



When the word "vocation" (called) is used, it has been frequent for centuries to think only of candidates for the seminary or religious life. Vatican Council II spoke of "Christian vocation" and even more: that Christian vocation is "universal vocation to holiness". In a broader sense still, the Council spoke of "human vocation", because all human life is a call to the fullness of beauty, goodness, and truth that open in God.

Well, human promotion -integral human development- is part, and an essential part, of Christian vocation; and even more, of all human existence. This is said in the encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, where the term "vocation" appears on 25 occasions:

"All men perceive the inner impulse to love authentically; love and truth never abandon them completely, because they are the vocation that God has put in the heart and mind of every human being". This universal vocation to love and truth is manifested by Jesus Christ, who liberates it from human limitations and makes it fully possible.

Vocation means to call. Who calls to participate in human promotion and development? Called God, who intervenes in all life that begins. It calls each of us our being, made for love. In the words of Benedict XVI, this vocation to human promotion is also a "Call of free men for free men to take on a common responsibility".

To the extent of their response to that call -explains the encyclical, "The men, the recipients of the love of God, become subjects of charity, called to become themselves instruments of grace to spread the charity of God and to weave networks of charity".

Since every call expects a response, what would be the conditions for responding to this "vocation to human development"? The encyclical points to three main conditions: freedom, truth, and charity.

In the first place, freedom. All vocation "is a call that requires a free and responsible answer" And who should answer? Both people, each one -the people's hungry people challenge the affluent peoples. In other words, this vocation demands, at the same time, personal response and a response from the social

structures and institutions of the State and other social, and ecclesial agents.

Secondly, the answer demands that the truth be respected. First of all, the deep truth of the "being" of man. And that's why it's all about "promoting all men and the whole man." In this regard, the Gospel is a fundamental element, because it teaches us to know and respect the unconditional value of the human person. Christ reveals man to man himself (cf. GS 22), and, thus, shows him that his value is great for God. He shows him "the great yes of God" to all his desires. From this, the Pope deduces that only by responding to this vocation can a man be happy and fully realized: "Precisely because God pronounces the greatest" yes "to man, man cannot help but open himself to the divine vocation to realize his development " So this vocation to development covers both the natural and the supernatural. When God is eclipsed in the horizon of man or society, it begins to dissipate our capacity to recognize the purpose and the good to which we are called.

Finally, "The vision of development as a vocation implies that its center is charity". It is very appreciated the clairvoyance of the encyclical on this subject, following the ideas of Paul VI. The causes of underdevelopment, it is said, are not primarily material, but are, first, "in the will that often disfigures the duties of solidarity". Then, in thought, which does not always know how to orient properly to the will (therefore it is necessary to configure a "new Humanism"). And, above all, the cause is in "the lack of fraternity between men and between peoples."

At this point, Benedict XVI wonders whether the fraternity can achieve the men themselves, favored by the current trend towards globalization. But no. The Fraternity "is born from a transcendent vocation of God the Father, the first who has loved us, and who has taught us through the Son what is fraternal charity". Therefore, he concludes, to respond generously to the vocation for development today requires the urgency of the charity of Christ.

Only that urgency of Christ's charity allows us to respond to the concrete and costly aspects of that call. This is the intervention in public, cultural and political life, each according to their condition. "Every Christian is called to this charity, according to his vocation and his possibilities to influence the polis". Another aspect is care and responsibility for nature; and, before, the respectful care of each person in the family, in the company, in the university, knowing that they are servants and not owners. Responding to this vocation requires work and the technique that comes from it. In any case, Benedict XVI proclaims the need to form "right men ... who strongly feel in their conscience the call to the common good".

We must bear in mind that this vocation we have not given to ourselves, but it comes from God. Therefore, before anything else, and continually, it is necessary to receive God in our life, let him enter freely and follow him with all fidelity and enthusiasm. The time has come, especially for young people and even more so for college students, of commitment to God and others. For "only if we think that we have been called individually and as a community to be part of the family of God

as their children, we will be able to forge a new thought and bring new energies to the service of a full and true humanism".