

Study-theme on PAX ROMANA



1. Why the present interest for the international affairs ?

a) The man is more and more drawn towards an international life. The seriousness of the problems that threaten him, the diffusion of all sorts of political, scientific, cultural information create in him a desire of being united with the other men. That is why we see now-a-days a continuous flow of individuals going from one continent to the other to be present at meetings, congresses, treatises, discussions.

b) This desire of unity has been facilitated owing to the enormous speed of the means of communication. One has the impression that the world is growing smaller and smaller. With a supersonic speed in a record-time one may get in touch with the most far-flung regions of the world.

c) The problems themselves, most of them, go beyond the national limits and take, in a world-wide level, terrifying and almost unsurmountable dimensions.

- on the economical level

- . millions of men starve every year.
- . side by side live men in the most tragic misery and men in the most ostentations show.
- . many of the traditional natural resources are at an end.
- . in the world there are regions that are absolutely deprived of economical possibilities, while others have plenty of richnesses.

- on the political level

- . the growing old of the political structures of the Western world giving arise to an internal trouble.
- . the movement of emancipation of the ancient colonial territories, most of which have not enough of trained leaders.
- . the domination, or, at least, the orientation of small countries by big potentates.
- . the slavery of one-third of the humanity under a communist regime.
- . the constant situation of " war " in the world.
- . the practical inefficacy of the international organs that have as a mission to safeguard peace.

- on the cultural level

- . the instability of a technical civilization that has not yet found a philosophical synthesis.



- . the absence, on every level, of a teaching suitable to the characteristics of the modern world and of each cultural tradition.
- . the lack of cultural development in great masses of people (70% of the africans cannot read)
- . the democratization of certain fields of culture.

- on the moral level

- . the increasing demoralization of customs.
- . an appeal to the life of the senses more and more frequent and commercially explored.
- . the juridical emancipation of woman without the basis of the respect for the dignity and mission that are her own.
- . the development of international networks for immorality and vice.
- . the désintegration of families having divorce as a result, the "birth-control", the juvenile delinquency.

2. The repercussion on the life of the Church of the international life such as it presents itself to us now-a-days.

a) The Church is in herself supranational, because She is universal. She extends herself to all men of all regions of the world and of all races. The Church is universal in the very expression of her life.

b) On the other hand, the Church takes to heart all problems that concern the life of man. Thus she is preoccupied with all those questions which, in our days, assume world-size dimensions. Though her action is at work on the supernatural level, the Church is present in all levels, and that not only because the supernatural is the crowning and the completion of everything that is achieved on the natural level, but also because the lay Christians, which are also the Church, live their christian life and give evidence of Christ in the temporal order.

c) The development of international life gives to the Church new human possibilities of presenting her universality in a very practical way to men and institutions and thus to fulfil her mission in the world in an effectual way. On the other hand the world-size problems, and the fact that there are organizations responsible for their solution, put the Church before the duty of being present and collaborating in all these fields, the duty which affords a sounder basis and gives to the international work the christian marks which it needs. In spite of safeguarding the possibility of a different choice, according either to the natural or the divine law, the Church must be in the vanguard of the solution of all problems where the religious and human valours are concerned.

3. The role of the University in the modern world and in the Church.

a) All problems that now-a-days are put in the world have some idea at their basis. They cannot be solved without the adequate application of other ideas. The working out of the solutions demands leaders in the social life having a superior culture and a specialized technique. As most of these leaders are formed at the University, this one is at the very root of all changes of structure in the social life.

The University has therefore, in the modern world, a mission that is unique and unreplaceable.

b) Owing to her specific mission, the University assumes a very special importance at the eyes of the Church :

In the one hand, because of her role in the transmission of culture and of spiritual values, the University meets, to a certain extent, the field of the Church herself. Wherever she recognizes the Truth, she can be an unique instrument for the radiation of Truth. In any case, through her students and graduates, the University plays always a decisive role in this domain. Through them the Church may provide, to the problems of today, an answer both scientifically valuable and fully christian

In the other hand the University may afford to the Church "the basis of experienced lay knowledge" that she needs.

4. PAX ROMANA derives from the meeting together of these three coordinates: the problems of the modern world, the universality of the Church, the mission of the University.

a) PAX ROMANA has, in the Church, "the mission of bringing the christian message to the students and to the intellectuals through an world-size organized action, of putting at the service of the Church the resources of their thought, of making Christ present in the university milieu, in the world of culture, and in all activities proceeding from it.

There is a well-defined university apostolate. Besides having as last purposes that are common to every redeeming task, this apostolate has well-defined, immediate aims, proper methods and even a spirituality of its own.

b) P.R. lives this university apostolate through the fulfilment of certain big aims :

- the santification of each one of its members in the Mystical Body through the Liturgy and the teaching of the doctrine.
- the personal trouble of the student for everyone of

his brothers, expressing itself in an effective action.

- the formation of the students in consideration of their future role as graduates in society.
- the creation, by the community of members of PR, of a christian atmosphere at the University.
- the active collaboration with all those that try and make the University a centre of a true culture, respecting all human values and their hierarchy.
- the responsibility of making a catholic voice heard in the midst of the university community and of representing the catholic students in the city and in the organisms with which they collaborate.

5. The proper apostolate of P.R. is founded on vital-ideas that justify its orientation and activities.

a) The apostolic idea is the cause of being of the whole movement. It is in the apostolate that P.R. expresses its proper life. In our groups everything must be thought with a view to the attainment of this aim. This apostolate is not a pious idea, but the effective action to the conversion of souls, that we are obliged to carry out by the fact of our Baptism. Everything must be based on this conversion of the souls to Christ. From there proceeds the unreplaceable role of the personal action of each member of our groups towards the other university students. This personal action, the foundation-stone of a fruitful apostolate, is completed by the action of the whole of the catholic group which acts as an whole, both on the souls and on the structures which have such a decisive influence on the full development of souls.

The apostolate cannot therefore be confined to a field or to certain private forms. It tries to reach every domain - the students, the university life as such, the neutral organizations. To each one of these one has to find out the fittest methods, that can be either a retreat and spiritual exercises full of a liturgical spirit, or round-table discussions with the representatives of other ideological groups, or firm assertions at the time of great ideological debates in the University or in the civic life itself, including even things as simple as friendly gatherings where the students in countries of catholic minority can find a christian atmosphere and soundly relax their minds.

The apostolate is connected with all these efforts and demands a coherent presence in all these possible aspects.

b) The intellectual apostolate has a specific character of its own. In spite of being very much democratized and of being overrun by a more and more dominant crowd, the University still gives access to professions where a specific intellectual activity is practised and where an increasing responsibility facing social life is required.

The catholic university people cannot avoid the duty of acquiring a sound intellectual formation and a religious culture on the same level as their secular culture. They must be apt to face the problems of culture and of social life that rise, first of all, in the plan of ideas. Their specific contribution to the human community and to the Church lays in the effort of thinking in a christian way all problems for which a fully technical-scientific formation is required, and in directing men to find true solutions for them.

In this context it is clear that this intellectual apostolate is not a cold mental elaboration, cut out from the real life. On the contrary; as far as this apostolate concerns the most basic problems of man it reaches the very roots of life, takes the whole of its human warmth out of it, and becomes apt of taking charge of the whole man and not only of this or that of his capacities; however the very exigencies that guide it oblige the intellectual apostolate to bend over all the problems with the same strictness of thought and critical methods that constitute an element of security in the pursuit of Truth.

c) The unity of the Movement on all the levels is an essential aspect of its life.

PR is neither an assembly of federations nor a superstructure. PR rises on a local level wherever a catholic student attempts to live his university vocation closely linked with Christ, and to direct to Him the souls of all those who live around him. Yet through the dialogue that sets up among the different groups PR has also a proper life on the national level, and beyond the frontiers, on an international level. It is on this level that a true Movement becomes definable. It is precisely here, as a synthesis and completion of all individual and group experiences, that must rise the idea that will give a new energy to the apostolic work of each Federation and will help the Movement to fulfil its apostolic task towards the other international organizations.

6. The specific task of P.R. is fulfilled at different levels and according to a well-determined nature.

a) PR is composed of more than 80 national federations which, though keeping their autonomy and their close ties with the national hierarchy, take as their ideal that of the Movement and give life to it with the contribute of their concrete experience. The Federations are not all of them, of the same kind. They cover large domains of apostolic action. These diversity is a fact as desirable and fruitful as the diversity that distinguishes us, christian individuals. This diversity does not mean that every one of our Federations has a scale of values absolutely different. By the very fact of their affiliation to PR, that is, a Movement of apostolate amidst the university people, the Federations are engaged in the irradiation of the life of Christ and His doctrine in the university milieu



and, owing to the responsibility that belongs to the University, in the whole social life. This means that historical reasons of birth or of a present situation must be overcome in order to attain this precedence of the apostolate that is expressed in the eager and practical desire that the kingdom of God arrives. The true diversity is born therefore of the different way in which each person or each group assumes the common values, gives them life and sets them in action.

b) PR receives for that reason in itself all apostolic forms which, though defining themselves in different social and historical contexts, safeguard the essentiality of the apostolate and make of it their main purpose.

In the other hand PR wishes the collaboration with the catholic organizations in the University in which the apostolate is not their principal clear aim. PR has the duty of bringing to these organizations the dimensions of a specific university apostolate, lived according the guiding-teachings of the Holy-Father. It is together with all these catholic organizations that the groups of PR build the catholic community at the university. PR has the duty of giving to this community a genuine apostolic physiognomy.

c) Within PR each Federation and each local group are indispensable cells. There can't be any real life in the International Movement if there is no apostolic life at its basis.

Moreover, PR is more than a sum of Federations. These ones create among them a dialogue from where springs a proper life. This proper life finds its expression in a common orientation and in the coordinated efforts to achieve the proposed aims. In order to strengthen the development of this proper life PR possesses a number of international organs. These organs are responsible for the constancy of the Movement to the ideal accepted by its members, and for the concreteness of this ideal in the particular situations of every moment.

These organs are:

- 1) The Interfederal Assembly, responsible in the first line for the life of the Movement; deliberates on the activities of MIEC and on all problems concerning the aims of PAX ROMANA; it passes judgement on the present orientation of the Movement and decides as a last resource on the present orientation of the Movement; in a particular way it orientates the federations, the Directing Committee, the General Secretariat and the Sub-secretariats.
- 2) This one elects a Directing Committee, that is responsible before the I.A. and has as tasks: in collaboration with the General Secretary, to prepare the programme of the activities and the manifestations of the Movement to be submitted to the Interfederal Assembly; to direct the activities of the MIEC on the basis of the decisions of the I.A.; to guarantee the fulfilment of the engagements of the Assembly.



- 3) As a member of the Directing Committee the General Secretary of the Movement participates in the responsibilities of the leaders, and helped by the Secretariate staff-team, looks after the accomplishment of its tasks.

Besides this, the Movement possesses specialized organs, the Sub-Secretariats, the main purposes of which concern the help to be granted to the Federations and the work to be carried out on the international level in consideration to the formation of the students in the professional field and in other fields of a basis-formation (missionary formation, social formation, etc.)

These organs work in close connection with the correspondent national groups.

7. PR accomplishes its specific aims as an International Movement through the carrying out of certain means of action.

a) What regards the Federations and the development of their apostolic work, PR makes use of three typical means :

- publications: these ones are primarily PAX ROMANA Journal, which is supposed to reach every student, and the hand-books on several aspects of the apostolic life and of the base-formation, and which are supposed to attain at least every national and local leader.
- meetings: besides the international gatherings organized by some Federations under the aegis of PR, the Movement holds regional and world-size meetings (as for instance the yearly I.A., preceded of a Formation Seminar on a particularly important theme, and every three years a World Congress). These meetings have as a purpose the creation of a true community-spirit among the students of the several countries and especially the study of problems connected with the apostolate and of which the conclusions must be carried to the different Federations, both through their delegates in these gatherings and through further publications.
- personal contacts: nothing matters if a deep friendship does not exist linking, on the one side, national and international leaders, and on the other side the simple students of the several countries. The personal contacts or the contacts by correspondence, the exchange with the foreign students that are present in a certain country, are the basis of this friendship.

b) PR, sharing the apostolic uneasiness of the Church facing the university world and the world of culture, is present in the international organizations connected with these domains. It parti

cipates in common meetings; in close collaboration with other organizations, it promotes meetings having a particular aim in view; it is by itself "sponsor" of neutral organizations like the WUS. In these meetings it must bring in the catholic point of view on the several problems and collaborate actively in the creation of a true supernational community among all the men.



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