



## **I. Origin and nature of Social Doctrine**

### **The Mystery of Jesus Christ**

1. The Advent time, already imminent, invites us once again to reflection and commitment. In it we will contemplate the mystery of the Son of God that for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and by the work of the Holy Spirit he became incarnate of Mary, the Virgin, and became man. His birth and life among men is Gospel, an announcement of salvation that confirms God's love for man and the sublime dignity with which he is born.

### **The Dignity of Man and his Rights**

2. The fundamental and inalienable rights of every human being are sprouted from this dignity, which never leaves him, from his conception to his natural death. And this, no matter their condition: male or female, rich or poor, wise or ignorant, innocent or inmate, and whatever their color. This dignity is the key and the center of the mystery of man and all that concern to it. From her every human problem can be enlightened and find a solution. This dignity also illuminates us to appreciate the sublime grandeur of earthly life and the efforts with which man strives to make it more fully human. Not for being a pilgrim from heaven, the Christian neglects the construction of the earthly homeland.

### **The Social Doctrine of the Church**

3. From the contemplation of the mystery of the Incarnation and birth of Jesus Christ, spontaneously arises the announcement of the Gospel applied to the social life considered at all levels: familiar, cultural, economic, ecological, political,

international. This is what is called the Church's Social Doctrine. It derives from the Gospel, but it is not a minor derivative of it. It is the Gospel of Jesus Christ applied to the social life of man. It's his temporal resonance. And just as the Church cannot shut the Gospel, it cannot silence its Social Doctrine. No one has to fear her. The Church announces it in favor of the man and of the social peace, for the service of all.

Although the Social Doctrine is systematically developed from Pope Leo XIII, and is often disseminated through pontifical encyclical, its origin goes back to Jesus himself and the Apostles' teaching. It even sinks its roots into the ancient Scriptures quoted by Jesus, especially the law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms. And it developed over the centuries thanks to the teaching of the Holy Fathers and Doctors of the Church and the contest of the People of God.

### **The Compendium of Social Doctrine: ecclesial and pastoral fact**

4. The complexity and acceleration of the life of man, as well as the phenomenon of globalization, have in recent times compelled a continuous development of the Social Doctrine of the Church, so that today constitutes a true doctrinal body. Pope John Paul II, with his clear pastoral gaze and by virtue of his authority as Pastor of the whole Church, arranged for the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace to draw up the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, whose Castilian version has been published recently. The intrinsic richness of the Compendium and the authority that arranged its composition allow us to consider it as an ecclesial and pastoral fact of magnitude. And, although first drafted for the use of pastoralists, we recommend their study and application to all members of the people of God, in particular the members of the clergy responsible for exposing Christian doctrine, catechists, catholic teachers and laic faithful who have special responsibilities in the construction of society.

### **Scope of this letter and method for your employment**

5. We do not intend to address in this letter all chapters of Social Doctrine; for example, family, human work, economic life, the political community, the international community, the safeguarding of the environment. Nor do we try to develop its principles and values, nor to unravel all the implications that these have for argentine social life. We simply want to show the organicity of the principles and values that sustain this Doctrine, and to propose to the reflection some situations and questions. And this to encourage everyone to study the Social Doctrine of the Church, to analyse with their light some aspects of the situation of

the country, and, in conjunction with their own science and experience, apply it to the present moment. And thus, working together with all men of goodwill, find concrete ways to contribute to the reconstruction of the social fabric, strengthen the sense of belonging to the nation and increase the awareness of being citizens.

## **II. Five basic Principles of Social Doctrine**

### **Projections on the social reality of Argentina**

#### **The Principles**

6. On the irreplaceable basis of the dignity of the human person, created in the image and likeness of God, which postulates an integral and solidary humanism, five permanent principles are erected, in the form of five columns, which support the entire building of the Social Doctrine of the Church; namely: the common good, the universal destiny of goods, subsidiarity, participation and solidarity. These principles have a general and fundamental character, as they refer to the social reality as a whole. They must be appreciated in their unity, connection and articulation (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church 161-162; onwards C).

#### **1 ° The common good**

7. "Of the dignity, unity and equality of all people, derives, first, the principle of the common good, which must refer to every aspect of social life to find fullness of meaning" (C 164). This is the set of values and conditions that enable the integral development of man in society, including his spiritual development. The common good is therefore the humus of a nation. From there she germinates and reconstructs herself. "The common good is not the simple sum of the particular assets of each of the subjects of the social body". (ib.). If so, the existence of a nation would be subject to the vicissitudes of the different sectors. The common good of a nation is a superior good, before all private or sectoral goods, which unites all citizens for the same company, for the benefit of all its members and also of the international community. It cannot be biased, divided, or privatized. "Being of each and every one, it is and remains common because it is indivisible and because only together it is possible to achieve it, to increase it and to guard it, also in view of the future" (ib.). A society that wants to be at the service of the human being "is that which proposes as a priority goal the common good, as well as all

the men and all the man. The person cannot find the realization only in itself; that is to say, dispense "with" and "for" others" (C 165). The construction of the common good is verified in the promotion and defense of the weakest and most unprotected members of the community.

## **Situations and issues**

8. How can we measure our will to rebuild the nation from the perspective of the common good? We propose to the reflection only two questions.

First, defending the acquired rights and the claim of the new. If by defending them or claiming them we do so in respect of the essential rights of others, we will be building the nation. Otherwise we would be damaging it, because we would be acting against the common good.

Second, behavior with public goods. Although "public good" and "common good" are not synonymous, the first is referred to the second, because it is obtained with the contribution of all and for the service of all. It is regrettable that, for some, "public" acquires a totally opposite sense. It would not be for everyone, for the service of all, acquired with the contribution of all, which all must be guarded and defended, but nobody, put there to appropriate it, damage, destroy it, or distribute it discretionally between friends and customers. Educating in respect of public goods is one of the great challenges facing family, school, catechesis and the social media.

Without this respect it would be very hard to coexist harmoniously and very difficult to build a republic.

## **2 ° The universal destiny of the goods**

9. "Among the many implications of the common good, the principle of the universal destiny of goods is immediately raised: God has destined the earth and how much it contains for the use of all men and peoples. Consequently, the goods created must reach everyone equitably under the aegis of justice and with the

company of charity "(C 171). This principle of the Social Doctrine of the Church, formulated from ancient times by the Holy Fathers, was often relegated to oblivion. Sometimes because it was not known to relate to another principle derived from it: that of private property. Others, not to understand that this is a concretion of the universal destiny of the goods, and not their denial; that is to say that all members of the community, and not just some, have the right to possess what is necessary. Others, not to understand that the property is never absolute, but is always subordinate to the common good. Others, finally, for not understanding that both the universal destiny of the goods, and the right to appropriate them, carry the right-duty to produce them; that is to say, the right-duty of the work.

## **Situations and issues**

10. Attentive to this classical principle of Social Doctrine, and to the impoverishment of a large part of the population, precipitated by the institutional crisis of 21 December 2001, many questions arise. First of all, what is the responsibility of the political authorities before and during the crisis. But also to the other sectors of society, especially to employers and trade unionists, in particular those who profess Christians, for failing to perceive sufficiently the impoverishment that had been occurring and which accelerated in an uncontrollable way seriously injuring the dignity of so many brothers and sisters. While we recognize that there are many that Argentines, citizens and authorities have done since then to reverse the situation, still a lot remains to be done. And so we have to interrogate ourselves about our willingness to commit ourselves even more and better to overcome general impoverishment.

11. There are many situations and forms of poverty due to different causes: natural (a catastrophe), structural (an unfair economic law), spiritual or moral (to be greedy, beggar), cultural (inability to cultivate the gifts received from God and provide for their own livelihoods). Several of these forms of poverty result in a man not being able to appropriate the part of the goods that he belongs to his integral development. and therefore, if they were not exceeded, the number of those already in poverty could be further multiplied, causing irreparable harm to them and a great detriment to all.

12. We particularly call attention to two serious situations of poverty, which we understand can only be overcome if we confront them all with firm and lasting policies, the guarantor of which is the State.

First, the absence of a dignified and stable work, which degrades broad sectors of the honest and hardworking people and disintegrates the family. This is one of the worst misfortunes suffered by Argentina, the magnitude of which has no full idea.

History teaches us that nations destroyed in devastating wars have been able to rise thanks to the work of the people. This is always the main wealth of a nation. If we want to see our resurgence, we must strive for the dignity of the worker through the creation of genuine sources of work and the suppression of black work and of the gift.

13. A second situation of poverty is the difficult access to land, which is the first gift God gives to man to provide for his livelihood. In Argentina, the large territorial extension, combined with a relatively scarce population and highly concentrated in the greater Buenos Aires and in many provincial capitals, threaten to constitute a permanent structure that generates poverty. In the balance between industry and field lies one of the secrets of the wealth of a nation. It is demonstrated by the experience of the highly industrialized first world countries that cultivate their lands with care.

So we ask: would it be appropriate to design a demographic policy that would reverse the exodus to greater Buenos Aires and provincial capitals? In the same vein, would the municipalities of the interior, especially the rural ones, and the regional economies have to strengthen, so that the man of the interior, in particular the young person, could flourish in his own social and cultural context? Would a wise agrarian reform help encourage the people of the countryside, mainly the small and medium-sized producers, to stay in rural life and work? How can we promote the realization of laws that recognise aboriginal rights to productive land and community ownership? What political measures are there to support in defending and preserving the environment?

14. There are other situations of poverty that also deserve special attention.

First of all, the deficiency of education, at all levels. Without proper schooling and teaching, it will be increasingly difficult for the poor to participate in the goods needed for their development.

Also, the precariousness of health services, which many do not have access to health is the first tangible good for every human being. Hence, the importance of caring for physical and psychic integrity and the severity of lacking of it.

Finally, and as the coronation of all situations that engender poverty, there is the immense public debt. It is our liveliest wish that this, despite the difficulties, is negotiated successfully and for the relief of our people. We must always remember that the debt has two sides, which must be put on notice to avoid them in the future: the injustice of the international economy reigning in this field, and the irresponsibility of those who contracted the debt or encouraged to contract it to backs of the village.

### **3 ° The subsidiarity**

15. This word enunciates another principle key of Social Doctrine. It means that all societies of higher order must put themselves in an attitude of help (Subsidium) Therefore, of support, promotion, development-respect of the minor ones. In this way, the intermediate social bodies can properly develop the functions that they are involved in, without having to give them unjustly to other social aggregations of higher level, of which they would end up being absorbed and replaced and by seeing denied, in definitive, their own dignity and their living space (C. 186). The principle of subsidiarity protects people from the abuses of higher social bodies and urges the latter to help individuals and intermediate bodies develop their tasks. This principle is imposed because every person, family and intermediate body has something of original to offer to the community (C. 187).

#### **Situations and issues**

16. The principle of subsidiarity is valid not only in the economy, but in all orders. For example in education. Thus, the public school of private management plaics a very important role in the society, and it is of justice that the State contributes to cover the expenses of this education with the taxes that the citizens pay.

This principle of subsidiarity has been abandoned many times in the organization of society, by excess or by default. By excess, when the State monopolizes for itself all the initiatives, freedoms and responsibilities, which are characteristic of the people and the minor communities of the society: the statism. By default, when the State does not protect the weak against the strongest, or does not provide its



economic, institutional, legislative aid to the smaller social entities when it is necessary: liberalism at the extreme.

17. In Argentina we have known the two extremes. At least since the 1930s there was a growing statism, that nourished, in the collective unconscious, the false image that the State would be like a god, that exists always, that everything can, to whom all can be demanded, and even it can be mistreated because nothing bad it It could happen. We also met a voracious liberalism, which dismantled the State by privatizing its companies, but without the social protection network that would have demanded, and without the necessary control over the new public service providers, further increasing the spending public that was intended to reduce. Both currents collided and produced the known social earthquake. We are now at the stage of reconstruction, learning from the painful experience.

On the other hand, the subculture of the gift is in force. It perverts the principle of subsidiarity, degrades the poor and makes it a subject unable to participate in democratic life, engendering a new social problem.

18. Many questions are also imposed here. How to rebuild the State and make it at the service of civil society? How can we prevent them from devouring societies or intermediate organizations? Or, on the contrary, to declare itself absent and leave the citizens at the discretion of the powerful? How to banish from the political activity the practice of buying accessions through the gift? How to promote the relationship between peoples, respecting the idiosyncrasy and values of them, and the necessary guarantees that make possible between them a fair and equitable trade exchange?

#### **4 ° Participation**

19. Participation is another of the pillars of the Social Doctrine of the Church. It is a characteristic “consequence of the subsidiarity, which is expressed, essentially, in a series of activities by means of which the citizen, as individual or associated with others, directly or through the representatives themselves, contributes to the cultural life, economic, political and social of the civil community to which it belongs. It is a duty that everyone must consciously fulfil in a responsible way and with a view to the common good. It cannot be delimited or restricted to any



particular content of social life. Participation in community life is not only one of the greatest aspirations of the citizen, called upon to exercise freely and responsibly the civic role with and for others, but also one of the pillars of all democratic ordinations, In addition to one of the best guarantees of permanence of the democracy (C 189, 190).

## **Situations and issues**

20. What is the degree of participation of the Argentine in the social life, and particularly in the defense and progress of the political society?

There are many positive signs. In general, the voter's index seems satisfactory and increases participation in civil society: neighborhood centres, clubs, NGO of all kinds, professional associations, etc.

But there are also negative signs. Rights are demanded, but they are not always known or fulfilled. That the people do not intervene in the government but by their representatives: it is a principle that is often misinterpreted. It is thought that the duties of the citizen are exhausted in the election act. This is fulfilled, many people say goodbye to their citizenship until the next election. They are not aware that at the exit of the darkroom the daily life awaits them with a multitude of other duties citizens, of varying degree, but all necessary to act as citizen and to build the republic: from not crossing the red light, not making noises annoying, to take care of the cleanliness of the public spaces, to carry out the work well, to pay the services and taxes, to demand accounts of its straight administration, to do with responsibility the own option partisan, to respect the others, to enter a democratic dialogue with she. And thus, until the fulfillment of more serious duties, like running for a public office, and, if it were the case, to make political judgement to the constituted authority, etc. They forget that the fulfillment of these duties is the necessary answer to the society, which defends and promotes the rights of which they enjoy. Not without reason it has been said that Argentines are 37 million inhabitants, but we can not be 37 million citizens. The inhabitant usufruct the nation and only demands rights. The citizen builds it because, in addition to demanding its rights, it fulfills its duties.

21. Among the many issues that arise, we raise the following: how to fight to

transform the passivity of many into a genuine democratic participation in political society? How to put in place the initiatives referred to the political reforms that were agreed at the table of the Argentine dialogue? How to ensure that the electoral promises or projects are concreted in just and timely laws? How can we legally guarantee the great contribution of the volunteers without harming them or the institutions they serve with generosity?

"Jesus Christ, author of our faith and our citizen commitment": this prayer that we prayed last year in preparation for the National Eucharistic Congress of Corrientes, and this year for the Congress of Laity, continues to interpeleling the Christians.

## 5 ° Solidarity

22. "Solidarity confers particular emphasis on the intrinsic sociability of the human person, on the equality of all in dignity and rights, on the common path of men and peoples towards an increasingly convinced unity. Never has such a widespread awareness of the bond manifested between men and peoples been in existence today (C 192). These interdependence relationships, "which are, in fact, forms of solidarity, must be transformed into relationships that tend towards a true and own ethical-social solidarity. Solidarity must be captured, above all, in its value of social principle of the computer of the institutions "(C 192.193).

23. In difficult situations, Argentines show solidarity. For example, when we suffer from flooding. The repeated political and social crises might have ended with us if we had not been in solidarity. It is admirable how, in borderline situations, unthinkable forms of solidarity are born, especially in the humble people.

Nonetheless, solidarity needs substantial growth in order to strengthen citizen awareness and the responsibility of everyone for all. Solidarity expresses the moral strength of a community when, surpassing the superficial feeling, it rises to the rank of social virtue. It is not just that the amount of donations grows to alleviate the ills of others in the face of painful events or catastrophes. It is mainly about reaching personal and community to "the firm and persevering determination to strive for the common good; that is to say, for the sake of each and every one, that we may all be truly responsible for all "(C 193).

## **Situations and issues**

24. Many issues arise in this line. There is a disturbing form of insolidarity: the scandalous growth of inequality in income distribution. A society in which social equity is lacking would be in serious danger of not being solidary.

Another form of insolidarity is the weakening of the culture of work in many who enjoy it. Work badly done, to ungain, without craving to be perfected. Work is a service to the community, which entitles you to eat from it.

It also concerns the reiteration of unattended claims and disproportionate strikes, which do not repair the unfair consequences suffered by the weakest: children, the elderly, the sick, the workers.

In a society where marginalization grows, there would be no wonder of violent demonstrations by sectors excluded from the world of work, which could degenerate into dangerous social confrontations.

25. The situations and questions outlined show the complex social field in which everyone, but especially you, dear laic faithful, should reflect the principles of the social doctrine of the Church, to contribute to find solutions, from their own vocation and mission of citizens, together with the other members of the society..

## **III. Four Fundamental Values of Social Life**

26. "The social doctrine of the Church, in addition to the principles that must preside over the building of a society worthy of man, also indicates fundamental values. The relationship between principles and values is undoubtedly reciprocity, as values express the appreciation that must be attributed to those certain aspects of the moral good that the principles intend to achieve. All social values are inherent in the dignity of the human person, whose real development they favor. They are essentially: truth, freedom, justice, love "(C 197).

## 1 ° The Truth

27. Truth is a fundamental value that humanity has always sought for anxiously. It has an objective dimension that bases the activity of the man, makes possible the dialogue, bases the society and illuminates on the morality of the behaviors of the citizens and the social groups: truth of the nature of the man, of the life, of the family, of society. Truth, also, of the events that occurred.

In the Christianity the Truth occupies a central place. The only begotten Son of God, whose birth we prepare to celebrate, is "full of grace and truth" (Jn 1.14). Jesus himself self-defined himself as the truth: "I am the Way, the Truth and the Life" (Jn 14.6). It is not, therefore, only a truth enunciatable in the speculative plane. It is the substantive Truth, whose word returns freedom to those who are enslaved by error or by evil: "If you remain faithful to my word, you will know the truth and the truth shall make you free" (Jn 8,31-32). The Truth of the Gospel, rather than to be known intellectually, is to be realized, so that "living in the truth and in love, we grow fully united to Christ" (Ef 4.15).

28. The truth is, therefore, also a fundamental value in the Social Doctrine of the Church. In this regard she tells us: "Men have a special obligation to tend towards the truth, respect it and bear witness to it responsibly. Our time requires intense educational activity and a corresponding commitment on the part of all so that the search for truth is promoted in all areas and prevails over any attempt to relativize its demands or to offend it "(C 198 ).

### Situations and issues

29. If the Christian dispense from the understanding of the truth that gives him the word of God, he could fall into multiple errors, and even adopt fundamentalist attitudes. So it happened in times past when it spread the maxim "the error has no rights", forgetting that the rights are of the people, even of those who are in error. The Gospel sends to die for the truth, not to kill for it. Therefore Pope John Paul II, when he exhorted Christians to prepare us for the celebration of the Great Jubilee of the year 2000, explicitly mentioned the "painful chapter, on which the children of the Church must return with open spirits to repentance, constituted by the acquiescence expressed, especially in some centuries, with methods of intolerance

and even of violence in the service of the truth "(Tertio Millennio Adveniente 35)

But the temptation of fundamentalism always lurks, not just the religious man. The civil history of the peoples, even Europeans, is riddled with examples of intransigence to death between opposing sectors. When religious arguments are being wielded, it is deceptively done to inflame the intransigence with which it is intended to suppress the contrary.

30. The interpretation of Argentina's history is crossed by a certain Manichaeism, which has fed the cone among argentines. We said it in May 1981, in Church and national community: Unfortunately, each sector has often exalted the values it represents and the interests it defends, excluding those of the other groups. So in our history, political dialogue becomes difficult. This division, this disagreement of the argentines, this not wanting to forgive each other, makes difficult the recognition of the own errors and, therefore, the reconciliation. We cannot divide the country, in a simplistic way, between good and bad, fair and corrupt, patriots and stateless. We do not want to deny that there is a serious ethical problem at the root of the critical situation in the country, but we resist raising it in the terms mentioned above (31).

Twenty-two years after the restoration of democracy, it is advisable for the elders to ask ourselves if we transmit to the young people the whole truth about what happened in the 70. Or if we are offering a biased view of the facts, which could encourage new encones among Argentines. This would be the case if despite the gravity of State terror, the methods used and the consequent crimes against humanity, which we will never mourn sufficiently. But it could also be the opposite, shup up the crimes of the guerrillas, or not being properly hated. These are by no means compared to State terror, but they certainly terrorized the population and contributed to mourn to the homeland. Young people must also know this chapter of the historical truth. To that end, everyone, but especially you, laic faithful, who lived at that time and were adults, have an obligation to testify. It is dangerous for the future of the Country to make partial readings of history. From the present, and on the basis of truth and justice, we must assume and heal our past.

## **2 ° Freedom**

31. According to the Gospel, freedom is the fruit of truth: “The truth will make you free” (Jn 8.32). David was freed from his sin because he recognized him. The same, the sinful woman. And also the Apostle Simon Peter. Only by sincerely acknowledging the truth of our sins, does God forgive us and liberate us from the spiritual bondages with which they imprison us.

32. On freedom the Social Doctrine tells us: it is an eminent sign of the divine image and, as a consequence, a sign of the sublime dignity of every human person. The value of freedom, as an expression of the uniqueness of each human person, is respected when each member of society is allowed to realize his or her own personal vocation. Freedom, on the other hand, must be exercised as an ability to reject what is negative morally, whichever way it is presented (C 199, 200).

### **Situations and issues**

33. Not always did the children of the Church keep the necessary clarity about the doctrine of religious freedom. Forty years ago the Conciliar declaration “*Dignitatis humanae*” (07-12-65), on religious freedom, returned its entire splendor. Freedom of the person and freedom of the religious community. Freedom for the Catholic Church and freedom for all religions. Freedom to celebrate the cult and freedom to propose and practice the Gospel doctrine.

34. It may seem strange to ask today about religious freedom in the West and in Argentina. But there are signs of excessive pressure from many media and international entities, which justifies asking whether the freedom of the Catholic Church to teach and practise the doctrine itself is always respected. The same can be said of resolutions and improper gestures of the civil authority when they invade a foreign jurisdiction. Since the subject of the State and of the Church is always the man, the common good demands that between the two there is autonomy and collaboration.

### **3 ° Justice**

35. Justice is an attribute of God. We say God is righteous; that we appeal to divine justice of Christ we confess that he will come with glory to judge alive and dead. That is why justice is also a fundamental Christian value. From this the Social Doctrine says: It is a value that accompanies the exercise of the corresponding cardinal moral virtue. The social Magisterium invokes the respect of the classical forms of justice: the commutative, the distributive and the legal. Justice is particularly important in the present context, in which the value of the person, of his dignity and of his rights, in spite of the proclamations of purposes, is seriously threatened by the widespread tendency to resort exclusively to the criteria of utility and having (C 201, 202).

### **Situations and issues**

36. There are questions about justice as an institution. In Argentina, the claim for justice reform is strong and the dialogue table of the Argentine has proposed the need for a deep and courageous reform of it. But there are no questions about justice as a value. However, the Social Doctrine makes us see its limit and inadequacy to found in itself a solid social coexistence: The full truth about the man, it allows to overcome the contractual vision of the justice, that is a limited vision, and to open it to the horizon of the solidarity and love. On its own, justice is not enough. Together with the value of justice, Social Doctrine places that of solidarity, as a privileged way of peace (C 203).

## **4 ° The way of charity**

37. Among the virtues as a whole and especially between virtues, social values and charity: there is a deep link that must be recognized more and more deeply. The values of truth, justice and freedom are born and developed from the inner source of charity. Charity presupposes and transcends justice. Human relations cannot be regulated only with the measure of justice. No legislation, no system of rules or stipulations will persuade men and people to live in unity, fraternity and peace. No argument can overcome the call of charity (C 204-207). Charity is the fullness of righteousness and all human virtue.

### **Situations and issues**

38. Christians must ask us a serious question: if we take seriously the commandment of the love that Jesus left us. If we do, we will discover more and



more clearly that, after the act of worship of God, the construction of social coexistence, in truth, freedom and justice, is the maximum work of man on earth. And God the Provident Father in nothing is pleased more than to see his children striving to build it.

On this basis of the basic principles and fundamental values of the Social Doctrine of the Church we can build a reconciled nation that manages to live a true social friendship.

#### **IV. Exhortation to the People of God**

39. A month ago we celebrated the III National Congress of Laity, at twenty years of the second celebrated in 1984, and in view of the bicentennial of the nation, to be held in 2010. The theme addressed was the vocation and mission of the laity in the Church, in society and in politics. During the Congress, the Social Doctrine of the Church was of the utmost relevance. And not only for their formulations, but for the challenges that it must face each day and deserve new answers. Although as pastors we are the guarantors of this Doctrine, it is also for you, dear laic faithful, to participate in its elaboration, knowing the postulates already acquired, illuminating with them the social situation of the Country, and, from there, to enunciate appropriate formulas that help Christians and any man of goodwill to act in the good of the Republic, respected the temporary option itself, without waiting for the slogans of the shepherds. Therefore, today more than ever the Social Doctrine of the Church must enter, as an integral part, in the formative path of the laicman (C 549). The Compendium of Social Doctrine is a valuable tool for knowing this doctrine and bringing new elements to it. We strongly advise your study and implementation.

40. That Mary, the glory of Jerusalem, the joy of Israel, the pride of humanity, the Virgin mother of Jesus of Nazareth, our brother and our Savior God, implore for us of the Father a great and strong love for our Nation like the one his Son had for his homeland until he cries for her.

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*of the Argentine Episcopal Conference*

*Pilar, November 11th, 2005*

*Memory of San Martín de Tours, bishop.*