Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation

JPIC

Introduction

The initials JPIC express in synthesis a vision of reality: a complex reality whose dimensions are intimately interconnected and whose roots lie in the mystery of Creation and the Incarnation.

This means that lack of attention to any one of these dimensions affects the global reality and that Christians, by their existence and action in the world, are called to enter it as a leaven, to transform it from within according to the order of justice, peace the protection of our "common home". In this sense JPIC can be considered as a privileged paradigm of interpretation.

The pontifical teaching and, above all, the Ecumenical Council, Vatican II, contributed to its formation. Since then Organisations and Commissions have arisen, which concentrate their attention on these dimensions.

Our Institute has given a significant contribution in this area.

The evolution of ecclesial reflection and experience, during the papacy of Pope Francis, has led to the institution of a new Pontifical Dicastery for the Service of Integral Human Development, as will be explained later.
1. The JPIC as a paradigm

The Second Vatican Council has placed the Holy Scriptures at the foundation of theology and the Christian life. This centrality of the Word of God and the biblical spirituality that derives from it has prompted the Church to turn ever more clearly to the view of the world and history. At the beginning of the "Preface", the Pastoral Constitution "Gaudium et Spes", dedicated to the theme of the Church in the Modern World states:

"The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. Indeed, nothing genuinely human fails to raise an echo in their hearts" (n.1).

History, guided by the Holy Spirit, is the place where the Kingdom of God grows. This is the reason why the Church exists. The teaching of the Council gave rise to many further, theological reflections that put in a clearer light the fact that the promotion of justice is an integral part of the Gospel. The Synod of Bishops in 1971 which had as its theme "Justice in the World" states:

"...Christian love of neighbor and justice cannot be separated. For love implies an absolute demand for justice, namely a recognition of the dignity and rights of one's neighbor. Justice attains its inner fullness only in love. Because every person is truly a visible image of the invisible God and a sibling of Christ, the Christian finds in every person God himself and God's absolute demand for justice and love" (n. 34).

In turn, as regards the relationship between the gospel and the existing theology, between evangelization and human promotion, the Apostolic Exhortation Evangelii Nuntiandi states:
“Between evangelization and human advancement- development and liberation- there are in fact profound links. [...] They include links of the eminently evangelical order, which is that of charity: how in fact can one proclaim the new commandment without promoting in justice and in peace the true, authentic advancement of man?” (n. 31).

The close relationship existing between the mission of the Church and the history of man in the contemporary world, has been made more explicit and intensified, opening new paths of testimony, of evangelization and human promotion.

A fundamental contribution offered by the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004), and published by the "Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace", has been translated into more than thirty-five languages. In its *presentation* it states:

Transforming social realities with the power of the Gospel, to which witness is borne by women and men faithful to Jesus Christ, has always been a challenge and it remains so today at the beginning of the third millennium of the Christian era. The proclamation of Jesus Christ, the “Good News” of salvation, love, justice and peace, is not readily received in today's world, devastated as it is by wars, poverty and injustices. For this very reason the men and women of our day have greater need than ever of the Gospel: of the faith that saves, of the hope that enlightens, of the charity that loves.”

As a culmination of this process, it can now count the guidelines offered by Pope Francis through his multiple interventions (teachings, concrete actions, initiatives, gestures of proximity), and especially through the apostolic exhortation *Evangelii Gaudium* (EG), and the encyclical *Laudato Si’* '(LS), which addresses the whole human family.
2. **Prophetic Magisterium**

In the fourth chapter of *Evangelii Gaudium*, Pope Francis extensively presents the social aspects of evangelization. His Magisterium illumines and reaffirms the commitment to *Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation* (JPIC). The Gospel, says the Pope, not only offers a personal relationship with God, but also the building of a society steeped in brotherhood, justice, peace, dignity for all:

“Reading the Scriptures also makes it clear that the Gospel is not merely about our personal relationship with God. Nor should our loving response to God be seen simply as an accumulation of small personal gestures to individuals in need, a kind of “charity à la carte”, or a series of acts aimed solely at easing our conscience. The Gospel is about the kingdom of God (cf. Lk 4:43); it is about loving God who reigns in our world. [...]. Both Christian preaching and life, then, are meant to have an impact on society” (n. 180).

An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it. If indeed “the just ordering of society and of the state is a central responsibility of politics”, the Church “cannot and must not remain on the sidelines in the fight for justice” (n. 183).

Nor is peace “simply the absence of warfare, based on a precarious balance of power; it is fashioned by efforts directed day after day towards the establishment of the ordered universe willed by God, with a more perfect justice among men” (n. 219).

These statements of Pope Francis take us directly to the Gospel, and show us the face of Jesus, with his glance full of mercy and the compassion that dwells spontaneously on those who suffer most, on the marginalized of his time, to restore to them the dignity of sons and daughters, and to heal sicknesses and remedy the woes.
3. Christ’s Plan

With his words and his gestures of compassion, Jesus shows us this path that leads us to recognize the other person. From the beginning of his ministry, he makes clear his mission, and says that in him the Messianic prophecies are completely fulfilled, applying to himself these words of the prophet Isaiah:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring glad tidings to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, and to proclaim a year acceptable to the Lord.*

Rolling up the scroll, he handed it back to the attendant and sat down, and the eyes of all in the synagogue looked intently at him. He said to them. Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing.” (Lk 4, 18-22: cf. Is 61, 1-2).

The plan of Jesus is the establishment of the Kingdom of the Father:

“To the extent that he reigns within us, the life of society will be a setting for universal fraternity, justice, peace and dignity” (EG, n. 180).

“We incarnate the duty of hearing the cry of the poor when we are deeply moved by the suffering of others.” (EG, n.193).

This expression of Pope Francis has been carried out in the lives of founders and foundresses of religious congregations and institutes, leading them to dedicate themselves totally to seeking the good of those in need, according to the charism received from the Holy Spirit.
Their witness confirms that JPIC is the nucleus of any paradigm of mystical and prophetic Religious Life, as passionate seekers of the Kingdom of God.

Mystical, because following in the footsteps of Jesus, they try to live in constant communion with the Father, open to the breath of the Spirit.

Prophetic, that is, available to place themselves at the service of the Kingdom, among those most in need, the little ones, the marginalized, the destitute, and to be present in the new evangelisation Areopagi, so that God's plan for humanity may be realized in the world, until its complete fulfilment beyond all history.

Assuming, choosing in everyday life “Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation” (JPIC) means to live a religious life that is **samaritan** in nature, which is passionate for Christ and for humanity, one that thirsts for God and is always attentive to those whom he encounters by the roadside, to help restore them to human dignity, as sons and daughters of God.

### 4. Biblical values that are intimately united

Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation are biblical and Gospel values. They constitute a spirituality paradigm that nourishes our life and our mission.

These values are intimately united so that we cannot fully live one without the other two. You cannot be a builder of Justice and Peace if you do not take into account, also Creation, our “common home”, and without feeling that we are educators and live accordingly as such.
Experience shows that, in most cases, the cause of poverty is injustice, and this, in turn, gives way to violence. That is, it creates a vicious cycle: poverty breeds violence and injustice creates poverty.

On the contrary, when one respects justice, be it toward oneself or toward others, whether for Creation or toward God, you collaborate in making peace reign. This reciprocal relationship is very well expressed by the Psalmist when he exclaims: "Justice and peace shall kiss" (Ps 85: 11b).

In the Encyclical *Laudato Si’* Pope Francis eloquently speaks of the existing connection between these three values:

> “We can hardly consider ourselves to be fully loving if we disregard any aspect of reality: “Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely interconnected themes, which cannot be separated and treated individually without once again falling into reductionism.

*Everything is related, and we human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun, sister moon, brother river and mother earth” (n. 92).*
5. JPIC in the General Chapter GC XXIII

The reality of the contemporary world gives increasing urgency to our educational response. The General Chapters from 1996 to 2014 (XX GC - GC XXIII), in their Acts, as well as the documents proper to the institute from which they were derived, have resulted in a strengthening of the commitment to consolidate in the education of youth those values indicated by the acronym JPIC, precisely as the way of the future.

Among the "Guidelines", the Acts of the GC XXIII have the educational commitment to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation, the defense of life oriented toward living charity from a social perspective according to the Social Doctrine of the Church (cf. n. 63). Being "missionaries of hope and joy," commits us, in fact, as educating communities:

- To promote a culture of peace according to the Gospel, and to form ourselves through non-violent behavior, to legality, tolerance, respect for all individuals, along with other people and institutions to denounce the structures of injustice and exploitation (cf. n. 66.2).

- To experience an ecological conversion, so as to rediscover the taste for the beauty of creation and wonderment before His marvels; to mature the critical ability to see the injustices present in a development model that does not respect persons and the environment; to assume an austere and respectful lifestyle in the use of natural resources, also as a responsibility to future generations and solidarity with the less fortunate (Cf. n. 66.3).

- To bring about an evangelizing web presence that creates a culture in defense of the rights of the poorest, especially of girls and women, and for justice and peace (cf. n. 66.6).

- To work as an educating community for a prophetic educational presence in the territory, and in the Church, in synergy with the Salesian Family and other organizations committed to education, and to the promotion of justice, peace, solidarity economy, defense of life, human rights and the integrity of creation (cf. n. 66.8).
6. To promote JPIC transversal dimension in all Sectors of animation in the Institute

The guidelines of action just mentioned, make it clear that from the perspective of the educational mission, the purpose of each field of animation is to make from its perspective a specific contribution to the integral development of every person, and of all the people who make up the Educating Community.

In this sense, the JPIC paradigm is a transversal dimension proper to all animation Sectors of the FMA Institute.

The convergence in the various Sectors in the action and procedures for proposals may be very relevant to encourage the assimilation of these Gospel values and to spell them out in personal and community settings.

The educational mission is carried out in a plurality of environments, in view of the Preventive System, combining pedagogical perspectives that are closely integrated: cultural, evangelizing, social, communicative (Cf. Institute FMA, That they may have life in abundance. Guidelines of the FMA educational mission, no. 41-57).
7. THE TRANSVERSAL DIMENSION IN ALL SECTORS OF ANIMATION

The General Council Six-year Plan for 2015-2020, assumed this precise option:

“To concretely implement education for Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation from the perspective of Christian anthropology” (3.1.2, p. 13).

This choice finds its resonance in the programming of each Sector, and in particular those of Youth Ministry and in Formation.

The Youth Ministry Sector
Youth Ministry is the enculturated expression of the educational mission, a charismatic gift expressed in the experience of Don Bosco and Maria Domenica Mazzarello, and in the tradition of the Institute. It is the typical way of expressing the attention of the Church to the younger generations so that Christ may grow in their hearts, and they may commit themselves to active citizenship.

The Youth Ministry lies on the horizon of the Church’s Gospel of joy and the social dimension of evangelization (Cf. Plan of the Youth Pastoral PG, p. 15).
Education to JPIC is explicit in the GPA Programming.

- In the first choice: "Transformed by the Encounter," we find practical suggestions to "Live the mystical and prophetic dimensions of Salesian life with a passion for God and for the young." It is precisely:

To encourage the development of a keen desire for and competence in educating to human rights, the justice, peace, and the integrity of creation is in accordance with the social teaching of the Church and the Preventive System (2nd Way).

The following are specific ways of doing this:
- Sharing reflection through the “Youth Ministry Series”
- Designing educational programs that integrate the Preventive System, human rights, justice, peace, and the integrity of creation in the Educating communities
- Meeting at the Interprovincial Conferences
- Video conferencing
- Theoretical and practical formation sessions at the Human Rights Office

The second action: "To know and share good practices that promotes inclusion and personalized attention in the process of formation". It presents in a concrete way:
- The process with the Schools / VTC Commissions ESA, CIAM, CIAO, PCI and SSEuropa, along with Educating communities and families.

- In the second choice: Missionaries of hope and joy", a further action is proposed:

To identify strategies and content to educate young people to the knowledge and understanding of the practical implications of human rights, justice, peace and integrity of creation, for a sustainable future for each person and for all peoples (First Way).

- This would be the preferred manner, throughout the six-year period for the schools/VTC in the Commissions of ESA, CIAM, CIAO, PCI and SSEuropa.
The Formation Sector

In the past six years, in agreement with the Formation Sector, it was proposed to our different provinces that they make their own the teaching aid entitled “Guide us in your righteousness. A formative itinerary for a prophetic consecrated life”, prepared by an inter-congregational group, in which our Institute was also represented.

The original objective of the proposal was to offer an itinerary with the aim of inserting the JPIC, in the light of the Social Doctrine of the Church, in all the stages of the formation process of Religious Life, starting from ongoing formation. The text consists of general guidelines which, after a brief presentation of a clear theological foundation, unwind in assumptions, dimensions, options and criteria to guarantee the continuity of the process during the different stages of formation.

If this is the view, the values of the JPIC must be assimilated through formation. They cannot be reduced to simple statements of principle, and they must not even be presented in a merely ideological way or according to the dictates of the prevailing fashion. It is not enough to transmit them in courses with a wealth of good content. JPIC can enter into our lives and educational mission only through formation.

It is necessary to activate suitable processes which, focusing on experience and illuminated by well-chosen content, can favor the assimilation of values to the point of converting them into virtues. These processes will, then, be able to generate new lifestyles, leading to a true and proper ecological conversion. Truly, thus understood, JPIC can give rise to a style of life and mission, under the impetus of the great causes of humanity, a lifestyle permeated by a constant attitude of discernment of the signs of the times, and completely dedicated to an educational activity aimed at forming "good Christians and honest citizens".
8. The JPIC Method

To avoid the risk of remaining mere spectators of even tragic events in the world, our nation, our educating communities, the JPIC helps us to insert ourselves deeply into reality, in the light of the Word of God, and the Magisterium of the Church (in particular of her Social Doctrine) and the documents of recent popes.

There are various forms of analysis of reality. One of the most effective methods in the context of the JPIC is the classic method of Christian Youth Workers (YCW): SEE - JUDGE - ACT.

- **SEE** and ask yourself: What is happening? Which are the visible agents and which are clandestine? What are the causes?

- **JUDGE** in the light of God's Word, the social doctrine of the Church and other sources of note. Ask yourself: Why is this happening? What does the Word say? Is what is happening in conformity with human dignity and the plan of God the Creator?

- **ACT** in a way capable of transforming and evangelizing, first of all, ourselves and our communities; with and for young people, families, people of the place in which we live, and finally, the whole world.

9. Way of work proper to the JPIC

The dominant activity in this area is education; and the goal is the conversion of the structures of sin into structures suited to the establishment of a more humane, peaceful, just and fraternal world. Some concrete means could be as follows:

1) **Awareness**: The starting point is to become upset by injustice. Get in touch with people who are victims... cultivate within oneself feelings of compassion, solidarity, and hope...
2) **Information:** Gather information, and study the issues, causes and consequences. Also, make use of interpretative analysis.

3) **Consciousness:** Discover the mechanisms of injustice and try to defuse the ideological suppositions. It is not enough to stay on the conceptual level; it is necessary to awaken the public conscience.

4) **Education:** Commit yourself to a systematic training process on the topics of JPIC.

5) **Diffusion:** Spread to others the results of the research you have done, promote an appropriate campaign in favor of JPIC.

6) **Motivation:** Make others enthusiastic; disrupt the habits of apathy, indifference, selfishness, and passivity, promote instead, active participation in problem-solving.

7) **Participation:** Participate in campaigns, sign petitions, write letters, make yourselves present as members of the Institute in events such as forums and world summits; spread information on movements that have a social impact.

8) **Witness:** Assume appropriate lifestyles with a set goal, help to form a new culture of solidarity, one that is fair and non-violent. Insist on helping to create a counterculture that can be lived with joy and creativity.

9) **Organization:** Give life to a form of power that ensures equal opportunities to those who lack the means to come forward. Political action should not start from the highest and more distant social or territorial levels, but from the local, those that are close to the people who are fighting for the urgent need to obtain public services suited to their lives, and it must be accompanied with immediacy and with the necessary educational activities.
10) **Celebration:** Praying for peace and for justice is part of the specific tasks of JPIC. Turn to God asking him for all these values as a gift of his love. Shared prayer for the great causes of humanity is itself a means of awareness and outreach.

11) **Advocacy:** The defense of the weak is a serious and demanding activity, which requires preparation and competence. It means helping the most vulnerable population be aware of their rights and to make possible the defense of these rights. This can be accomplished through various activities both by individuals and organized groups, through media campaigns, public lectures of investigations, meetings ... 

12) **Lobbying:** The work of the JPIC aims to influence at the highest level possible. We intend to access the governments, presenting well-founded information and documents, to intervene with legally-based language in the structures of the United Nations, to qualify to engage in Advocacy or Lobbying.

- The **IIMA Human Rights Office - Geneva** is engaged at the last two levels. It is located in Veyrier, at the Council of Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland. The mission of the Office is to create and promote a network between the FMA Institute and the United Nations, its bodies and mechanisms, for the protection and promotion of Human Rights. [http://dirittumanifma.blogspot.it/](http://dirittumanifma.blogspot.it/)

- The **“International Volunteering Women Education and Development”** (VIDES) also has Consultative In the field of JPIC, our Institute is enriched by the contribution of reflection and operation that comes from other Church organizations, both religious, lay. Among these, we want to emphasize the [http://www.vides.org/](http://www.vides.org/)
10. The Institute networking with other organizations

As I mentioned in the introduction, the Institute for several years now has been networking with Church organizations, both religious, and lay. Among these we want to emphasize the following:

1) "Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development"

This is the name assumed by the Vatican where, as of January 1, 2017, they joined together the *Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace*, and three other Vatican organizations: the Pontifical Council "Cor Unum", the Pontifical Council for the Ministry to Migrants, and the Pontifical Council for Health Care Ministry, as a result of the reform of the Roman Curia made by Pope Francis. They are constituted at the new Sector for the Charity Commission, the Commission for ecology and the Commission for health care professionals. The Sector has jurisdiction with respect to *Caritas Internationalis* according to its statutes.

The Pontifical Council for "Justice and Peace" was rooted in *Gaudium et Spes* (# 90), and was established by Pope Paul VI, who had also given it this name (cf. Encyclical *Populorum Progressio*, n. 5: "Justice and peace is its name and its program").

Only later, with the *Message for the International Day of Peace* in 1990, did John Paul II draw attention to the need to care for the "common house". Since then he formed the trinomial *Justice, Peace, Integrity of Creation*.

2) The Commission "Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation"

of the Union of Superiors General and the International Union of Superiors General. It was formalised as a joint working group with USG / UISG in 1982.

To promote and support the integration of JPIC in the life and mission of Religious Institutes, members of USG and UISG, in coordination with the Superiors General, their leadership teams and the promotors of JPIC at international level.
3) The groups of men and women religious, Promoters of JPIC USG / UISG
Integrated by delegates from religious (men e women) of congregations residing in Rome, were called to cooperate in the implementation of these values in the life and mission of their communities at worldwide. There are two language groups: Spanish / Portuguese and English.

4) The "Pax Christi International" Movement, works on a global scale, with a wide variety of tasks in the field of peace, security, disarmament, demilitarization, human rights, and the relationship between religion and religious conflicts and the construction of a more just world. ([http://www.paxchristi.net/](http://www.paxchristi.net/)).

For Personal Reflection

1. After having read these notes, write a short comment. If possible, send it back to the address indicated below

2. Of the aspects presented, which would you enjoy knowing more about ?

3. In your community, how could you use the following proposal: "A formative itinerary for a prophetic religious life"?

4. What would you suggest in order to realize JPIC education in your Province?

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We invite you to interact through the blog:

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"Prophecy of a new world"

http://jpicfma24.blogspot.it/