imposed by force. It must be set up with the consent of all nations. If its work is to be effective, it must operate with fairness, absolute impartiality, and with dedication to the common good of all peoples.⁴³

⁴²*Pacem in terris*, 137.

⁴³*Pacem in terris*, 138.

The special function of this universal authority must be to evaluate and find a solution to economic, social, political and cultural problems which affect the universal common good.⁴⁴

The Pope underlines that such authority should be accepted by states freely, not be subject to partial interests, or be dependent on one influential nation. Its basic aim ought to be defence and promotion of human rights and its functioning should be fully based on the principle of subsidiarity and not limit “sphere of action of the public authority of individual States, or to arrogate any of their functions to itself.”⁴⁵ Further context shows that the Pope places great hope concerning global governing into the UN project, although it is not explicitly expressed. It remains open to what extent John XXIII understood the idea of global political authority as linked to the already really existing UN project, which had been functioning for twenty years, or whether he expected a global authority of yet another character, which would not be dependent on the interests of individual states.

The concept of global authority, proposed by Pope John XXIII and partially received by the council in GS, was not much developed or even recalled in later social encyclicals; neither Paul VI nor John Paul II mentions it in their social encyclicals. Only in the “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2003” (written in honour of the encyclical *Pacem in terris* on the occasion of its anniversary) in art. 6, called “A new international moral order,” John Paul II comments on the thinking of John XXIII in this matter: “[John XXIII] called the entire world to a nobler vision of public life and public authority, even as he boldly challenged the world to think beyond its present state of disorder to new forms of international order commensurate with human dignity.” At the same time he stresses that new international order is first of all a matter of morality, not of a global political organization.⁴⁶

The idea of world political authority (*auctoritas politica mundialis*) with reference to John XXIII is again emphasized by Benedict XVI in his encyclical *Caritas in veritate* (2009), where in connection with the urgency of the current economic crisis he speaks of a higher degree of international order aimed at realizing the common good, real integral development and the realization of a social order in accordance with the moral order — it would govern globalization, world economy, redistribution of wealth, protection of the environment and migration movements:

⁴⁴*Pacem in terris*, 140.

⁴⁵*Pacem in terris*, 141.

⁴⁶John Paul II, “Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace 2003,” 6.

To manage the global economy; to revive economies hit by the crisis; to avoid any deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would result; to bring about integral and timely disarmament, food security and peace; to guarantee the protection of the environment and to regulate migration: for all this, there is urgent need of a true world political authority, as my predecessor Blessed John XXIII indicated some years ago... Furthermore, such an authority would need to be universally recognized and to be vested with the effective power to ensure security for all, regard for justice, and respect for rights...⁴⁷

The Pope further stresses that the absence of such authority could pose a threat to advances already reached in the sphere of international law, which would thus be conditioned by the power balance of the strongest agents. At the same time he also sees fundamental risks in the concentration of political power, which is why he elsewhere stresses that the global authority must be organized in a subsidiary way, in a multi-degree and polyarchic manner, so that it cannot become “a dangerous universal power of a tyrannical nature.”⁴⁸

The above context implies that the attitude of the social teaching of the Church supports a certain form of globalization and international relations management, which the theory of international relations normally calls *Global Governance*. Within the theory there exists a fierce conflict of conceptions — some are closer to the conception of world state or world federation, others rather to the diversified governing of various agents and regimes without a strong power centre. By emphasizing the subsidiary, multi-degree and polyarchic character of globalization management in *Caritas in veritate* the social teaching of the Church comes closer to the non-authoritarian conception, though it is difficult to interpret some statements from older encyclicals, especially those by John XXIII, in this spirit.

With Pope Francis there comes a certain critical spirit and stronger rhetoric against the negative phenomena of globalization and there is a stronger voice in support of the autonomy of national states (!). While in *Evangelii Gaudium* (2013) we find critical statements concerning mostly the economic situation and economic dimension of globalization, on various occasions and at press conferences Pope Francis also speaks on political matters and international concerns. For example during the “In-Flight Press Conference from the Philippines to Rome” (January 2015)⁴⁹ he expressed his idea of globalization — he

⁴⁷*Caritas in veritate*, 67.

⁴⁸*Caritas in veritate*, 57.

⁴⁹In-Flight Press Conference of Pope Francis from the Philippines to Rome, 19 January 2015; http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/speeches/2015/january/documents/papa-francesco_20150119_srilanka-philippine-conferenza-stampa.html.

considers the current trends to be “ideological colonization” and revoking of a totalitarian conception of power, against which he places emphasis on the freedom, identity and autonomy of nations:

Each people has its own culture, its own history. Every people has its own culture. But when conditions are imposed by colonizing empires, they seek to make these peoples lose their own identity and create uniformity. This is spherical globalization — all points are equidistant from the centre. And true globalization — I like to say this — is not a sphere. It is important to globalize, but not like the sphere but rather, like the polyhedron. Namely that each people, every part, preserves its identity without being ideologically colonized. This is ‘ideological colonization.’

These and other statements seem to show that Pope Francis does not harbour much trust in existing forms of international political order and the institutions participating in it, quite on the contrary he views them as highly risky and places hope in a diversified conception of globalization respecting the autonomy and identity of nations. These views are even more salient in the Pope’s “Address to the European Parliament” (2014), from which we will cite some statements further on in connection with the development of the view the social teaching of the Church takes of European integration.

3.4. View of the Social Teaching of the Church and the Popes on European Integration

The social teaching of the Church in its primary documents does not speak on European integration, particular remarks and commentaries on the character and processes of European integration are found e.g. in John Paul II’s post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Ecclesia in Europa* (2003). On the one hand he underlines the positive aspects, prospects and hopes of the integration trend, consisting especially in maintaining peace and promoting cooperation among nations, the democratic character of changes, economic and political unity. On the other hand he places emphasis on the necessity of the primacy of ethical and spiritual values in order for the European integration project to be satisfactory and sustainable, as well as the decisive contribution of Christianity to European culture.⁵⁰ When we also consider some other and older speeches and statements of the Popes, we can historically see a fairly dramatic transformation of attitudes to European integration. E.g. Pius XII in the context of the situation after WW II strongly supported the project of European integration and a federalist model of Europe applied “from above” (with a strong part played by Catholicism). John Paul II and Benedict

⁵⁰Cf. *Ecclesia in Europa*, 2003, especially §§ 19, 108, 109, 110, 114.

XVI were critical of the trends in European integration — primarily not for the political and economic technical dimension of the integration, but especially for serious doubts concerning its ethical dimension — democratic deficit, intervention in decisions of national states in the sphere of family, morality, marriage or protection of unborn life. In contrast to the preceding popes, John Paul II does not link the idea of European cultural and religious identity with the integration project and is generally rather sceptical of various forms of supranational governing. Benedict XVI further radicalized the attitudes to European integration up to some sort of “Euro skepticism.” He evaluates the EU mostly through the lens of the ethical dimension — the European integration in his view becomes an active threat for Christian identity and religious freedom. E.g. in the frequently commented upon “Address to the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community” (2007)⁵¹ he suggested that the process of European integration in its present form is evidently not universally accepted and is enforced without respect to the citizens of European countries. He further pointed out the rejection of essential values and the associated “*unique form of ‘apostasy’*” of Europe, he spoke of community “*built without respect to true human dignity*” and the associated harm to “*fundamental human rights.*” Benedict XVI also supported the widening of the EU to the East (including Turkey!) with the hope that new member states could help Europe revitalize the religious dimension of its identity. His views of European integration have earned the Pope criticism even within the Catholic Church, e.g. from the COMECE, which almost unconditionally supports European integration. This fact is noted and thoroughly analysed by, for example, the Czech theoretician of international relations Petr Žák in his articles “Joseph Ratzinger as Cardinal and Pope in Relationship to European Integration”⁵² and “Changes in Papal Relationship to European Integration: From Pius XII to Benedict XVI.”⁵³ For him, one of the causes is a possible difference in representation: while the papacy embodies the Church in her universality, the ‘local’ European bishops emphasise pragmatic

⁵¹Cf. Address of Benedict XVI to the Participants in the Convention Organized by the Commission of the Bishops’ Conferences of the European Community, 24. 3. 2007; http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2007/march/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20070324_comece.html.

⁵²Petr Žák, “Josef Ratzinger jako kardinál a papež ve vztahu k evropské integraci,” *Církevní dějiny* 11 (2013) 24–42.

⁵³Petr Žák, “Proměny vztahu papežství k evropské integraci: Od Pia XII. k Benediktu XVI,” *Mezinárodní vztahy* 4 (2013) 67–88.

cooperation between the EU and the Church in areas of possible agreement with CST goals. These might include issues of peace, economic cooperation, environmental protection, development and humanitarian aid, 'welfare statehood', etc.

The present Pope Francis, at least insofar as we can consider his "Address to the European Parliament" (2014)⁵⁴ to be determinate, since in other statements he has not spoken of the European Union, continues with critical rhetoric towards the EU. He says e. g.: "In recent years, as the European Union has expanded, there has been growing mistrust on the part of citizens towards institutions considered to be aloof, engaged in laying down rules perceived as insensitive to individual peoples, if not downright harmful."⁵⁵

Of interest besides criticism of the character of integration is Francis's heightened and unprecedented emphasis on the identity and autonomy of nations accompanied by distrust to the real supranational forms of organization. Although in the first half of the 20th century in respect of the negative operation of nationalistic ideals the concept of nation and autonomous state was rather subdued in the social teaching of the Church in favour of an emphasis on the universality and unity of humanity and higher forms of political organization (especially in Pius XII), it was significantly rehabilitated already by John Paul II⁵⁶ and Pope Francis seems to be following in the trend. Some of his pronouncements even have a certain "anti-conspiracy" shade:

Keeping democracies alive is a challenge in the present historic moment. The true strength of our democracies — understood as expressions of the political will of the people — must not be allowed to collapse under the pressure of multinational interests which are not universal, which weaken them and turn them into uniform systems of economic power at the service of unseen empires. This is one of the challenges which history sets before you today.⁵⁷

He values highly the democratic political order and links it strongly to the idea of national identity and national interest and of course, like the previous Popes, strongly identifies the identity of Europe with Christianity.⁵⁸ He exhorts to a reappraisal of spiritual roots, sacred

⁵⁴Address of Pope Francis to the European Parliament, 2014.

⁵⁵Address of Pope Francis to the European Parliament, 2014.

⁵⁶Besides the emphases in the social teaching of the Church, the book of interviews with John Paul II, *Memory and Identity: Conversations at the Dawn of a Millennium* (2005), especially the chapter "Thinking 'My Country'" is of interest in this context.

⁵⁷Address of Pope Francis to the European Parliament, 2014.

⁵⁸Address of Pope Francis to the European Parliament, 2014.

character of the human being and inalienable values, faith, so that Europe can become “a precious point of reference for all humanity.”⁵⁹

4. Conclusion

The constitution *Gaudium et spes* responds to the international political issues of the time in a fairly extensive and complex way, as it does to economic and cultural issues. On the issue of political order, on the other hand, it is surprisingly very brief. Otherwise it is a fairly balanced text which became a determinate and strong voice of the Church towards the world in key issues of peace, war and international relations, as well as in the sphere of the further development of this and other issues of Catholic ethics and the social teaching of the Church. The following 50 years up to the present have brought numerous events, historical transformations and other political and economic factors, which have changed the world also from the point of view of international relations. To these changes the social teaching of the Church adequately responds, and thereby becomes one of the most important inspiring voices for the sphere of Christian social ethics. On the other hand some other critical authors point out the fairly weak analysis of international relations in documents of the social teaching of the Church, especially as compared with other spheres (economy, development, phenomenon of work, and others), as well as to sometimes simplified views of international relations.⁶⁰

With respect to the conception of the character of international relations as such the voice of the Catholic Church is in general a voice promoting a certain cosmopolitan perspective, based on the idea of equality, dignity of all human beings and a certain unity of humanity. The social teaching of the Church promotes international cooperation, peaceful cohabitation, free market exchange and integral development of all nations and the whole world. Even though the social teaching of the Church knows the concepts of sovereignty and “rights of nations,” it does not conceive them as wholly absolute and supports also supranational forms of cooperation and organization, especially the idea of international law and universal human rights. In this sense it is in the sphere of the tradition of reflection on international relations closer to liberal and “idealistic” traditions,

⁵⁹Address of Pope Francis to the European Parliament, 2014.

⁶⁰Cf. Petr Suchý, “Sociální encykliky Jana Pavla II. v kontextu mezinárodních vztahů”; in: Petr Fiala, Jiří Hanuš, Jan Vybíral eds., *Katolická sociální nauka a současná věda*, Brno, 2004, 157–170.

rather than to so-called realistic ones. The anti-globalization rhetoric of Pope Francis shifts somewhat the evaluation of international relations towards the conclusions and evaluations of so-called critical or communitarian approaches to international relations. On the other hand, from the point of view of discussions in the context of theory of international relations the role of religion in international relations is variously interpreted. However, the increase in vitality of religion since 1960s and 1970s together with a weakening of the roles of states as exclusive agents of international relations in the context of globalization has led to the increase of the role of religions (primarily those not tied to a particular limited territory). Jack Snyder adds to this conclusion that by their attitude the religions are in a certain tension to all key paradigms of international relations theory — to “state-centric” realism by their transnational character and influence, to “relativist and rationalist” liberalism by their strong rooting of value notions and to constructivism by assuming the existence of the sacred and transcendent.⁶¹

Besides her inspiring influence, the role of the Catholic Church is often recognized as that of an important and prominent non-state transnational agent in international relations, whether by her diplomatic operation, informal influence, views, influence on more than a billion faithful located in the individual countries, on politicians of Christian-democratic orientation, and others. Even though in the sphere of international relations the sometimes too “idealistic” and “proclaiming” rhetoric of the Catholic Church may be recognized as inadequate or naive, it is on the other hand possible to emphasize its prophetic, critical and normative significance. By its activity in the international field the Catholic Church can balance out the limited perspectives of the individual states expressed by “national interests,” taking a global and cosmopolitan perspective and “enlarging the normative spaces in IR (international relations).”⁶²

These “normative spaces” are newly opened with the new social encyclical *Laudato si'* (2015) of Pope Francis and its stronger demands on the holistic concept of an integral (environmental, economic and social) ecology. Pope Francis’ radicalised “preferential option for the poor” is connected with the critique of “dominant technocratic paradigm,” unbalanced in many places excessive “super development”

⁶¹Cf. Jack L. Snyder ed., *Religion and International Relations Theory*, New York, 200–209.

⁶²See for instance Alan Chong, “The Catholic Church in International Politics”; at: <http://www.e-ir.info/2013/11/14/the-catholic-church-in-international-politics/>

and hedonistic “extreme consumerism.” The Pope speaks about revising the ethics of international relations in the twenty-first century, recognises the actual nature of international relations as unsatisfactory and outdated, and calls for devising “stronger and more efficiently organized international institutions” — but in relation to the governments of the states, and empowering them to impose sanctions to prevail political power over economic powers.⁶³

But how does the Church concretely contribute to influencing of autonomous political sphere in international relations? Church as an institution should engage in direct or indirect dialogue with all relevant representatives of political power through its representatives at all levels. Diplomatic potential of the Holy See also can be employed in this regard. Acknowledging the autonomy of political power, the Church cannot and must not

...take upon herself the political battle to bring about the most just society possible. She cannot and must not replace the State. Yet at the same time she cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice. She has to play her part through rational argument and she has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice, which always demands sacrifice, cannot prevail and prosper.⁶⁴

In order to defend peace, human dignity, freedom and solidarity it is also necessary to coordinate cooperation, as much as possible, with all religions and their leaders who share (at least partially) these fundamental values. The laity are called in addition (compared to ecclesiastical structures) to active and practical participation and involvement in the context of the political community, including active efforts to build just social structures and fight for them. However to convince people (especially on a global level) that justice requires sacrifice, elimination of consumerism and pursuit of global solidarity with the poor, is a long term task.

⁶³Cf. *Laudato si'*, 175.

⁶⁴Cf. *Deus caritas est*, 28.