

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO LIVE WITH DIGNITY?

**To live with dignity is to know how
to live freely and responsibly**

It is in the great human principles where the greatness of the human being glimpses, but also where its fragility can be glimpsed. A very general and abstract conception can bring men together, like for example love, human rights, freedom; but our life elapses in the coordinates of reality and concretion, not in those of abstraction. Therefore, it is under the great human principles where diametrically opposite concrete realities are often hidden.

One of these concepts, one of these great principles is the dignity of the human being. Indeed the dignity is also our ONG reference and flag. It is the dignity of all human beings that moves us to do something in common, to share our lives together. But, what does it mean to live with dignity?

The Catalan Philosopher and Theologian Francesc Torralba in his book "Cent valors per viure" (Lleida: Labrador editors, 2003) ["One hundred values to live"] answers this question in a simple and clear way: "to live with dignity is to know how to live freely and responsibly". If we pay attention to this sentence there are like two movements: "to know how to live" and "freely and responsibly". The "knowledge to live" integrates action with reflection and vice-versa. To live with dignity implies to commit oneself every day with sense, something that must be learnt and polished along

editorial

someone's life. The second movement "freely and responsibly" tells us about this living that implies me and the person of the other. It is not a worthy life the one that ignores the other; it can not exist a worthy life with a scorn of me.

Nowadays it seems that the dignity is only reduced "to live freely", whatever the cost, forgetting about the words "knowledge" and "responsibly". Nothing about knowing, because the person that does not have a horizon different than himself does not have anything to learn. Nothing about "responsibly", because the others do not interest me at all. In this sense, we corroborate the words of the auxiliary Bishop of Barcelona Joan Carrera: "Looking at the social body as a whole, the non-stop increase in the exigencies of comfort, solutions and security has become a concern... in contrast to a certain diminution in people's self-exigency, in the resource to the educative route and a decrease in the risk acceptance. When the sense of responsibility is eroded, the solidarity is also affected, although verbally it may remain on the upswing. We are all, in the end, those who are asked for an explanation by so many placards that say 'we already want it', 'we call for it'..."

Surely we have met and we still know of some people that have lived and do still live with dignity and who animates us with their example. Jonh Paul II has been, without doubt, one of these people. That his example does not happen unnoticed to us.

The Council

TYOLOGY OF SOCIAL VOLUNTEERING



From a personalist or Christian approach, the most authentic social volunteering is one based on an interpersonal relationship

The typologies or “labels” that sociologists or researchers use for social phenomenons are not always in accordance with the particular reality of the day-to-day routine. Because reality is much more rich and complex, it escapes from any classification or taxonomy. Nevertheless, one must admit that “labels” help us to assume positions regarding the reality under study and also supply us with interpretation keys that may foster a fruitful dialogue in relation with this reality.

The reality of social volunteering is capable of being classified. In the book “Repensar el voluntariado social desde la doctrina social de la Iglesia” (Madrid: San Pablo, 2004 [“Think again the social

volunteering from the point of view the social doctrine of the catholic Church”]), Jesús Sastre reviews some typologies on social volunteering and summarizes them in the following table.

From a personalist or Christian approach, the most authentic social volunteering is one based on an interpersonal relationship between the agent and the addressee, that is to say, the “encounter” model. However, this encounter model is not always possible, reason why the “cooperation” model also approaches to the ideal of social volunteering. The “spectacle” or else the “campaign” volunteering are models that, at best, should help us to have access to other types of volunteering, such as the “cooperation” or the “encounter” models, although this result is not always achieved.

Édison Fañanás Lanau

TYPOLOGY OF SOCIAL VOLUNTEERING					
CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS	METHODOLOGY	SPECTACLE	CAMPAIGNS	COOPERATION	ENCOUNTER
		Festivals	Information	Organization	Presence
	CHANNEL	Mass-media NGOs	Mass-media NGOs	NGOs - Volunteering	NGOs - Volunteering
	VISION OF THE CONFLICT	Misfortune	Blot	System imbalance	Radical imbalance N/S
	IMPLICATION DEGREE	Nor follow-up nor process	Economic follow-up	Projects follow-up	Accompaniment processes
	VOLUNTEERING MODEL	Collaborators in spectacles	In extreme situations	Projects starting	An alternative to society
	HORIZON	To maintain disorder	To palliate catastrophes' effects	Promotional aid	Social transformation
	EFFECTS FOR THE AGENTS	To consume solidarity	Exoneration	Awareness	To shape a life plan
	EFFECTS FOR THE ADRESSEES	Beings without face or decontextualized	Temporary relief	Reliance to make projects	Protagonists of their own liberation
	ETHICAL MODEL	Postmodernism	Emotivism	Consensus	Compassion
	KEY WORD	MARKET	AID	DEVELOPMENT	TRANSFORMATION

A LETTER FROM BRASIL

The project aims to support the development of family ecological agriculture against the neoliberal model of soybean and cotton agrobusiness

São Felix do Araguaia, March 28, 2005

Dear friends of Claim for Dignity:

First of all, I send you all a big hug from Brazil.

I'm writing this letter from the "Assentament" (settlement) Gleva Don Pedro, which is some 180 kilometers away from the place where I have been living for the last three years: São Felix do Araguaia, in Mato Grosso, an inland state of Brazil. To be more precise, I am visiting my friend Edison, who is now watching without losing a detail the 8 o'clock soap opera on a mini TV which functions on and off with accumulated solar energy.

Edison is one of the first "posseiros" (small land owners) who became part of the Gleva Don Pedro settlement ten years ago, when the Instituto Nacional de Colonización y Reforma Agraria (INCRA) (National Institute for Colonization and Agrarian Reform) bought a large estate from one of the greatest landowners of the region. Nowadays, Edison's family survives selling tapioca flour and making sporadic recollection works on the properties of big landowners. Even so, he never earns more than the minimum wage, that is, 75 euros a month.

Edison's house is made of straw and mud, like most of the houses of the 5,000 families that live in the region settlement. Edison wakes up each day at 5 o'clock in the morning to harvest some kilos of tapioca. Afterwards, with a bag on his back, he walks more than 3km to take the tapioca over to the "farinheira" (community's mill), which has been set up by some families.

As they work, men and women take time to talk about the last news of the settlement. They chat, laugh and sing, and in the meantime the outline of their sun-tanned and worked bodies blur between the smoke and the heat of the oven that slowly toasts the tapioca.

Saturday is market day in São Felix do Araguaia. An old and run-down truck picks up the posseiros with their load of tapioca flour and some other (few) goods that they bring to sell. After a trip of eight or ten hours on top of the bodywork they will arrive to the city and luckily they may turn home with a few coins in their pockets.

experiences

These days we are visiting each of the small properties of the posseiros to check the ongoing projects. Abilio, a young man from Brazil, is the agricultural technician responsible for the Comissão Pastoral da Terra (CPT, Pastoral Land Commission). In October 2004, with the help of United Hands, members of ANSA (Associação de Educação and Social Assistência Nossa Senhora de Assunção) started a Project which has as a primary target "to improve social and economic life conditions of families in the settlement, based on the community implementation of agroecological systems of production".

We are working on three lines of performance:

1. To stimulate the farming and the harvest of fruits native of the region, such as maracuyá (passion fruit), pineapple and acerola in the agroecological system. That's why we have extended the microcredit program developed here since the year 2000 to all the territory of this settlement.
2. To guarantee the commercial use of these fruits, turning them into frozen pulp for making juice, and sending this pulp to another ANSA project: the Araguaia Pulp Factory whose main purpose is precisely this.
3. And to work on training, qualification, awareness and teamwork aspects, developed by the Pastoral Comissão da Terra. With all this in mind, the project aims to support the development of family ecological agriculture against the neoliberal model of soybean and cotton agrobusiness, which large industries and big interests intend to impose at any cost.

In the last few years Brazil has become one of world's largest exporters of soybean and its (macro) economy is strongly dependent of the international sale of agricultural products. But the price that the majority of its inhabitants is paying is tremendous: world champions in the environmental destruction of the Amazon region, with more than 50% of its population living in a state of extreme poverty, a slavery work, murders over land conflicts and so on.



The Prelature of São Felix do Araguaia, headed by our bishop Pere Casaldàliga has been pointing out these abuses and the ominous consequences that this neoliberal model means for the majority of Brazilian people. Making front to the murder of some of its members, dead threats, criticism and many other pressures, this special Church has been able to communicate its claim for dignity and justice, but over all it has been able to convey to its people a constant message of hope that today shines over each and every one of the persons of this humble community.

Raul Vico Ferré
São Felix do Araguaia, Mato Grosso
Brazil

Some translations to understand this text:

Assentament: Land obtained from a large estate, by means of expropriation by the government or as a result of an occupation. This land is divided among the applicant families (or occupants) and delimited by the government. Due to their location and structure, the majority of these settlements lack of any type of infrastructure.

Posseiros/Settlement: Owners of one "posse", or a small piece of land within a settlement. Farinheira: The premises adapted for the manufacture of tapioca flour.

Further information at:

www.prelaziasaofelixdoaraguaia.uol.br
www.cptnac.cómo.br
www.mst.org.br

communication

- Under the motto For the family and the liberties. Now is time to act, an event took place in Barcelona on March 6th to affirm the value of the marriage and the family. The act was summoned by the organizations of the Pact for the Life and the Dignity, one of which is "Clam per la Dignitat". There was an attendance success.
- 250 € were collected during the "Diner of the Hunger" made on March, 11th in the parish of the Josepets of Barcelona. Thank you very much!
- Saturday 14 of May a requiem for Mr. Xavier Casellas, father of Maria, Xavier and Blanca, was celebrated. Family Casellas Rocabert hosted Patrícia Sinthumule in July 1998, when five South African young people participated in a workshop in Barcelona. We share the sorrow and pray of the family. Rest peacefully.
- A scholarship for studies has been granted to the young Rabelani Witness Sinthumule, son of Patrícia Sinthumule. The scholarship is only for a year and, according to the results and our economic possibilities, it may be prorogued for more academic years.
- From the previous number, the bulletin "CexDe" is not only sent by electronic mail, but also by postal mail to all the partners and some friends and supporters of "Clam per la Dignitat". They read to us in South Africa, Colombia, Peru, India, Australia and, of course, in Spain and Germany.
- From this number we also publish the bulletin in German! Thanks to the disinterested collaboration of German and Spanish friends, we make true that the "CexDe" can be published in four languages: Catalan, Spanish, English and German.
- Our German friend Ralf Kammerer has assumed the task of the design and update of our Web page as well as the design of the bulletin in exchange for a symbolic economic repayment: thank you very much!
- Finally the trip to South Africa forecasted for May has not been done nor will be done a workshop next summer. The MaS project goes on ahead with the desire that soon we will be able to go to South Africa again.
- The forecasted meeting of „Clam for Dignity" on May, 8th has been postponed to July, 17th, when a coexistence and training day will take place in Sant Just Desvern (Barcelona).
- The annual Assembly of "Claim for Dignity e.V." will take place at the end of July in Tübingen.

Published by Clam per la Dignitat

Legal deposit: B-21.862-2004
C/ Major 49
08960 Sant Just Desvern
Barcelona
Tel. and fax: (+34) 932 172 112
Registration in the Generalitat:
Nr. 27.209, 1st section, Barcelona
NIF: G-63.112.189
C/c: 3025-0004-33-1433212631

clamdignitat@clamdignitat.org
www.clamdignitat.org

claimfordignity@claimfordignity.org
www.claimfordignity.org

Claim for Dignity e.V.

eingetragener gemeinnütziger Verein
Konrad-Adenauer-Str. 50/42
72072 Tübingen

Tel. und Fax. (+49) 7071 / 94 24 03
Kontonummer 7354948
KSK Esslingen BLZ 61150020
Vereinsregister Nr. 1458
Amtsgericht Tübingen