

will suggest. The level of detail of this plan can be worked out within the Dialogue, which begins where God is invited.

In the mystery of the “**Presentation of the Lord**”, we touch on the question of entrusting to God, in the temple, what already belongs to Him. In meditating on this mystery, I often try to understand the nature of God’s action in me which led to the realisation of the idea, in order to reentrust it to His care. This offering is also has a public dimension, involving promotion, marketing and all the consequences resulting therefrom.

In the mystery of “**the Finding of Jesus in the Temple**”, we touch on the problem of product sustainability, design. If the product has stayed on the market for a “12” year period and we continue to find it in the divine economy of creating and developing the world (even if it is a small thing, as we do not know who and what will inspire us in the future), it means we have succeeded in the economic field and in God’s field at the same time.

In other mysteries of the Rosary, certain connections, comparisons or touches can be found, but I will leave this for individual meditation.

An example of the connection between prayer and reflection on the mysteries of Rosary in the context of our attitudes of dialogue in the economy of everyday life is a generalization, perhaps not the best, but showing the possibility of seeking and finding a space of economic dialogue in a sphere exclusively for contact with God.

Dialogue always leads to cooperation, this “holy cooperation”, and not only with God, but also with the people who we invite to cooperate.

The purpose of every dialogue is always to better understand the other person and their faith, and also deepen understanding of our own faith in being an apostle wherever God sends us.

Questions for personal and communal reflection:

1. Do I know and have a sense of responsibility that my whole life (including money and finance in everyday life) and all of my actions constitute my participation in God's plan of creation for the world?
2. Does my Dialogue with God cover matters of my daily life, work, management?
3. What is my responsibility for the place where I work, and for the people with whom I work?, Do I pray for my employers, employees, cooperators, superiors?

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Apostles for Today

Prayer and Reflection - October 2017

DIALOGUE IN ECONOMICS

Economics is one of those social sciences which helps the correct functioning of a world developed according to the will of God, and what follows is also the consequence of the words written in the Bible, Genesis (1:26):

Then God said, "Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have **dominion** over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

This is the **world** we received as a gift of original creation, for the purpose of proper management, of Cactive and careful administration”.

Active and careful administration (**dominion**) is not only recommended by the Gospel, but also by local law established for our congregations and also for the Union, as recalled by Fr. Friedrich Kretz SAC in his introduction to the Textbook of Economic Administration for the Societ .

This “**dominion**” as expressed in economic science, is a means and a use of various tools for the purpose of “administration”, ie. responsible management taking care of what has been given and entrusted.

In order consciously to be able to take care, to manage according to God's will, it is necessary to include God in this dialogue, as the Creator of what has been given to us. The **Dialogue in Economics**, God's dialogue, takes place at various levels: local and personal. This dialogue concerns everyone personally, depending on their situation and condition. It concerns the owner, manager, supervisor, employee and everyone who makes us of the product of their work. We are all protagonists in the same dialogue.

Let us leave the global economy to the experts of this world who, like us, will one day have to give a final account of their stewardship (Lk 14: 25-33).

In the following part of this reflection, I would like to share my personal experience of dialogue in economics, on the level of my relationship with God, with other people and myself, giving some indications, perhaps even some suggestions, models which have been very useful in helping me to remain actively engaged in this Dialogue.

The essence of the beginning of this difficult dialogue with God, in the management of HIS property, is God’s invitation to work, to make money, to accumulate money, to spend and administer them. The result of this invitation is the awareness, given by God Himself, that all these goods belong to Him, and have

their beginning in Him. Putting God in first place, not depending solely on my own skills, education, resourcefulness, need to possess and to create a world in my own image instead of in **HIS** image, is an act of trust which, instead of “JESUS I trust myself”, expresses “**JESUS I trust in YOU**”.

Much time passed before I understood and accepted this, and it has become for me a kind of conversion, metanoia and liberation. Such conversion is probably more difficult for lay people in their contexts, as their life is so connected with the skills they possess in order to acquire such goods, but this conversion is also necessary in consecrated life in order to understand God's will regarding the possession and administration of such material goods.

Awareness that what I have is not my own, but something which I have received in order to manage, changes the perspective of looking at the world, at work, at earning, investing and saving. It is a conversion that gives life, as the Scriptures say: “Repent and live!” (Ez 18:32). Such awareness is not easy to develop and every day requires conversion, prayer, dialogue, giving a “management report”, a continuous renewal of friendship with HIM to whom all belongs.

St. Vincent saw economic resources as ultimately belonging to our Lord Jesus Christ and as the heritage of His poor. (cf. SAC Law n 26).

On my way to work, in my daily dialogue with God, I try to completely entrust to Him my day, my skills, my decisions, my partners, my employees and the people I will meet that day, in order to enable me to be a useful instrument “in the vineyard of the Lord”.

In prayer, together with God, I find solutions to professional problems or other matters entrusted to me. Sometimes the answer comes immediately, but often it needs more time, in order that my heart be opened and prepared for it.

The best place and time to talk about these topics related to work is before His presence in the Blessed Sacrament or in the Sacrament of Penance. In these two realities of His presence, the answer to the questions asked comes to the heart or directly to the “ear”.

I often entrust my work and professional duties to God through the saints, but especially to St. Joseph the Worker. Pope John XXIII taught me this prayer, which I offer here as an aid which you may find useful.

Prayer of the Pope John XXIII to St. Joseph the Worker

O Saint Joseph, guardian of Jesus, chaste spouse of Mary, who passed your life in the perfect fulfillment of duty, sustaining the Holy Family of Nazareth with the labour of your hands, protect kindly those who trustingly turn to you. You know their aspirations, their miseries, their hopes, and they have recourse to you because they know that they will find in you one who will understand and protect them. You too have known trial, labor and weariness.

But, even in the midst of worries of the material life, your soul was filled with profound peace and it exulted in unerring joy through intimacy with the Son of God entrusted to you, and with Mary,

his most sweet mother. Make those whom you protect understand that they are not alone in their labour, but show them how to discover Jesus near them, to receive him with grace, to guard him faithfully, as you have done.

And assure that in every family, in every factory, in every workshop, wherever a Christian works, all may be satisfied in charity, in patience, in justice, in seeking to do well, so that abundant gifts may descend from heaven.

Amen.

Trusting, discovering and allowing God to lead us allows us to enter into a specific dialogue with God, sometimes allowing us to gauge a particular economic situation and whether or not to take concrete action. I will try to describe it through a particular example.

Once while contemplating the **joyful mysteries of the Rosary**, it struck me that, based on their meaning, it was possible to find an answer regarding the appropriateness of choosing a particular economic task and creating a feasibility study.

At the very beginning, before a new “business idea, product, project to implement” comes to birth, **the Annunciation** is to be followed - a certain thought, God's touch, the Angel's prompting: “You might do this”, or “maybe this might be important to do”... **Annunciation** is a specific beginning of the process, the conception of an idea, the START UP. Annunciation is also the skipping of a heartbeat, a brainstorm, when a “wonderful” new idea appears. But in the mystery of the Annunciation, there remains a lot of uncertainty, a response yet to be given: will something happen? Will it come about? Is it really God's will? Will it be anointed by God?

The next step is to do further evaluation, to try to reduce risk and see whether our idea is a one-off, unique, innovative, because only such characteristics and our way of implementing our idea can guarantee its future success (and show whether it is “anointed by God”). It is also necessary to check our design against what is already in the market, to see whether there is already anything similar to our idea. There are often many similar products but only some are successful. Mary's visit to Elizabeth further confirmed to her that her son was the Messiah; Elizabeth's son was already even at this point shown to be “prophet”, already pointing to and revealing Mary's son as the promised “Messiah”, “anointed by God”.

If your idea is “anointed by God”, you can sing the Magnificat and bring it forth to be an instrument in the hands of the Father for helping to “save the world”. If you say that it is a “prophet”, this decision to bring it forth still rests with you, but the possibility of success can be far more difficult to achieve.

We go to the mystery of “Birth”, a coming to be in which the idea becomes reality and complements God's plan of creation. This mystery can meditate on further, the revelation to the shepherds, the Epiphany of the “birth” and so on, as the Lord