



Boston Catholic Journal



NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

Laudato si

The Salvation of the *Economy*

VS.

The Economy of *Salvation*

If the Pope pontificates on *economics*, we must ask ourselves, can an *economist*

pontificate on the Faith? “Of course not”, you say, “The province of expertise embodied in an economist does not qualify him as a theologian. It’s not his job description. He may have *opinions* on the matter but that is all they are:

“opinions.” By the same reasoning, neither can a pope pontificate on economics. Its not *his* job description. His job description is *spiritual*: proclaiming the Gospel and saving souls. In fact, his Master clearly states that “His Kingdom is not of this world.” (*“Regnum Meum non est de hoc mundo”*). An economist’s job description is *temporal*: to research and analyze economic issues: it precisely pertains to the world, matter, money, and financial assets. Would you go to Warren Buffet for spiritual advice on moral matters? Would you go the pope for economic advice concerning your retirement options? Really? It is a matter of competency and invested authority. Would you attend a seminar featuring Warren Buffett on the topic of saving your soul and going to Heaven? Would you go to one featuring Francis on organizing your work strategy and finances? You would cock your head in bewilderment and politely decline both, no?. Or do I have a deal for you on ocean-front property in Nebraska!

In the one, **the Economy of Salvation**, we have a unique Catholic concept concerned with the redemption and salvation of man through the providential ordering of all things necessary to this end. An admirably concise definition is provided below:

“It is the elements and resources revealed by God as necessary for the sake of our salvation through God’s revelation and communication of Himself to mankind. It refers to God's creation of all things, and of His governance of the world, especially with regards to Jesus’ part in salvation, which includes His mission being fulfilled by His Body, the Church, and through the sacraments.”(

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economy_of_Salvation)

In the other, **Economics**, we have from the same source, a definition even more concise:

“the **social science** that studies the production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services.” (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Economics>)

The differences, we see, could not be more distinct. They are *ontological* in nature — that is to say, they are concerned with the “being”, the substance, of each understood as “economies”. The distinction is nothing less than metaphysical. For further clarity let us say that we predicate the same title to two different men with the same name, both of whom we refer to as: “Doctor Smith”. Doctor John Smith is a physician. Doctor Joseph Smith is a professor of economics. Because we make no overt distinction in title does not mean that the two are identical in function and taxonomy. The professor could not perform an appendectomy, and the physician could not teach Adam Smith’s, *The Wealth of Nations*.

In other words, the two “Economies” that Francis conflates are really quite different, both in scope and purpose.

Confusing our mothers

Until the pontificate of Francis we, as Catholics, had two holy Mothers:

- Our Holy Mother the **Church**
- Our Holy Mother, **Mary**

... and now “our *holy Mother Earth*”?

Pope Francis insists that we must:

- “Love the land as **Mother earth**”
- “Make alliance with **Mother Earth**”
- “This **sister** [Earth] now **cries out to us** because of the harm we have inflicted on her by our irresponsible use and abuse of the goods which God has endowed her with. We have come

to see ourselves as her lord
and masters, entitled to plunder her at will. The violence present in our
hearts, wounded by sin, is also
reflected in the soil, in the water, in the air, and in all forms of life.”

This, however, is not how God Himself saw it from the beginning:

“Let us make man to our image and likeness: and **let him have dominion over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and the beasts, and the whole earth, and every creeping creature that moveth upon the earth.** And God created man to his own image: to the image of God he created him: male and female he created them. And God blessed them, saying: **Increase and multiply, and fill the earth, and subdue it, and rule over the fishes of the sea, and the fowls of the air, and all living creatures that move upon the earth.**” (Genesis 1.26-28)

Francis takes Exception:

- “We human beings are united as brothers and sisters on a wonderful pilgrimage, woven together by the love God has for each of his creatures and which also unites us in fond affection with brother sun,

sister moon, brother river and **mother earth.**”

- “*One thing is certain: we can no longer turn our backs on reality, on our brothers and sisters, on **Mother Earth,***”

(speech at the Pontifical Catholic University of Ecuador)

- And that, “*The system of production and distribution of food must be **radically rethought.***” (we do not know from what “school of theology” this derives, but in the way of structure and policy it is remarkably similar to, if not a template drawn from, Marxism.)

If much of this is reminiscent of New Age thought and the culture and encroaching Communism of the “groovy 60s”, we are at least inclined to wonder at the correspondence.

We pray for Francis, that God lead him *away* from the world and guide him in **His ways** — and not the *ways of the world.*

In our humble — and perhaps even mistaken opinion — the last truly holy and absolutely faithful pope was Pope Pius X. The Seat of Peter did not expire after his

death. Whether or not it has been heroically Catholic in the last 50 years is, in our opinion, very questionable. The Church has suffered much and terribly as a consequence of Vatican II. But just as Pope Pius X sat upon the *Cathedra* that Honorius and Alexander stained, another Pope of heroic Catholic sanctity may await us and restore what had been — once again, in our opinion — illicitly deprived of us.

In that sense we are, indeed, Faithful to the Sacred Deposit of Faith entrusted to the Holy see in Rome when it is exercised as such *in the sight of God*, and in complete continuity and agreement with that 2000 year Deposit of Faith — *which is susceptible to being (illicitly) ignored or prescinded from to the ends of man, but from which no one can deprive Catholics — and which **no one** can abolish.*

Remember the admonition of Saint Paul to St. Timothy:

“For there shall be a time, when they will not endure sound doctrine; but, according to their own desires, they will heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears: And will indeed turn away their hearing from the truth, but will be turned unto fables.” (2 Tim. 4:3-4)

Remember also the deceits of the devil:

“For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood; but against principalities and power, against the rulers of the world of this darkness, against the spirits of wickedness in the high places.” (Eph. 6.11-12)

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