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**“The Social Doctrine of the Church cannot be chained up” Interview with Most Rev. Giampaolo Crepaldi on the occasion of the publication of the “Third Report on the Social Doctrine of the Church in the world”**



*Interview with Most Rev. Giampaolo Crepaldi, Archbishop of Trieste and president of the International Observatory Cardinal Van Thuân on the Social Doctrine of the Church on the occasion of the publication of the “Third Report on the Social Doctrine of the Church in the world”*

**Where does the annual publication of the Report stand among the activities of your Observatory?**

The publication of the annual Report on the Social Doctrine of the Church in the world is the pride and jewel of our Observatory, perhaps the most important and well known activity of all. Our Report, which has already reached its third edition, is a *unicum* in this field, and for this reason we think we have covered a real need and perform an important service with this publication.

**Where is the Report published?**

The 2010 Report was published in Italy and France, in Peru for Latin America, and in Spain. This will also be the case in 2011. It is the result of collaboration on the part of four international institutions dedicated to the Social Doctrine of the Church, and is therefore the outcome of very meaningful collaboration coordinated by our Observatory.

**“The Social Doctrine of the Church cannot be chained up”: this is the slogan you have chosen as a synthesis of the Report. Why**

Because emerging from the Report are the many chains that continue to prevent the Social Doctrine of the Church from expressing itself and becoming incarnated. There are external chains like the pressure

exercised by international lobbies against life and the family, but there are also internal chains like a lack of attention to the Magisterium of Benedict XVI in this field or the secularization of the Social Doctrine.

**“Witnesses, saints and martyrs”: the Report substantiates many events of martyrdom and sanctity that occurred in 2010, and narrates how in England and Portugal Benedict XVI resolutely insisted in calling for forms of extreme witness – we could say – also in the area of the Social Doctrine.**

This expression “witnesses, saints and martyrs” falls within what you call the slogan we have chosen for this year. Martyrdom in the realm of evangelical witness in social affairs is high up on today’s agenda and has the great merit of evoking the selfsame essence of the Social Doctrine, which is the announcement of Christ and participation in the mission of the Church. Evident is a great need for the Social Doctrine of the Church to be de-intellectualized and deeply lived with the life of the Church. Perhaps too many are the conferences and symposiums held to discuss it, and less done to make it the praxis of a life enlightened by the truth of the Gospel.

**The main part of the Report consists of information on events that happened in 2010 on all five continents. Could you highlight some of the most interesting ones?**

This is the most prominent part of the Report. Presented is an extensive review of the main dynamic phenomena on the five continents in 2010. Among the many processes in question I could recall the numerous elections held in Africa, the battle waged by international potentates for the passage of laws in favor of abortion and detrimental to the family in Latin America, opposition in Spain to the single thought of “Zapaterism”, the discussion on the reception of *Caritas in Veritate* in the United States, and the frequently debatable policies pursued by agencies of the United Nations. Detailed as well is the information we offer on both anti-Christian persecutions and the themes of justice and peace in Asia.

**One chapter of the Report addresses the Magisterium of Benedict**

## **XVI. What can you tell us about that?**

In 2010 Benedict made two important apostolic visits; one in Portugal and the other in England, and both were rich in teachings of Social Doctrine. In addition, he insisted on two strategic fields: on one hand he gave a series of substantive and methodological indications so the Church would relate in a right and just manner with the world, and, on the other hand, he stressed natural law. The Report is a very useful instrument for becoming familiar with Holy Father's teaching and following it.

### **Each year you select a particular argument for in-depth consideration? What did you choose this year?**

In this year's Report there is a lengthy interview with Professor Simona Beretta of the Catholic University of Milan on "Development in *Caritas in Veritate*". The outcome is a very precise and farsighted picture of the current problems of development, which refutes the all too many clichés circulating in this regard.

### **This is the third edition of the Report. A substantial effort. . .**

Each annual Report also lends itself to be read in relationship with its predecessors. The year by year succession of these Reports is an added value. Thus evident is a very interesting itinerary to be followed and assessed from within. It certainly does involve a great effort on our part, but, as I said at the outset, we consider the outcome to be a most useful tool.