

# “For Others, With Others”



Pedro Arrupe





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## Men for Others—A Lecture on the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

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By


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On July 31, 1973, Fr. Pedro Arrupe, who at the time was Superior General of the Society of Jesus, addressed an assembly of graduates of European Jesuit Schools in the city of Valencia in Spain. As the manuscript prepared for the event was rather long, he had to shorten it so as to save time. Nevertheless, the words spoken by Father Arrupe caused upset among the graduates, some of whom were so angry that they stood up from their seats. It was such a painful subject for the graduates to hear.

The lengthy manuscript on which the lecture was based was later made public in Spanish and also translated into French, and it has since been the object of a great deal of criticism among the alumni. There was no English translation, since English was not included among the languages used by the Association of European Jesuit Schools. However, later, a condensed English version was published by the Society of Jesus as an official translation, and so people over the world came to know of the content of Father Arrupe's lecture. Even in Japan, Fr. Ribas published a Japanese translation entitled "New Principles of Catholic Education," though in his translation the word "Jesuit" is replaced by "Catholic" in all references. This was probably due to the fact that terms like "Jesuit school" and "Jesuit education" have a rather limited connotation in Japan, while the content of the lecture was intended to be conveyed to all Catholic schools.

What indeed could it have been that aroused such reactions of censure and protest among the graduates? Those reactions were



due to terms used by Fr. Arrupe, that made it seem as though he had with a single stroke, dismissed the education that had been followed by Jesuit schools until that time. Fr. Arrupe commenced his lecture with the following words.

Let me first ask you the following question. Have we Jesuits been carrying out our education for the sake of justice? You and I know that the majority of your Jesuit teachers would answer thus to this question. In all sincerity and humility they would reply, “we did not.”

Likewise, I am sure you yourselves will agree with this self-assessment, and with the same sincerity and humility you will admit that you have not been trained for the kind of righteous action and righteous “witness,” that the Church now asks of you.

For the graduates, those words must have sounded like an outright denial of the education they had received so far. Jesuit schools in Europe and North America are widely known as so-called ‘elite schools.’ Based on the “Ratio Studiorum” or “Regulations of Study” of the Society of Jesus, the Jesuit Schools, which carry out rigorous and academically high-level education, have for over 400 years come to be highly regarded, not just in the Catholic world but in Europe and the U.S.A. as well. During and after the time of the French Revolution, the Jesuits were expelled from numerous areas of Europe, and they were disbanded in due course. Nevertheless, they still continued conducting their educational activities, wherever they were expelled. A good example of this would be Georgetown University in Washington DC. With the establishment of the modern state education came to be state-run, and most of the Jesuit schools were sequestered by the state, yet many schools managed to survive as private institutions. In addition, the Jesuits who enthusiastically carried out educational activities in their



mission lands exerted a significant influence on the enhancement of cultures around the world, and in so doing they fortuitously created what one might call, a “social elite.”

It was in the face of this type of history and way of life of the Jesuit schools that Fr. Arrupe spoke of the necessity of “education for justice.” It was something that primarily followed the outlook of the Catholic Church as oriented by the Second Vatican Council. Fr. Arrupe himself on several occasions referred to the Second Vatican Council in the course of his talk. Through this Council, the Catholic Church sought for ways to renew and adapt the form it hitherto possessed to the realities of present-day society. The Synod (Council of Bishops) that subsequently followed, confirmed this direction. Foremost in the direction was a “preferential option for the poor.” This was to strive for the realization of “Social Justice” on the basis of the Gospel of Christ, and for the Catholic Church, tackling the issue of Social Justice was a “constitutive” element in its evangelical mission.

This was an urgent and pressing issue in developing nations during the 1970s. Political powers oppressed the people and the gap between the rich and poor widened. The Catholic Church could not ignore the voices of people suffering from poverty and destitution, for to stand by their side was indeed a posture based on the Gospel of Christ.

This fundamental stance of the Catholic Church was viewed by Father Arrupe as being the most vital factor for the renewal of the Jesuits. Two years after the talk given in Valencia, the 32<sup>nd</sup> General Congregation of the Society of Jesus was held in 1975, wherein it was clarified that the mission of the Society of Jesus today is the “proclamation of faith and promotion of justice.” This mission continues to be confirmed by the Jesuits today, nearly 50





years after the 32<sup>nd</sup> General Congregation.

Consequently, if Jesuit schools are educational institutions associated with the mission of the Society of Jesus, then the lecture, “Men for Others,” would still be relevant. The term “Jesuit Education” was coined in the 1980s. Until then the institutions were simply referred to as Jesuit Schools, signifying the fact that the schools had Jesuits. If Jesuits happened to be involved in the education provided by those schools, it was referred to as “Jesuit education.” However, in every nation the number of Jesuits working in schools is witnessing a steady decline, and there exist quite a few schools wherein there are no Jesuits at all. Accordingly, the question of what constitutes “Jesuit education” has come to be pondered over, and the awareness that schools carrying out such education are “Jesuit schools,” has also emerged. In other words, we have no choice but to consider seriously the issue of “Jesuit Schools with no Jesuits.”

It was under such circumstances that 50 years have passed by, since the lecture “Men for Others.” Did Fr. Arrupe have an awareness that situations like these would arise? Back in 1957, there were three Jesuit’s middle and high schools in Japan, and there are records indicating that the Jesuits working there assembled and conducted training sessions. Fr. Arrupe who was the Provincial gave the first talk. The content follows the “Ratio Studiorum” and reminds us of the administration, which followed methods based on the constitution of the Society of Jesus. However, it recommends that we avoid two extremes. One is to emphasize and adapt the educational model of one’s own nation of origin, and the other is to consider Japan as unique, so as to avoid the efforts of learning the educational methods of other nations. One may perceive here a desire to strike a balance between Jesuits who are missionaries, and those who are Japanese. However, there are no



words indicating the renewal of Jesuit schools in the context of the times. Nevertheless, both the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus would undergo a major transition, in the next decade. “Men for Others” was that epoch-making lecture.

Fifty years have elapsed since that lecture, and now the expression “Men for Others,” has become a motto common to Jesuit schools around the world. And that’s not all. Studying with an awareness of social justice has come to be included within the circumstances in which each school is placed, and concrete practices as well have begun to be carried out. Furthermore, educational and school facilities for those who have been driven to the margins of society, have begun to be created and managed. “Fey Alegria” are institutions for the primary school education of children who are at the lowest levels of society. These are centered in South America. They have been conducted since the 1950s, and they have since seen an ever growing expansion. In North America, “Cristo Rey” schools for young Mexican immigrants which were begun in Chicago have spread throughout the nation. These schools are also run for the education of Hispanic, black, and indigenous youth, who tend to be at the extremity of societies that create vast disparities. Even in Asia, nations that are economically and politically volatile like East Timor and Cambodia, have begun raising schools for underprivileged children.

When using the term “Men for Others,” we need to bear in mind the meanings of the words “men” and “others.” The word men does not refer to human beings who are males. Recently, due to the fact that people have grown aware of gender issues, in our Jesuit schools too we don’t merely use the word ‘men’. Rather, we also include the word ‘women’, and say “Men and Women for Others.” Furthermore, it was later realized that rather than merely restrict ourselves to the words ‘men’ or ‘women,’ it would be more





appropriate to say “For Others with Others.”

However, a noteworthy point to ponder over here is when Fr. Arrupe used the word “men,” what did he intend to signify? Concerning this issue he said, “men and women who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ—for the God-human who lived and died for all the world; men and women who cannot even conceive of the love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men and women who are completely convinced that the love of God that does not issue in justice for others is a farce.” Here, what the word “others” signifies is clear. These others are the “smallest people,” the “oppressed people in an unjust society,” and the “marginalized people.”

“Men and Women for Others, with Others,” or “For Others, with Others,” has become a “motto” for Jesuit schools around the world, and we may say that these words of Father Arrupe have now become firmly established. As a matter of fact, there have even been moves to realize educational missions in line with those directives. Also, quite obviously this is something we need to bear in mind if we wish to continue our Jesuit schools, and promote our educational mission of fostering men and women who have a desire to live for others, with others.







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## Men for Others

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**Pedro Arrupe (1973)**

*On July 31, 1973, Pedro Arrupe, the superior general of the Society of Jesus, spoke to the 10th International Congress of Jesuit Alumni of Europe gathered in Valencia, Spain. Because of the “new awareness in the Church,” Arrupe concedes in these remarks that a graduate from Jesuit schools and colleges had not been properly educated to participate “in the promotion of justice and the liberation of the oppressed.” Nevertheless, he remains hopeful that, with proper adjustments, “the paramount objective of Jesuit education” could be reached, namely the formation of its graduate as “man for others,” a man who would “give himself to others in love—love, which is his definitive and all-embracing dimension, that which gives meaning to all his other dimensions.”*

### I. EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE

#### I. Fashioning Men for Others

Education for justice has become in recent years one of the chief concerns of the Church. Why? Because there is a new awareness in the Church that participation in the promotion of justice and the liberation of the oppressed is a constitutive element of the mission which Our Lord has entrusted to her.<sup>1</sup> Impelled by this awareness, the Church is now engaged in a massive effort to educate—or rather to re-educate—herself, her children, and all men so that we may all “lead our life in its entirety... in accord with the evangelical principles of personal and social morality to



be expressed in a living Christian witness.”<sup>2</sup>

Today our prime educational objective must be to form men-for-others; men who will live not for themselves but for God and his Christ—for the God-man who lived and died for all the world; men who cannot even conceive of love of God which does not include love for the least of their neighbors; men completely convinced that love of God which does not issue in justice for men is a farce.

## **2. Deficiencies in the Past**

This kind of education goes directly counter to the prevailing educational trend practically everywhere in the world. We Jesuits have always been heavily committed to the educational apostolate. We still are. What, then, shall we do? Go with the current or against it? I can think of no subject more appropriate than this for the General of the Jesuits to take up with the former students of Jesuit schools.

First, let me ask this question: Have we Jesuits educated you for justice? You and I know what many of your Jesuit teachers will answer to that question. They will answer, in all sincerity and humility: No, we have not. If the terms “justice” and “education for justice” carry all the depth of meaning which the Church gives them today, we have not educated you for justice.

What is more, I think you will agree with this self-evaluation, and with the same sincerity and humility acknowledge that you have not been trained for the kind of action for justice and witness to justice which the Church now demands of us. What does this mean? It means that we have work ahead of us. We must help each other to repair this lack in us, and above all make sure that in future the education imparted in Jesuit schools will be equal to the demands of justice in the world.



### **3. We have the tools**

It will be difficult, but we can do it. We can do it because, despite our historical limitations and failures, there is something which lies at the very center of the Ignatian spirit, and which enables us to renew ourselves ceaselessly and thus to adapt ourselves to new situations as they arise.


What is this something? It is the spirit of constantly seeking the will of God. It is that sensitiveness to the Spirit which enables us to recognize where, in what direction, Christ is calling us at different periods of history, and to respond to that call.

This is not to lay any prideful claim to superior insight or intelligence. It is simply our heritage from the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. For these Exercises are essentially a method enabling us to make very concrete decisions in accordance with God's will. It is a method that does not limit us to any particular option, but spreads out before us the whole range of practicable options in any given situation; opens up for us a sweeping vision embracing many possibilities, to the end that God himself, in all his tremendous originality, may trace out our path for us. It is this "indifference", in the sense of lack of differentiation, this not being tied down to anything except God's will, that gives to the Society and to the men it has been privileged to educate what we may call their multi-faceted potential, their readiness for anything, any service that may be demanded of them by the signs of the times.

### **4. Readiness for change**

Jesuit education in the past had its limitations. It was conditioned by time and place. As a human enterprise it will always be. But it could not have been a complete failure if we were able to pass on to you this spirit of openness to new challenges, this readiness for change, this willingness —putting it in Scriptural





terms— to undergo conversion. This is our hope: that we have educated you to listen to the living God; to read the Gospel so as always to find new light in it; to think with the Church, within which the Word of God always ancient, ever new, resounds with that precise note and timbre needed by each historical epoch. For this is what counts; on this is founded our confidence for the future.

It is not as a father speaking to sons that I speak to you today. It is as a companion, a fellow alumnus, speaking to his classmates. Sitting together on the same school bench, let us together listen to the Lord, the Teacher of all mankind.

## II. WHAT KIND OF JUSTICE?

### *A. The Call of the Church*

There are two lines of reflection before us. One is to deepen our understanding of the idea of justice as it becomes more and more clear in the light of the Gospel and the signs of the times. The other is to determine the character and quality of the type of man we want to form, the type of man into which we must be changed, and towards which the generations succeeding us must be encouraged to develop, if we and they are to serve this evangelical ideal of justice.

### **5. The Synod of 1971**

The first line of reflection begins with the Synod of Bishops of 1971, and its opening statement on “Justice in the World”:

*1. Gathered from the whole world, in communion with all who believe in Christ and with the entire human family, and opening our hearts to the Spirit who is making the whole of creation new, we have questioned ourselves about*

*the mission of the People of God to further justice in the world.*

*2. Scrutinizing the "signs of the times" and seeking to detect the meaning of emerging history... we have listened to the Word of God that we might be converted to the fulfilling of the divine plan for the salvation of the world.*


*3. ...We have... been able to perceive the serious injustices which are building around the world of men a network of domination, oppression and abuses which stifle freedom and which keep the greater part of humanity from sharing in the building up and enjoyment of a more just and more fraternal world.*

*4. At the same time we have noted the inmost stirring moving the world in its depths. There are facts constituting a contribution to the furthering of justice. In associations of men and among peoples there is arising a new awareness which... spurs them on to liberate themselves and to be responsible for their own destiny.*

## **6. The Council and after**

Please note that these words are not a mere repetition of what the Church has traditionally taught. They are not a refinement of doctrine at the level of abstract theory. They are the resonance of an imperious call of the living God asking his Church and all men of good will to adopt certain attitudes and undertake certain types of action which will enable them effectively to come to the aid of mankind oppressed and in agony.

This interpretation of the signs of the times did not originate with the Synod. It began with the Second Vatican Council; its application to the problem of justice was made with considerable vigor in *Populorum progressio*; and spreading outward from this center to the ends of the earth, it was taken up in 1968 by



the Latin American Bishops at Medellin, in 1969 by the African Bishops at Kampala, in 1970 by the Asian Bishops in Manila. In 1971, Pope Paul VI gathered all these voices together in the great call to action of *Octogesima adveniens*.

The Bishops of the Synod took it one step further, and in words of the utmost clarity said: "Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation."<sup>3</sup> We cannot, then, separate action for justice and liberation from oppression from the proclamation of the Word of God.

### ***B. Tensions in the Church***

This is plain speech indeed. However, it did not prevent doubts, questionings, even tensions from arising within the Church itself. It would be naive not to recognize this fact. Contradictions, or at least dichotomies, have emerged regarding the actual implementation of this call to action, and our task now is to try to harmonize these dichotomies if we can. This would be in the spirit of the Holy Year that is coming, which is the spirit of reconciliation.

To begin with, let us note that these dichotomies are differences of stress rather than contradictions of ideas. In view of the present call to justice and liberation, where should we put our stress—in our attitudes, our activities, our lifestyle:

1. Justice among men, or justice before God?
2. Love of God, or love of the neighbor?
3. Christian charity, or human justice?
4. Personal conversion, or social reform?
5. Liberation in this life, or salvation in the life to come?
6. Development through the inculcation of Christian values,

or development through the application of scientific technologies and social ideologies?


## 7. Justice and the Church

Quite clearly, the mission of the Church is not coextensive with the furthering of justice on this planet. Still, the furthering of justice is a *constitutive element* of that mission, as the Synod teaches. Recall the Old Testament: that First Alliance, the pact of Yahweh with his chosen people, was basically concerned with the carrying out of justice, to such a degree that the violation of justice as it concerns men implies a rupture of the Alliance with God. Turn, now, to the New Testament, and see how Jesus has received from his Father the mission to bring the Good News to the poor, liberation to the oppressed, and to make justice triumph. "Blessed are the poor"<sup>4</sup>—why? Because the Kingdom has already come; the Liberator is at hand.

## 8. Love of neighbor

We are commanded to love God *and* to love our neighbor. But note what Jesus says: the second commandment is *like unto* the first; they fuse together into one compendium of the Law. And in his vision of the Last Judgment, what does the Judge say? "As long as you did this for one of the least of my brothers, you did it for me."<sup>5</sup> As Father Alfaro says:

*[E]ntry or exclusion from the Kingdom announced by Jesus depends on one's attitude towards the poor and oppressed, who are the same referred to in Isaiah 58, 1-12 as the victims of human injustice, and for whom God wishes to manifest his justice. But the great new factor is that Jesus makes of these despised and marginal men "his brothers"; he makes himself personally solidary with the poor and*



*the helpless, with the hungry and the destitute. Every man who finds himself in such a situation is the brother of Christ. Whatever is done for them is done for Christ himself. Whoever gives effective help to these "brothers" of Jesus belongs to his Kingdom; whoever leaves them in their misery excludes himself from the Kingdom.<sup>6</sup>*

## **9. Love and justice meet**

Just as love of God, in the Christian view, fuses with love of neighbor, to the point that they cannot possibly be separated, so, too, charity and justice meet together and in practice are identical. How can you love someone and treat him unjustly? Take justice away from love and you destroy love. You do not have love if the beloved is not seen as a person whose dignity must be respected, with all that that implies. And even if you take the Roman notion of justice as giving to each his due, what is owing to him, a Christian must say that he owes love to all men, enemies not excepted. Just as we are never sure that we love God unless we love our fellowmen, so we are never sure that we have love at all unless our love issues in works of justice. And I do not mean works of justice in a merely individualistic sense. I mean three things:

*First*, a basic attitude of respect for all men which forbids us ever to use them as instruments for our own profit.

*Second*, a firm resolve never to profit from, or allow ourselves to be suborned by, positions of power deriving from privilege, for to do so, even passively, is equivalent to active oppression. To be drugged by the comforts of privilege is to become contributors to injustice as silent beneficiaries of the fruits of injustice.

*Third*, an attitude not simply of refusal but of counterattack against injustice; a decision to work with



others towards the dismantling of unjust social structures so that the weak, the oppressed, the marginalized of this world may be set free.


## 10. From Personal Conversion to Social Reform

Sin is not only an act, a personal act, which makes us personally guilty. Over and above this, sin reaches out to what we may call the *periphery* of ourselves, vitiating our habits, customs, spontaneous reactions, criteria and patterns of thought, imagination, will. And it is not only ourselves who influence our “periphery”. It is shaped by all who have helped to form us, by all who form part of our world.

We thus have a congenital inclination toward evil. In theological language this is called “concupiscence”, which is, concretely, a combination in us of the sin of Adam and all the sins of men in history—including our own. When a man is converted, when God effects in him the marvel of justification, he turns to God and his brothers in his innermost self, and as a consequence sin in the strict sense is washed away from him. However, the effects of sin continue their powerful domination over his “periphery”, and this, quite often, in a way that he is not even aware of.

Now, Christ did not come merely to free us from sin and flood the centre of our person with his grace. He came to win our *entire* self for God—including what I have called our “periphery”. Christ came to do away not only with sin, but with its effects, even in this life; not only to give us his grace, but to show forth the power of his grace.

Let us see the meaning of this as it pertains to the relationship between personal conversion and structural reform. If “personal conversion” is understood in the narrow sense of justification operative only at the very core of our person, it does not adequately represent the truth of the matter, for such justification is only the



root, the beginning of a renewal, a reform of the structures at the “periphery” of our being, not only personal but social.

If we agree on this, conclusions fairly tumble forth. For the structures of this world —our customs; our social, economic, and political systems; our commercial relations; in general, the institutions we have created for ourselves— insofar as they have injustice built into them, are the concrete forms in which sin is objectified. They are the consequences of our sins throughout history, as well as the continuing stimulus and spur for further sin.

There is a biblical concept for this reality. It is what Saint John calls, in a negative sense, the “world.” The “world” is in the social realm what “concupiscence” is in the personal, for, to use the classical definition of concupiscence, it “comes from sin and inclines us to it.”

Hence, like concupiscence, the “world” as understood in this sense must also be the object of our efforts at purification. Our new vision of justice must give rise to a new kind of spirituality, of asceticism; or rather, an expansion of traditional spirituality and asceticism to include not only the personal but the social. In short, interior conversion is not enough. God’s grace calls us not only to win back our whole selves for God, but to win back our whole world for God. We cannot separate personal conversion from structural social reform.

## **II. An on-going process**

It follows that this purification, this social asceticism, this earthly liberation is so central in our Christian attitude toward life that whoever holds himself aloof from the battle for justice implicitly refuses love for his fellows and consequently for God. The struggle for justice will never end. Our efforts will never be fully successful in this life. This does not mean that such efforts



are worthless.

God wants such partial successes. They are the first fruits of the salvation wrought by Jesus. They are the signs of the coming of his Kingdom, the visible indications of its mysterious spreading among men. Of course, partial successes imply partial failures; painful failures; the defeat of many people, many of us, who will be overcome and destroyed in the fight against this “world.” For this “world” will not take it lying down, as the vivid American expression has it. It will persecute, it will try to exterminate those who do not belong to it and stand in opposition to it.

But this defeat is only apparent. It is precisely those who suffer persecution for the sake of justice who are blessed. It is precisely the crucified who pass through the world “doing good and healing all.”<sup>7</sup>


## **12. Technologies and Ideologies necessary but not sufficient**

To point out in very general fashion that there are injustices in the world —something which everybody knows without being told— that is not enough: agreed. Having stated principles, we must go to a map of the world and point out the critical points — geographical, sociological, cultural— where sin and injustice find their lodgment: also agreed. To do this, technologies and ideologies are needed as instruments of analysis and action so that they will actually dislodge and dismantle injustice: by all means agreed.

What role is left, then, for the inculcation of Christian values, for a Christian ethos? This: we cannot forget that technologies and ideologies, necessary though they are, derive their origin, historically, from a mixture of good and evil. Injustice of one kind or another finds in them too a local habitation and a name.

Put it this way: they are tools, imperfect tools. And it is the Christian ethos, the Christian vision of values, that must use these tools while submitting them to judgment and relativizing





their tendency to make absolutes of themselves. Relativizing them, putting them in their place, as it were, with full realization that the Christian ethos cannot possibly construct a new world without their assistance.

### **III. THE MEN THE CHURCH NEEDS TODAY**

#### **13. Continuing Education**

With this background, let us now enter upon our second line of reflection, which bears on the formation of men who will reconcile these antitheses and thus advance the cause of justice in the modern world; their continuing formation, in the case of us “old timers”, their basic formation, in the case of the youth who will hopefully take up the struggle when we can do no more.

With regard to continuing education, let me say this: our alumni associations are called upon, in my opinion, to be a channel *par excellence* for its realization. Look upon it as *your* job, and, with the assistance of our Jesuits in the educational apostolate, work out concrete plans and programs for it.

And let us not have too limited an understanding of what continuing education is. It should not be simply the updating of technical or professional knowledge, or even the re-education necessary to meet the challenges of a rapidly changing world. It should rather be what is most specific in Christian education: a call to conversion. And that means, today, a conversion that will prepare us for witnessing to justice as God gives us to see it from the signs of our times.

#### **14. Men for Others**

What kind of man is needed today by the Church, by the



world? A man who is a “man-for-others”. That is my shorthand description of him. A man-for-others. But does this not contradict the very nature of man? Is not man a “being-for-himself”? Gifted with intelligence that endows him with power, does he not tend to control the world, making himself its center? Is this not the vocation, the history of man?

Yes; man, gifted with conscience, intelligence and power is indeed a center. But a center called to go out of himself, to give himself to others in love —love, which is his definitive and all-embracing dimension, that which gives meaning to all his other dimensions. Only he who loves fully realizes himself as a man. To the extent that he shuts himself off from others man does not become more a person; he becomes less.

The man who lives only for his own interests not only provides nothing for others. He does worse. He tends to accumulate in exclusive fashion more and more knowledge, more and more power, more and more wealth; thus denying, inevitably to those weaker than himself their proper share of the God-given means for human development.


## **15. Humanizing the World**

What is it to humanize the world if not to put it at the service of mankind? But the egoist not only does not humanize the material creation, he dehumanizes men themselves. He changes men into things by dominating them, exploiting them, and taking to himself the fruit of their labor.

The tragedy of it all is that by doing this the egoist dehumanizes himself. He surrenders himself to the possessions he covets; he becomes their slave—no longer a person self-possessed but an un-person, a thing driven by his blind desires and their objects.

But when we dehumanize, depersonalize ourselves in this





way, something stirs within us. We feel frustrated. In our heart of hearts, we know that what we have is nothing compared with what we are, what we can be, what we would like to be. We would like to be ourselves. But we dare not break the vicious circle. We think we can overcome our frustrations by striving to have more, to have more than others, to have ever more and more. We thus turn our lives into a competitive rat-race without meaning.

The downward spiral of ambition, competition, and self-destruction twists and expands unceasingly, with the result that we are chained ever more securely to a progressive, and progressively frustrating, dehumanization.

Dehumanization of ourselves and dehumanization of others. For by thus making egoism a way of life, we translate it, we objectify it, in social structures. Starting from our individual sins of egoism, we become exploiters of others, dehumanizing them and ourselves in the process, and hardening the process into a structure of society which may rightfully be called sin objectified. For it becomes hardened in ideas, institutions, impersonal and depersonalized organisms which now escape our direct control, a tyrannical power of destruction and self-destruction.

How escape from this vicious circle? Clearly, the whole process has its root in egoism—in the denial of love. But to try to live in love and justice in a world whose prevailing climate is egoism and injustice, where egoism and injustice are built into the very structures of society—is this not a suicidal, or at least a fruitless undertaking?

## **16. Good in an evil world**

And yet, it lies at the very core of the Christian message; it is the sum and substance of the call of Christ. Saint Paul put it in a single sentence: “Do not allow yourself to be overcome by evil, but rather, overcome evil with good.”<sup>8</sup> This teaching, which is identical



with the teaching of Christ about love for the enemy, is the touchstone of Christianity. All of us would like to be good to others, and most of us would be relatively good in a good world. What is difficult is to be good in an evil world, where the egoism of others and the egoism built into the institutions of society attack us and threaten to annihilate us.

Under such conditions, the only possible reaction would seem to be to oppose evil with evil, egoism with egoism, hate with hate; in short, to annihilate the aggressor with his own weapons. But is it not precisely thus that evil conquers us most thoroughly? For then, not only does it damage us exteriorly, it perverts our very heart. We allow ourselves, in the words of Saint Paul, to be overcome by evil.


No; evil is overcome only by good, hate by love, egoism by generosity. It is thus that we must sow justice in our world. To be just, it is not enough to refrain from injustice. One must go further and refuse to play its game, substituting love for self-interest as the driving force of society.

All this sounds very nice, you will say, but isn't it just a little bit up in the air? Very well, let us get down to cases. How do we get this principle of justice through love down to the level of reality, the reality of our daily lives? By cultivating in ourselves three attitudes:

## **17. Live more simply**

First, a firm determination to live much more simply—as individuals, as families, as social groups—and in this way to stop short, or at least to slow down, the expanding spiral of luxurious living and social competition. Let us have men and women who will resolutely set themselves against the tide of our consumer society. Men and women who, instead of feeling compelled to acquire everything that their friends have will do away with many





of the luxuries which in their social set have become necessities, but which the majority of mankind must do without. And if this produces surplus income, well and good; let it be given to those for whom the necessities of life are still luxuries beyond their reach.

### **18. No unjust profit**

Second, a firm determination to draw no profit whatever from clearly unjust sources. Not only that, but going further, to diminish progressively our share in the benefits of an economic and social system in which the rewards of production accrue to those already rich, while the cost of production lies heavily on the poor. Let there be men and women who will bend their energies not to strengthen positions of privilege, but, to the extent possible, reduce privilege in favor of the underprivileged. Please do not conclude too hastily that this does not pertain to you —that you do not belong to the privileged few in your society. It touches everyone of a certain social position, even though only in certain respects, and even if we ourselves may be the victims of unjust discrimination by those who are even better off than ourselves. In this matter, our basic point of reference must be the truly poor, the truly marginalized, in our own countries and in the Third World.

### **19. Agents of Change**

Third, and most difficult: a firm resolve to be agents of change in society; not merely resisting unjust structures and arrangements, but actively undertaking to reform them. For, if we set out to reduce income in so far as it is derived from participation in unjust structures, we will find out soon enough that we are faced with an impossible task unless those very structures are changed.

Thus, stepping down from our own posts of power would be too simple a course of action. In certain circumstances it may be the



proper thing to do; but ordinarily it merely serves to hand over the entire social structure to the exploitation of the egotistical. Here precisely is where we begin to feel how difficult is the struggle for justice; how necessary it is to have recourse to technical and ideological tools. Here is where cooperation among alumni and alumni associations becomes not only useful but necessary.

Let us not forget, especially, to bring into our counsels our alumni who belong to the working class. For in the last analysis, it is the oppressed who must be the principal agents of change. The role of the privileged is to assist them; to reinforce with pressure from above the pressure exerted from below on the structures that need to be changed.

## **20. Christ the Man for Others**

Men-for-others: the paramount objective of Jesuit education—basic, advanced, and continuing— must now be to form such men. For if there is any substance in our reflections, then this is the prolongation into the modern world of our humanist tradition as derived from the Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius. Only by being a man-for-others does one become fully human, not only in the merely natural sense, but in the sense of being the “spiritual” man of Saint Paul. He is the man filled with the Spirit; and we know whose Spirit that is: the Spirit of Christ, who gave his life for the salvation of the world; the God who, by becoming Man, became, beyond all others, a Man-for-others.



## Note

1. Cf. Synod of Bishops 1971, "Justice in the World", nn. 6, 37-8.
2. Ibid. n. 49.
3. Ibid. n. 6.
4. Lk 6.20
5. Mt. 25.40
6. Juan Alfaro, S.J., *Theology of Justice in the World*, Pontifical Commission Justice Peace, 1973, p. 28.
7. Acts 10.38
8. Rom 12.21






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## A Brief Biography of Father Pedro Arrupe

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- 1907: Born in Bilbao in Spain, (November 14).
- 1922: Entered the School of Medicine at Madrid University.
- 1926: Made a pilgrimage to Lourdes.
- 1927: Entered the Society of Jesus.
- 1932: Expulsion of the Jesuits from Spain.
- 1936: Ordained a Priest in Valkenburg, Netherlands.
- 1937: Completed his 4<sup>th</sup> year of Theological study at the University of St. Mary in Kansas, USA.
- 1937: Completed his Tertianship at Cleveland, Ohio, in the USA.
- 1938: Arrived at Yokohama Port in Japan (October 15).
- 1940: Appointed to Yamaguchi by the Jesuits.
- 1941: Arrested by the military police and incarcerated in the Yamaguchi prison.
- 1942: Relocates to Nagatsuka in Hiroshima, on his appointment as Novitiate Rector and Novice Master.
- 1945: Commences the treatment of the injured, in the aftermath of the Atomic bomb incident at Hiroshima, (August 6).
- 1954: Japan is constituted a Jesuit Vice-province. Appointed Vice-provincial.
- 1958: Japan is constituted a Province of the Society of Jesus. Appointed Provincial.
- 1965: Elected as the 28<sup>th</sup> Superior General of the Society of Jesus at the 31<sup>st</sup> General Congregation of the Jesuits.
- 1971: Visited Japan as Superior General, (April, 5 to 13).
- 1973: Delivered his lecture on “Men for others” at Valencia in Spain, (July 31).

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- 1974: Convened the 32<sup>nd</sup> General Congregation of the Society of Jesus.
- 1979: Established the Jesuit Refuge Service (JRS), to assist the Vietnamese refugees.
- 1981: Collapses due a cerebral thrombosis at Rome's Fiumicino Airport, on his way back from the Philippines.
- 1983: Resigns as Superior General at the 33<sup>rd</sup> General Congregation of the Society of Jesus.
- 1991: Dies at the Headquarters of the Society of Jesus in Rome, (February 5).
- 2018: Notification by the Vatican of a formal enquiry, for the canonization of Fr. Pedro Arrupe.

