

John Paul II's Challenges to the Social Sciences

Initial Responses of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences

Mary Ann Glendon
Learned Hand Professor of Law
Harvard Law School
President of the Pontifical Academy
of Social Sciences

Time and again, by word and example, John Paul II urged social scientists to reexamine some of their most fundamental presuppositions. He asked them to be mindful of the unity that underlies their fragmented disciplines, to question their assumptions about personhood, and to be not afraid in the quest for truth. The Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences, the think tank created by the late Holy Father in 1994 as a sister academy to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences, has made considerable progress in four main areas where the principles of Catholic social thought have to be applied to a host of new things: the world of work, the promise and perils of globalization, the dilemmas of democracy, and the relations among generations. The principle of subsidiarity along with sensitivity to the concept of human ecology, the social systems that undergird and support human flourishing, have provided some tentative but promising avenues for the future of the social sciences.

When one finds something new and deeply thought-provoking each time one rereads a text, that generally is a good sign of the work's enduring significance. It will surely be so with the social encyclicals of John Paul II. The ideas in those documents are so fertile that much time will be required to draw out and develop their full implications. At least that is the experience of the Pontifical Academy for Social Sciences, the think tank created by the late Holy Father in 1994 as a sister academy to the venerable Pontifical Academy of Sciences.

On a first reading of *Centesimus Annus (CA)*, for example, a social scientist is likely to be gratified by its expression of esteem for social studies as indispensable aids to the development of Catholic social teaching. "In order better to incarnate

the one truth about man in different and constantly changing social, economic and political contexts,” we are told, the Church “enters into dialogue with the various disciplines concerned with man, assimilates what these disciplines have to contribute, and helps them to open themselves to a broader horizon” (*CA*, 59). We now know that when John Paul II penned those lines, he was already planning to put that dialogue on a more systematic basis by establishing a social science academy. Three years later, in the *Motu Proprio* establishing the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, he noted that the Church “has turned with growing interest” to the social sciences, and that in order to make her own contributions more effectively, “she needs more constant and more extensive contact with the modern social sciences, with their research and with their findings.”²¹ Accordingly, he charged the academicians with a double mission: to promote “the study and progress of the social sciences, primarily economics, sociology, law and political science,” and to offer the Church “elements which she can use in the development of her social doctrine.”²²

Yet, even as John Paul II was acknowledging the value of the social sciences, he was issuing a profound challenge to many of their most deeply entrenched assumptions. By asking them to “open themselves to a broader horizon,” he was inviting their practitioners to critical self-examination in the light of the perspectives underlying the Church’s social doctrine. His own methodology, in fact, calls into question several habits and assumptions that are prevalent among economists, lawyers, sociologists, and students of politics.

To take one obvious instance, *Centesimus Annus* posits the unity of knowledge (“the one truth about man”) and the consequent need for cooperation among the various human sciences (*CA*, 59). Though few social scientists would dispute the importance of interdisciplinary collaboration, such efforts are often impeded not only by the intrinsic difficulty of the effort but also by the relatively autonomous development of fields and subfields, not to mention interdisciplinary rivalries. In fact, one of the greatest hurdles faced by the Pontifical Academy in its early years was precisely in learning to communicate across the artificial barriers that have grown up among the disciplines within which the members were trained.

The writings of John Paul II also call the social sciences to introspection through their well-known emphasis on the importance of an adequate anthropology. No one has insisted more strongly than the late pope on the need for an understanding of human personhood that treats each man and woman as uniquely valuable, yet takes account of our social nature, which in turn finds its expression in the myriad networks of groups and associations that compose society. In *Centesimus Annus*, he warned that policies and programs will run into

trouble if they do not take account of the “social nature of man” (13, 44). Yet, who could deny that the social sciences have contributed more than their share to fostering faulty anthropologies—whether by denying human nature altogether or by treating individuals as radically autonomous or by downgrading persons from responsible agents to mere subjects? An early benefit of interdisciplinary work in the Pontifical Academy was that the members became increasingly aware of the tensions between Catholic understandings of personhood and the various assumptions about human nature that were encoded in legal, political, and economic thinking. Accordingly, the Academy decided to devote its entire 2005 plenary session to exploring conceptualizations of the person in the social sciences.³ Among other things, the contributions to that symposium provided us with a better understanding of how concepts, such as “economic man,” can serve as useful analytic tools but wreak havoc when they escape the tool box.

Perhaps the most deeply challenging aspect of John Paul II's teaching for social scientists is its treatment of truth. Not that many would dispute his assertion that “nowadays there is a tendency to claim that agnosticism and skeptical relativism are the philosophy and the basic attitude which correspond to the democratic forms of life” (*CA*, 46). After all, the social sciences bear considerable responsibility for the spread of relativism, even to the point of giving it the status of a dogma. What many social scientists have failed to acknowledge, however, is what was obvious to the philosopher-pope: that relativism jeopardizes the ideals that most of them profess to cherish, for if truth is entirely subjective, there can be no sure principle for justly ordering social relations. If there is no truth, John Paul II warned, the “force of power takes over, people become means and objects to be exploited, there is no basis for human dignity, and no basis for human rights” (*CA*, 44).

At the same time, however, he took pains to stress that the Catholic critique of relativism offers no support to the various fundamentalisms, religious or secular, that claim the right to impose their concept of what is true or good on others. Because human life “is realized in history in conditions that are diverse and imperfect,” he insisted that we must pay “heed to every fragment of truth” that one's faith and reason have enabled one to gain from one's own “life experience and in the culture of individuals and of nations”; we must engage in dialogue with others to discern whatever fragments of truth they may possess; and we must constantly verify our heritage of values existentially, testing those values in our own lives, striving to “distinguish the valid elements in the tradition from false and obsolete ones or from obsolete forms which can usefully be replaced by others more suited to the times” (*CA*, 46). At his very first meeting with the

Pontifical Academy in 1994, he again emphasized those points, instructing the members to search for “all the grains of truth present in the various intellectual and empirical approaches” of the disciplines represented in their midst.⁴

Time and again, by word and example, John Paul II urged social scientists to reexamine some of their most fundamental presuppositions. He asked them to be mindful of the unity that underlies their fragmented disciplines, to question their assumptions about personhood, and to be not afraid in the quest for truth.

Recently, Dominican theologian J. Augustine Di Noia took the occasion of an address to the Pontifical Academy to remind the members of their responsibilities in relation to those challenges. It is “of the greatest possible importance,” Di Noia told the group, “for social scientists like yourselves to resist reductionist accounts of human nature and society, and relativistic accounts of moral reasoning and norms.... Such accounts are by no means entailed by research in the social sciences, but often arise from pre-existing philosophical assumptions that come to influence and shape the conclusions of scholarship.”⁵ There is no reason, he went on, “why research that focuses on specific aspects of human behavior and interaction needs to deny the existence of the wider horizon which faith reveals to us.”

As an illustration of how faulty social science influenced by faulty philosophy can wreak havoc in the realm of human affairs, Di Noia pointed out that the programs and policies of many international organizations, including the United Nations, have been profoundly influenced by a secular anthropology that “espouses the socially constructed character of truth and reality, the priority of cultural diversity, the deconstruction of all moral norms, and the priority of personal choice.” That constellation of views, with its hold on the media, international agencies, and other influential bodies, “has created many practical problems that sometimes make it difficult for Catholic aid agencies even to function at the local, national, and even international levels.” Without mincing words, the theologian told the academicians that, “although the roots of this secular anthropology are philosophical, the social sciences have been the principal vehicle for its diffusion in modern western societies.”

Over the course of its short existence, the Social Science Academy has had to struggle not only with the epistemological and methodological issues just mentioned but also with difficulties arising from gaps and ambiguities within Catholic social teaching. *Centesimus Annus*, for example, is well-known for its appreciation of liberal democracy and the free market. It expresses appreciation for liberal democracy’s commitment to the protection of human freedom and dignity, its structural limits on the abuse of power, and its impressive resources for self-correction. It also recognizes the capacity of the free market to foster

creativity, stimulate economic growth, and enable people to build a better future for themselves and their families. At the same time, Pope John Paul II cautioned that materialism, hedonism, and other habits formed in freedom can set the stage for the loss of freedom. Hence, his insistence that if we are to realize the benefits of democracy and the market, we must find ways to minimize their destructive potentials by harnessing their energies within a juridical framework, undergirded by a healthy moral culture.⁶

Yes, one wants to say, that seems to be exactly right, but when one begins to reflect upon what those ideas might mean in practical terms, one finds oneself in a veritable thicket of perplexing questions: What kinds of juridical arrangements can temper free politics and free economics without stifling them? If a country's moral culture is unraveling, how on earth can it be reinvigorated? Who is supposed to figure out the answers to those questions?

As to that last question, John Paul II did not leave room for doubt. Reiterating the message of Vatican II, he emphasized on many occasions that the job of bringing Catholic social teaching to life belongs primarily to those men and women who live and work in the secular sphere. In *Centesimus Annus*, he wrote, “[M]odels that are real and truly effective can only arise within the framework of different historical situations, through the efforts of all those who responsibly confront concrete problems in all their social, economic, political and cultural aspects, as these interact with one another” (43). At his first meeting with the Social Science Academy, he made it clear that he did not expect the members to treat their meetings as mere talk shops. They were, he said, to actively engage in the search for “solutions to people’s concrete problems, solutions based on social justice.”⁷

In the years since then, it has not been easy for the Academy to move from the level of study and analysis to practical recommendations about “solutions to people’s concrete problems.” However, in a time of rapid social and economic change, it is not an insignificant accomplishment to achieve a better understanding of concrete problems, and in that respect, the Academy has made considerable progress through the studies it has carried out in four main areas where the principles of Catholic social thought have to be applied to a host of new things: the world of work, the promise and perils of globalization, the dilemmas of democracy, and the relations among generations.⁸

As those projects have moved forward, a concept that has repeatedly emerged as central to the problem of moving from theory to practice is the subsidiarity principle.⁹ In its social doctrine, the Church has always made a point of insisting that the principle of subsidiarity must be respected in any effort to bring the virtues of solidarity and justice to life in the world around us, though it remains

subordinate to the virtues it aims to promote. The emphasis on subsidiarity is pervasive in *Centesimus Annus*. The “whole social doctrine of the Church,” its author reminded us, teaches that “the social nature of man is not completely fulfilled in the State, but is realized in various intermediary groups, beginning with the family and including economic, social, political and cultural groups which stem from human nature itself and have their own autonomy, always with a view to the common good” (13).

Yet, as many have observed, the meaning of subsidiarity has often been misunderstood, and its practical implications under the actual conditions that prevail in diverse societies have been little explored. There is still too little understanding of what social tasks are best carried out at what level and under what circumstances. Those investigations will require well-informed technical and prudential judgments that in turn will depend on conditions that vary from time to time and place to place.

It was an important move, therefore, when *Centesimus Annus* linked the principle of subsidiarity to the idea of *human ecology*, a concept that suggests a way of thinking about society as composed of complex moving systems and that mandates an alertness to the ways in which these systems interact. Noting that the “first and fundamental structure for ‘human ecology’ is the family, in which man receives his first formative ideas about truth and goodness, and learns what it actually means to be a person” (39), the pope commented that the destruction of human environments is “by no means receiving the attention it deserves,” and that “too little effort is [being] made to safeguard the moral conditions for an authentic ‘human ecology’” (38). With those words, it seems clear that he was outlining a Herculean task that is peculiarly within the domain of the social sciences.

Within the Social Science Academy, time has only served to heighten our awareness of the importance of the Holy Father’s emphasis on subsidiarity coupled with his call for an ecological approach. In fact, an ecological perspective reveals the close relationships among all four of the projects the Academy has undertaken thus far, for globalization has been accompanied by the disruption everywhere of age-old patterns of work, while the weakening of intergenerational solidarity has jeopardized the health both of national economies and the world’s democratic experiments.

By 1991, when *Centesimus Annus* appeared, the time was already overdue for Catholic social thought to take account of the turbulent changes that were transforming economic life and family relations everywhere in the late twentieth century. Those changes not only impaired the family’s ability to nurture and educate children but also its centuries-old role as a support institution for

its dependent members. Moreover, the transformation of family life was affecting all the other structures of civil society—neighborhoods, schools, parishes, and so on. In a vicious cycle, the mediating institutions could no longer count on families and thus were less able to serve as resources for families. To make matters worse, the benevolent aim of the welfare state to free individuals from much of their dependence on families, and to relieve families from some of their responsibilities for their weaker members, often aggravated the very situations it was meant to help. As John Paul II observed, “the individual today is often suffocated between the two poles represented by the State and the marketplace” (CA, 49).

Complicating any effort to remedy this state of affairs was the fact that many of the developments that weakened family ties are closely connected to goods and freedoms that are prized by modern men and women. By the 1990s, the major demographic indicators were stabilizing in the developed countries, but they remained near their new high or low levels. The tremors of the demographic earthquake subsided, but the social landscape was irrevocably changed. It does not seem an exaggeration to say that the human ecology was and remains in crisis.

As with natural environments, it is not easy to determine how probabilities might be shifted to foster social environments more favorable to human flourishing. What on earth could law and policy do to revitalize families and other fragile institutions upon which political freedom and economic vitality depend? It seems clear that any family policy that focuses on families alone without attending to their surrounding institutions is doomed to failure. Social scientists, regrettably, do not know very much about how to encourage, or even to avoid damage to, the social systems that undergird and buffer the free market and the democratic polity. Thinking in ecological terms did, however, suggest certain tentative conclusions and areas for further study.

So far as the role of law is concerned, the imperfect state of our knowledge suggests proceeding modestly, preferring local experiments and small-scale pilot programs to broad, standardized, top-down regulation. Often, the principle of “do no harm” will be the best guide. At a minimum, that would require investigation of environmental impacts, that is, the ways in which governmental or business policies may be undermining the very social structures upon which they depend. Where family policy is concerned, the ecological perspective helps us to recognize that a nation that does not have a conscious family policy nevertheless has family policies made by chance and by the operation of programs and practices that have an impact on family life. Regarding pilot programs, one of the most promising proposals has been that pioneered by Peter Berger and Richard Neuhaus: the idea that many social services such as education, health care, and

child care could be delivered more cheaply, effectively, and humanely through the mediating institutions of civil society, including religious institutions, than directly through the State.¹⁰ One of the many merits of that suggestion is that it also could be expected to promote the health of the mediating structures. Thus far, however, experiments with delivery of various social services by faith-based institutions have encountered formidable legal and political obstacles. In the United States, on the rare occasions when religious institutions have been permitted to participate in publicly funded programs of education, health care, housing, and services for the poor, the pressures on them to compromise their principles as the price of participation are so great as to imperil the integrity of the institutions themselves.

Impediments to implementation of the subsidiarity principle also loomed large when the Academy's Democracy Project turned its attention to the problem that free societies seem to have difficulty generating the very habits upon which they depend. In one of our reports, we speculated that the path to correction might lie in accepting a proposition that many friends of liberal democracy find difficult to entertain, namely, that democratic states and free markets ought to refrain from imposing their own values indiscriminately on all the institutions of civil society. With regard to families and the mediating structures of civil society, we wrote: "To play their role effectively in the ecology of democracy, these structures need not be democratic, egalitarian or liberal; their highest loyalty need not and should not be to the state, and their highest values need not and should not be efficiency and productivity."¹¹ In fact, we dared to suggest that the preservation of liberal, egalitarian democracy may depend on its willingness to maintain certain culture-forming institutions that are not organized on liberal, democratic, egalitarian principles, such as single-sex schools or churches that maintain a certain division of roles between men and women.

At the same time, however, the academicians (who come from many different parts of the world) recognized that to achieve an appropriate ecological balance among governments, markets, and mediating structures entails judgments that will vary according to the circumstances prevailing at any given time or place. In countries where kinship groups exercise excessive power, for example, it is governmental authority that needs to be reinforced.

The realm of international relations is yet another area where increased attention to the subsidiarity principle seems to be essential. At present, misunderstandings of the concept abound in the secular sphere, while Catholic social thought concerning its application to the relations among peoples and nations is relatively undeveloped. The discussion of subsidiarity in *Quadragesimo Anno* was mainly concerned with the relationship between the nation state and the intermediate

institutions of civil society in a world where the authority of the nation state within its own borders was taken for granted. In 1931, it would have been difficult to imagine a situation where many nations are yielding some of their sovereignty to supranational entities such as the European Union, where national sovereignty is eroded by economic forces, and where increasing numbers of problems can only be handled by cooperation at the international level.

It was not surprising therefore, when the Holy See's former Minister for Relations with States suggested in 2005 that it would be useful if the Academy were to explore the implications of the concept of subsidiarity in the context of the challenges for Catholic social doctrine posed by globalization. Specifically, he wrote us that it would be helpful, if "the theme of subsidiarity were developed, linking it to the principle of solidarity and to international governance, in relation also to the problems of multilateralism and to the far-ranging questions of development/poverty/responsibility (e.g., Millennium Goals) and security/disarmament/use of force/humanitarian intervention."

To a great extent, that suggestion shaped the agenda of the Academy's Plenary Session in 2007 on "Charity and Justice in the Relations among Peoples and Nations," a session that also represented the penultimate phase in the preparation of a final report on the Academy's longstanding studies of globalization. In the course of the 2007 meeting, the academicians heard the views of a wide range of experts on what might be done to maximize the benefits of globalization while minimizing the dislocations and losses that are its inevitable accompaniments.

One result of those discussions has been a heightened awareness of the need to address some internal tensions in Catholic international relations theory. Consider, for example, the Church's approach to poverty and development. Many Catholics, taking their bearings from *Centesimus Annus*, speak of the need to help bring the poorest peoples into the "circle of exchange" (CA, 34) or, as is now heard more frequently, the circle of productivity and exchange. However, John Paul II himself complicated that counsel when he said in an address to the Academy in 2001, "One of the Church's concerns about globalization is that it has quickly become a cultural phenomenon.... The market imposes its way of thinking and acting, and stamps its scale of values on behavior."¹² "Globalization," he went on, often risks destroying the carefully built structures of civil society "by exacting the adoption of new styles of working, living and organizing communities" (3). He warned that "globalization must not be a new version of colonialism. It must respect the diversity of cultures which within the universal harmony of peoples are life's interpretive keys. In particular it must not deprive the poor of what remains most precious to them, including their religious beliefs and practices ..." (4).

Those concerns of John Paul II, coupled with a similar appreciation for globalization's potential benefits, were echoed by Thomas Friedman in his best-selling book, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*. Friedman wrote that the more he "observed the system of globalization at work, the more obvious it was that it had unleashed forest-crushing forces of development and Disney-round-the-clock homogenization which, if left unchecked, had the potential to destroy the environment and uproot cultures at a pace never before seen in human history."¹³ Friedman was sufficiently alarmed about globalization's potential to damage social and natural environments that he warned: "You cannot build an emerging society ... if you are simultaneously destroying the cultural foundations that cement your society and give it the self confidence and cohesion to interact properly with the world. ... [W]ithout a sustainable culture there is no sustainable community and without a sustainable community there is no sustainable globalization."¹⁴

The puzzle lies open: How can the poorest peoples be brought into the circle of productivity and exchange without inflicting irreparable harm on their social environments?

International relations are another area where Catholic social thought seems to need further attention. The social teachings emphatically affirm the rights of peoples and nations. In fact, on the fiftieth anniversary of the United Nations, Pope John Paul II spoke at length of the need to develop protections for peoples and nations analogous to the rights of persons.¹⁵ "[O]ne source of the respect which is due to every culture and every nation," he said, is that "every culture is an effort to ponder the mystery of the world and in particular of the human person; it is a way of giving expression to the transcendent dimension of human life."¹⁶ Yet, recognizing that numerous problems cannot be addressed adequately at the national or local levels, the Holy See has been one of the strongest supporters of the United Nations and other international institutions. The principle of subsidiarity is supposed to help resolve the tension between the need for international solutions to certain problems and the need to respect the integrity of nation states and other bodies of a lower order.

Thorny problems arise, however, when one tries to determine just how the subsidiarity principle can or should apply in international contexts. Two scholars who have thought deeply about these matters are George Weigel and Paolo Carozza. Weigel has noted that, with the emergence of the Holy See as an important actor on the international stage, there is a certain tension between the role of the Church as a moral witness, on the one hand, and the pressures of everyday diplomacy on the other.¹⁷ A special challenge for the Holy See's posture toward international institutions arises from the fact that the record of existing international entities is quite mixed, with notable deficiencies when it comes to protecting unborn human

life and the integrity of the family, as well as in transparency and accountability, susceptibility to ideological biases, and cooption by special interests.¹⁸

Weigel suggests, therefore, that the time is ripe for Catholic international relations theory to undertake a critical evaluation of contemporary international organizations, one that includes consideration of their failures and biases as well as their accomplishments. To what extent do they operate in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity? To what extent do they displace smaller structures that enable men and women to have a voice in setting the conditions under which they live, work, and raise their children? In their day-to-day activities, to what extent do they promote or impede freedom, solidarity, justice, security, and the pursuit of dignified living? Just as the Church cannot regard the nation state as the final form of human political organization, Weigel cautions, it cannot assume that every body that labels itself international represents an advance for humanity.

Professor Carozza, examining contemporary international law from the perspective of Catholic social thought, argues that subsidiarity, rightly understood, offers a promising approach to the impasses that currently afflict human rights and international law. Among its merits, he cites the fact that “it values the freedom and integrity of local cultures without reducing particularism to pure devolution . . . , and it affirms internationalism . . . without the temptation for a super-state or other centralized global authority.”¹⁹ To the charge that the principle is too vague or soft, Professor Carozza wisely replies that, “The only sure way to address that challenge is to put subsidiarity to the test by seeking to apply it to concrete, ‘real world,’ problems.” For that to happen, of course, would require no small degree of intellectual and political effort.

Carozza further suggests that the scope of international law should be limited to those aspects of the good of human communities that are truly shared and that the role of international law and institutions should be regarded as strictly subsidiary—aimed at assisting the realization of the common good in national and smaller communities by addressing the kinds of problems that cannot reasonably be handled by separate entities at a lower level, intervening only to assist, not to replace, roles of smaller entities.²⁰ He thus commends an approach to international relations that acknowledges the need for international solutions to certain problems while recognizing the integrity of nation states and other bodies of a lower order—and respecting the enduring tensions among these bodies. (Though now nearly forgotten, that is exactly the approach that animated the principal framers of the United Nation’s Universal Declaration of Human Rights.)²¹

Those suggestions from Weigel and Carozza are so sensible that one must wonder why so many discussions of international law and institutions are characterized either by an uncritical acceptance of internationalism on the one hand, or

a blanket rejection of international norms on the other. Once again, a share of the responsibility belongs to the social sciences and to one discipline in particular. At present, there is among international lawyers, international civil servants, and activists in international NGOs a professional culture that is indifferent at best and hostile at worst to the concept of a legitimate range of approaches to the problem of implementing principles of freedom, solidarity, and justice. As political theorist Peter Berkowitz recently pointed out, “[T]he dominant view in the legal academy—which closely resembles the consensus among European elites and is associated with the European Union’s self-understanding—is that international law has an identifiable content and that its content corresponds to a progressive interpretation of government’s obligations at home and abroad.”²² The idea of legitimate pluralism, so central to the thought of the founders of the United Nations, was strongly emphasized by Pope John Paul II in his 1995 United Nations address,²³ but it is largely ignored by proponents of a form of international-*ism* that tends to place itself above sovereign states and civil society alike.

As a few dissenters from internationalist orthodoxy have observed, the internationalist project tends to formulate its objectives mainly in terms of its own dogmatic interpretations of human rights and to treat international law as a means to achieve results that have been rejected by national democratic political processes.²⁴ In his presentation to the Pontifical Academy in 2003, the distinguished international lawyer Joseph Weiler called attention to the “ironic dissonance” between the tendency of many internationalists to moralize about their version of human rights and their contempt for any notion of democratic legitimization of the norms they favor.²⁵

As this brief account of efforts by one group of social scientists indicates, it will require sustained collaboration and dedication to meet the challenges addressed to economists, jurists, sociologists, and political scientists in the social teachings of John Paul II. The philosopher-pope did not leave his readers without guidance. One of the most important messages of John Paul II’s work and personal witness is that the path out of a vicious social cycle begins with the recognition that we human beings are not helplessly trapped within institutions. Human beings are capable of reflecting upon their existence and of making judgments concerning whether the society they live in is the kind of society they wish to leave to their children and future generations. Those judgments, of course, can be powerfully influenced by the settings in which we find ourselves, but those settings in turn can be influenced to some extent by reflection and choice.

Therein lies the greatest challenge of all. Will we who have had the blessing of living in free societies be able to shift probabilities in a direction more favor-

able to the maintenance of those societies? One thing seems certain. The enemies of free societies and Christianity are watching and waiting to see whether the civilizations of Europe and the Americas will survive the fallout from the vast social transformations of the late twentieth century. The life and work of John Paul II will stand forever as a reminder that seemingly indestructible regimes could be and were brought down by countless men and women determined to live in truth and to call good and evil by name. Now it is up to those who follow in their footsteps to prove that free societies can be preserved in the same way—by human persons acting intelligently and choosing wisely.

Notes

1. John Paul II, Apostolic Letter Given *Motu Proprio* Establishing the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, January 1, 1994. The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* contains a similar appreciation of the social sciences:

A significant contribution to the Church's social doctrine comes also from human sciences and the social sciences... The Church recognizes and receives everything that contributes to the understanding of man in the ever broader, more fluid and more complex network of his social relationships... This attentive and constant openness to other branches of knowledge makes the Church's social doctrine reliable, concrete and relevant. Thanks to the sciences, the Church can gain a more precise understanding of man in society, speak to the men and women of her own day in a more convincing manner and more effectively fulfill her task of incarnating in the conscience and social responsibility of our time, the word of God and the faith from which social doctrine flows. (78)
2. Statutes of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, Article 1.
3. Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, *Conceptualizations of the Person in Social Sciences*, ed. Edmond Malinvaud and Mary Ann Glendon (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006).
4. John Paul II, Address to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, 25 November 1994 (10).
5. Rev. J. Augustine Di Noia, O.P., "Charity and Justice in the Relations among People and Nations: The Encyclical 'Deus Caritas Est' Of Pope Benedict XVI," Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences XIII Plenary Session, 27 April 2007; reported in *Zenit*, "On 'Deus Caritas Est' and International Charity," 5 May 2007, ZE 07050501. <http://www.zenit.org/article-19541?l=english>.
6. For example, "Authentic democracy is possible only in a State ruled by law, and on the basis of a correct conception of the human person. It requires that the necessary conditions be present for the advancement of both the individual through education

and formation in true ideals, and of the ‘subjectivity’ of society through the creation of structures of participation and shared responsibility” (CA, 46). See also CA, 15 and CA, 35 (“the market [should] be controlled by the forces of society and by the State, so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are satisfied”).

7. John Paul II, Address to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, 25 November 1994 (4).
8. Representative publications of the Academy include: *Work and Human Fulfillment*, ed. Edmond Malinvaud and Margaret Archer (Ypsilanti, Mich.: Sapientia Press, 2003); *Democracy in Debate: Reports, Final Proceedings and Final Document*, ed. Hans F. Zacher (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005); *Vanishing Youth? Solidarity with Children and Young People in an Age of Turbulence*, ed. Mary Ann Glendon and Pierpaolo Donati (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006); *The Governance of Globalization*, ed. Edmond Malinvaud and Louis Sabourin (Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2004).
9. Subsidiarity is the principle of Catholic teaching that requires respect for the proper autonomy of each social body in its own sphere. Addressing the Pontifical Academy in 2000, Pope John Paul II emphasized that

smaller social units—whether nations themselves, communities, ethnic or religious groups, families or individuals—must not be namelessly absorbed into a greater conglomeration, thus losing their identity and having their prerogatives usurped. Rather the proper autonomy of each social class and organization, each in its own sphere, must be defended and upheld. This is nothing other than the principle of subsidiarity which requires that a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its rightful functions; instead the higher order should support the lower order and help it to coordinate its activity with that of the rest of society, always with a view toward serving the common good. (4)
10. Peter L. Berger and Richard John Neuhaus, *To Empower People: From State to Civil Society* (Washington, D.C.: American Enterprise Institute, 1996).
11. *Democracy in Debate*, 266.
12. John Paul II, Address to the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, 27 April 2001 (3).
13. Thomas Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, rev. ed. (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2000), 23.
14. Friedman, *The Lexus and the Olive Tree*, 302.
15. Pope John Paul II, Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations, 5 October 1995 (5–8). See also, CA, 16, 21.

16. Pope John Paul II, Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations, 5 October 1995 (9).
17. George Weigel, "World Order—What Catholics Forgot," *First Things*, no. 143 (May 2004): 31–38.
18. See, regarding family policies, Mary Ann Glendon, "International Organizations and the Defense of the Family," in *La Famiglia: Dona e Impegno, Speranza dell'Umanita* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1999), 31–47.
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20. Paolo Carozza, "Universal Common Good and the Authority of International Law," *Logos* 9, no. 1 (Winter 2006): 26–55.
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22. Peter Berkowitz, "Laws of Nations," *Policy Review* 130 (April/May 2005): 71.
23. Pope John Paul II, Address to the Fiftieth General Assembly of the United Nations, 5 October 1995 (3).
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