

ENCYCLICAL LETTER ~~ FRATELLI TUTTI

Chapter Four

A HEART OPEN TO THE WORLD

129. Our response to the arrival of migrating persons can be summarized by four words: welcome, protect, promote and integrate.
133. The arrival of those who are different, coming from other ways of life and cultures, can be a gift, for “the stories of migrants are always stories of an encounter between individuals and between cultures. For the communities and societies to which they come, migrants bring an opportunity for enrichment and the integral human development of all”.
135. Here I would mention some examples that I have used in the past. Latino culture is “a ferment of values and possibilities that can greatly enrich the United States”.
136. On an even broader scale, Grand Imam Ahmad Al-Tayyeb and I have observed that “good relations between East and West are indisputably necessary for both. They must not be neglected, so that each can be enriched by the other’s culture through fruitful exchange and dialogue. The West can discover in the East remedies for those spiritual and religious maladies that are caused by a prevailing materialism. And the East can find in the West many elements that can help free it from weakness, division, conflict and scientific, technical and cultural decline.
140. Life without fraternal gratuitousness becomes a form of frenetic commerce, in which we are constantly weighing up what we give and what we get back in return. God, on the other hand, gives freely, to the point of helping even those who are unfaithful; he “makes his sun rise on the evil and on the good” (Mt 5:45).
141. The true worth of the different countries of our world is measured by their ability to think not simply as a country but also as part of the larger human family. This is seen especially in times of crisis. Narrow forms of nationalism are an extreme expression of an inability to grasp the meaning of this gratuitousness. They err in thinking that they can develop on their own, heedless of the ruin of others, that by closing their doors to others they will be better protected.
142. It should be kept in mind that “an innate tension exists between globalization and localization. We need to pay attention to the global so as to avoid narrowness and banality. Yet we also need to look to the local, which keeps our feet on the ground.
145. We need to sink our roots deeper into the fertile soil and history of our native place, which is a gift of God. We can work on a small scale, in our own neighborhood, but with a larger perspective... The global need not stifle, Nor the particular prove barren”; our model must be that of a polyhedron, in which the value of each individual is respected, where “the whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts”.
147. Other cultures are not “enemies” from which we need to protect ourselves, but differing reflections of the inexhaustible richness of human life.
148. In fact, a healthy openness never threatens one’s own identity. A living culture, enriched by elements from other places, does not import a mere carbon copy of those new elements, but integrates them in its own unique way. The result is a new synthesis that is ultimately beneficial to all, since the original culture itself ends up being nourished.
150. To see things in this way brings the joyful realization that no one people, culture or individual can achieve everything on its own: to attain fulfilment in life we need others. An awareness of our own limitations and incompleteness, far from being a threat, becomes the key to envisaging and pursuing a common project. For “man is a limited being who is himself limitless”.