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Ad lectores

Pope Francis, through the Congregation for Catholic Education, has wished to bring about an educational and formative movement in favour of care of the common home, given the serious challenges facing all the inhabitants of the planet. First of all, however, these challenges confront national governments. They have a grave obligation to address these challenges, and to that end, to offer guidance to the peoples. To carry out the Papal mandate, the Congregation has chosen to promote discourse on a Global Compact on Education. Indeed, the Encyclical *Laudato si'* calls repeatedly, in various forms, for an *itinerarium* offering humankind an education to integral ecology (nn. 15; 47; 53; 63; 105; 108; 111; 114; 119; 120; 143-146; 162; 190; 197; 202; 209-215; 219; 229; 231). An integral ecology is needed because «ecological culture cannot be reduced to a series of urgent and partial responses to the immediate problems of pollution, environmental decay and the depletion of natural resources. There needs to be a distinctive way of looking at things, a way of thinking, policies, an educational programme, a lifestyle and a spirituality which together generate resistance to the assault of the technocratic paradigm. Otherwise, even the best ecological initiatives can find themselves caught up in the same globalized logic» (n. 111), namely, the same kind of globalized logic that has precipitated the global challenge to be addressed.

The Pontifical University Antonianum, with the Pontifical Faculty of Theology Seraphicum, answering the Pope's call, have thought to offer a contribution to the initiative of the Congregation for Catholic Education, as it is described in the web-portal dedicated to it (https://www.educationglobalcompact.org/). To this end, from the 14th to the 16th of January 2020, at the *Aula Magna* of our University, the Roman *Auditorium Antonianum*, a three-day event was held devoted to studying commitment to education for integral ecology, rooted in Franciscan tradition and sensibility.

The event was inaugurated, in the afternoon of Tuesday, the 14th, by Pope Francis's video Message *On Launching the Compact on Education* (12 September 2019). Papers were then read by Professors: Andrew

Steane (*The Role of Science in the Avenues of Understanding and Appreciating Nature*) and Felipe Fernández-Armesto (*The Perils of Environmental Truthfulness*), followed by the testimony of Francesco d'Errico (*Riflessioni sulla relazione tra cultura, ambiente e educazione: i San del Kalahari e gli Ovahimba del Kunene*).

The next morning, that of Wednesday the 15th, it was their turn to read their papers of Professors: Giovanni Buccino (*Pedagogia e neuroscienze: le suggestioni della cognizione incarnata*) and Massimo Folador (*L'impresa come luogo educativo*), as it was, too, the time for Professor Giorgio Bonaccorso's communication (*Il valore per-formativo della liturgia*).

In the afternoon of the same day, the four papers read were, respectively, by Professors: Giuseppe Buffon (*Il Cantico di Francesco d'Assisi*); Celia Deane-Drummond (*Biodiversity and Theology in the Public Sphere: Wonder and Paying Attention to All Creatures*); Andrea Bizzozero (*Approcci sistemici, interdisciplinari e sinodali all'educazione*); Fabien Revol (*Francis of Assisi: Model for Integral Ecology*).

The morning of Thursday, the 16th, it being the annual feast day of the University, was a time for "institutional" addresses. The then Vice Rector (now the Rector Magnificus), Professor Agustín Hernández Vidales, delivered the Greeting, which was followed by the Message – video-recorded for the occasion – of the President of the European Parliament, The Honourable David Maria Sassoli. Several testimonies were then heard concerning the Compact on Education, namely by: Gianfranco Bologna (WWF Italia), Sebastiano La Piscopia (Societé Internationale de Droit Militaire et de la Guerre), Frank Raes (Museum of Anthropocene Technology, Laveno Mombello, VA), Sergio Talamo (Formez PA, Centro Servizi, Assistenza, Studi e Formazione per l'Ammodernamento delle Pubbliche Amministrazioni), Jean-Pascal van Ypersele (IPCC, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change), Martinus Wilibrodus Kowe (OFM, Order of Friars Minor), Jean Mboma (Université Loyola du Congo, CD), Laura Vicuña Pereira Manso (Special Assembly for the Amazon of the Synod of Bishops). The Message, too, was projected that was addressed to this academic gathering by the Ambassador of the Republic of Honduras to the Holy See, H.E. Carlos Ávila Molina. The monographic issue of *Antonianum*, the first of the year (2020, the 95th) was presented; aptly, since it is dedicated to inter-

disciplinary research on integral ecology, and was put together to mark the fifth anniversary of the Encyclical *Laudato si',* and is indeed titled: *Ecologia integrale e ricerca interdisciplinare - V anniversario della Laudato si'*. This intense morning session concluded with the address by the Chancellor of the Pontifical University Antonianum, the Minister General of the Order of Friars Minor, Fr. Michael Anthony Perry, and with the ceremony of awarding the prize named after St. Francis of Assisi, the "Premio San Francesco".

In the afternoon of the 16th, it was time for the singularly valuable address on the relationship of education to nature (*Il rapporto educativo con la natura*) delivered by Cardinal Cláudio Hummes, Emeritus Archbishop of São Paulo in Brazil, Emeritus Prefect of the Congregation for the Clergy, the President of the Ecclesial Network for the Pan-Amazon Region, REPAM (Red Eclesial Panamazónica), who – we are happy to be able to note – holds a Doctorate earned at our own Faculty of Philosophy. Thereafter, Professor Andrea Di Maio delivered the final paper (*Le vestigia trinitatis nella natura: la relazionalità dell'essere*), and Archbishop Angelo Vincenzo Zani, the Secretary of the Congregation for Catholic Education, offered conclusions drawn from the three-day academic event. This issue of *Antonianum* – the first of this year, its 96th – brings to you a significant part of all that was shared with attendees of the three-day event, specifically the contributions that require at least a modicum of footnotes for their contents to be conveyed fully. For the rest of the richly rewarding presentations, we refer you to the video documentation available on our University's YouTube channel.

It was as far back as 1964 that Marshall McLuhan coined the felicitous expression: "our global village" (*Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*, New York 1964, p. 34). It was a "prophetic image" at a time when neither he nor anyone else would yet be able to foresee how much closer everything and everyone was going to be brought to everything and everyone else by the internet and the social networks. In this present world of ours, a world almost without distances – something we have been made to experience in another way, too, albeit under a negative aspect, by the present pandemic – the African proverb that «it takes a whole village to educate a child» (Pope Francis, *Message for the Launch of the Global Compact on Education*, 12 September 2019) sounds as a universal – etymologically, a "catholic" (*καθ'ὅλου*) – call; it brings to light

how care of our common home, our Planet Earth, requires everyone to lend a hand, each according to their abilities, skills, responsibilities. Thus the Antonianum University, for its part, places itself at the service of this global village, in order to help educate this generation, and the generations to come, to an integral ecology; it is doing so now also through this issue of its scholarly journal, the first of 2021, a year when humanity is facing tremendous challenges, which it must marshal all of its resources to meet and overcome, together.

Stéphane Oppes