

# Living in Dialogue in the Light of the Personalistic Vision of Karol Wojtyła/ John Paul II

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## 1. Introduction

We actually live in the world of diversity because as a human being, we are not an isolated being. However, in the presence of diversity, there are two extreme attitudes that often still emerge. First, the attitude of rejecting diversity which is reflected in various expressions of chauvinism, radicalism, and fundamentalism. Diversity is seen as a threat to the original or dominant identity. Second, the very permissive attitude towards diversity which allows people to dissolve in syncretism, relativism, non-identity, etc. Diversity is thus seen as a necessity and a part of social-cultural evolution opposed to a static identity that tends to be authoritarian and dominating. Both can trigger some conflicts and tensions. In this diversity characterized by those extreme attitudes, the principles of dialogue are needed.

Karol Wojtyła (1920-2005), who was latter known as Pope John Paul II, had an interesting notion of dialogue which was based on his personalistic vision. As a pope, he was known as the Pope of Dialogue through his Magisterium and some concrete dialogical actions.<sup>18</sup> Moreover, when he visited Indonesia in 1989, he realized that the Indonesian diversity becomes a strength as well as a challenge for the unity and the good of Indonesia and the world. Therefore, one of the important messages he gave to Indonesian was “living in dialogue”.<sup>19</sup>

This paper aims to briefly examine Wojtyła’s notion of dialogue. This paper primarily uses *Person and Act*<sup>20</sup> as the principal source of Wojtyła’s personalistic thought and some articles he wrote before his election as pope which were published in the book entitled *Person*

<sup>18</sup> See “John Paul II the Pope of Dialogue – the virtual exhibition in <https://www.britishpoles.uk/john-paul-ii-the-pope-of-dialogue-the-virtual-exhibition/>; We can see also some brief information from other websites: <http://polishconsulatemanchester.com/popeofdialogue/gallery/pope-of-dialogue/>; [https://issuu.com/msz.gov.pl/docs/papie\\_dialogu\\_plansze\\_wszystkie\\_11.05.2020](https://issuu.com/msz.gov.pl/docs/papie_dialogu_plansze_wszystkie_11.05.2020). All those were accessed in January 7, 2022 between 12.50 - 13.10 UTC.

<sup>19</sup> Pope John Paul II, “Apostolic Journey to the Far East and Mauritius: Meeting with the Leaders of the Major Religious Communities of Indonesia, at Taman Mini Indonesia Indah, Jakarta, Tuesday, 10 October 1989,” downloaded from [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1989/october/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_spe\\_19891010\\_capi-religiosi.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/1989/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19891010_capi-religiosi.html), accessed in October 23, 2019 at 12.13 UTC.

<sup>20</sup> *Person and Act* was firstly published in Polish entitled *Osoba i czyn* (1969). The first publication in foreign language was *The Acting Person* (1979, translated by Andrzej Patocki, edited with some additional notes by Anna-Teresa Tymieniecka). Unfortunately, this English version was controversial so that John Paul II established a commission consisted of his academic colleagues to re-examine, re-edit and renovate his original text *Osoba*, and in 1994 this commission had finished the definitive text. I used two translation versions: 1) *The Acting Person* (I simply call AP) and, 2) *Persona y acción* (PA) which refers to the definitive text of *Osoba* in 1994). Further information about this controversy can be read in the first chapter which is an exploration from some sources: Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyła: Thought of the Man who Became Pope John Paul II*, Cambridge, U.K.: Wm. B. Eedermans, 1997, p. 117 note 1; Rodrigo Guerra López, *Volver a la persona: El método filosófico de Karol Wojtyła*, Madrid: Caparrós Editores, 2002 p. 199-200; Cf. Juan Manuel Burgos,

and Community<sup>21</sup>. Since dialogue is not the main topic in Wojtyła's *Person and Act*, he only alluded a tiny, brief, but dense idea of dialogue. For that reason, I also use his writings and actions during his papacy by assuming that those sources were rooted in his personalistic vision that had been matured before he was elected as pope.

## 2. Participation and the Common Good

### 2.1. The idea of Participation

Wojtyła discusses the principles of dialogue in the topic of the intersubjectivity through his notion of participation. He examines intersubjectivity in his analysis of a dynamic correlation between the person and the action.<sup>22</sup> In this framework, Wojtyła argues that the person manifests himself in the action. This manifestation includes the transcendence of person as well as the integration of person. In an action performed, we can thoroughly explore various important aspects of personhood, such as consciousness, self-determination, freedom, moral conscience, responsibility, the unity of psycho-somatic dimension with the spiritual dimension, etc. He calls them as a personalistic value of the action. This personalistic value precedes the ethical value because it exists in man as a person even before the action is actualized and judged in accordance with certain ethical norms.<sup>23</sup> Therefore, this personalistic value can be considered as the value of the person or his dignity.

The personalistic value is manifested through an individual action as well as a common action. Wojtyła considers the experiential fact that man exists and acts together with others. In those co-existence and co-operation, without ceasing to be himself, one can also manifest his unity with the other and together direct themselves toward the common good. That is, for Wojtyła, a participation which primarily points out the innermost and homogeneous property of the man who reveals his co-existence and co-operation with other.<sup>24</sup> For this reason, participation is, for Wojtyła, a fundamental element of community and the common good. In a deeper sense,

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“La antropología personalista de *Persona y Acción*,” in Juan Manuel Burgos (ed.), *La filosofía personalista de Karol Wojtyła*, Madrid: Ediciones Palabra, 2007, p. 117 note 1.

<sup>21</sup> Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, translated by Theresa Sandok, New York: Peter Lang, 1993.

<sup>22</sup> Wojtyła realizes that the theme of intersubjectivity through participation is an important complementary of his entire analysis of the person and his action. As he mentions, it seems that Wojtyła was inspired especially by Husserl who analyzed a cognitive dimension of intersubjectivity. Nevertheless, Wojtyła asserts that his source to understand intersubjectivity is the dynamic correlation of person with action which reveals in experience of existing and acting together with the others. He calls participation to the intersubjectivity in particular sense regarding that correlation. (PA, p. 379 note 1; AP, p. 315 note 75). He then develops the notion of participation especially in his articles he wrote after the publication of *Osoba*, that is, “Participation or Alienation?” (*Paper sent to the Fourth International Phenomenology Conference in Fribourg, Switzerland, on 24-28 Januari 1975, and published in Summarium 7.27 (1978), 7-16*), and “The Person: Subject and Community” (*First published in Roczniki Filozoficzne 24.2 (1976), 5-39*).

<sup>23</sup> PA, p. 383; AP, p. 264.

<sup>24</sup> PA, p. 391; AP, p. 269.

participation is also a human ability to take part in and share humanity with the others without any borders.<sup>25</sup>

## 2.2. *The Common Good*

Wojtyła's idea of the common good is close to Thomistic view which discusses the common good in a relationship between person and society, and in a dynamic tension between individual and common good. In Thomistic view, the aim of society is the act of virtue of all its members which has two conditions.<sup>26</sup> First, they act according to the virtue since the virtue makes them live well. Second, the sufficiency of the physical goodness that is useful for carrying out the virtuous actions. For living by virtue, freedom is principally required since the man is naturally ready to achieve virtue, but there are still individuals who have a tendency toward evil. Therefore, to ensure unity and keep every individual away from evil, a legal juridical action can be carried out so it can direct all to the virtue.

Inspired by Thomistic view of the common good, Wojtyła formulates his own view.<sup>27</sup> Firstly, he emphasizes the primacy of person over any human relation and community. It is profoundly important and necessary to understand the community from its fundamental reality, that is, the real personal subject, not vice versa. Secondly, the concept of the common good is an analogical concept. Thirdly, the common good is simply not a sum or a generalization of the individual good, but it is really the good which is valuable to gain for all members of that community. Fourthly, the common good has both objective and subjective dimension<sup>28</sup>,

<sup>25</sup> PA, p. 421; AP, p. 294.

<sup>26</sup> Cf. Sergio Lozano Arco, *La interpersonalidad en Karol Wojtyła*, Valencia: Edicep, 2016, p. 261-263.

<sup>27</sup> In general, Wojtyła's view about the objective dimension of the common good is the same as St. Thomas' view. For Wojtyła, the common good is an objective and concrete aim of a certain community. Nevertheless, Wojtyła sees that such definition is too superficial because it cannot explain and express the subjects' dynamics within the community who acts together to obtain the good for them, both for the individual as well as the community. In other word, such definition is lack of a deep consideration of the subjective dimension of community. (Cf. PA, p. 404-406; AP, p. 280-282; Cf. Karol Wojtyła, "The Person: Subject and Community," in Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community: Selected Essays*, translated by Theresa Sandok, New York: Peter Lang, 1993, p. 249-250)

<sup>28</sup> For example, Maritain also pertains the subjective dimension of the common good, at least, in his work *The Person and the Common Good* (1946). There is a correlation between the person as a social unit and the common good as the end of the society. The common good as the end of society is the good of the community, of the social body, neither the individual goal nor a collection of the individual goals. However, the common good has to reach not only the social body as the error that has been done by a totalitarian system, but it has to be received in the persons, in each one of whom is a mirror of the whole social body. It is really the good or a good living for the multitude persons. The most important thing in the common good is that it requires a recognition of the fundamental rights of the persons and of the type of society in which the domestic society where the persons are engaged primitively, is totally different from the political society. Maritain's idea of the common good has gone beyond the classical Thomistic idea because he added the subjective dimension of the common good in which he links the person and the personality to the society. The common good of the political society is not only a set of the objective dimensions of the commodities and services (infrastructures, schools, public spheres, fiscal condition, military power, judicial institutions, etc.), but also the subjective dimensions which are something more profound, more concrete, more humane, such as a civic conscience, the political virtues, liberty, the spiritual riches, justice, virtues, heroism, a happiness for all its members. They all constitute the good human life of the multitude. (cf. Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good*, translated by John J. Fitzgerald, Notre Dame, Indiana: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972, p. 49-50, 54, 59; Cf. Juan

and the subjective dimension of the common good can be understood through the notion of participation. By asserting the subjective dimension of the common good, Wojtyła reminds us that the common good also relates to manifestation of the personalistic value and self-realization of each member through the common actions. The acting together, therefore, for Wojtyła, aims not only to the common good in the objective dimension, but also to the realization of the subjective moment. The common good thus reveals the true participation.<sup>29</sup>

### 2.3. *The Authentic vs Non-authentic Attitudes*

For Wojtyła, participation is not automatically actualized, but is really a task that must be realized.<sup>30</sup> Dealing with the common good, participation contains two authentic attitudes, namely solidarity and opposition.<sup>31</sup> The essence of solidarity is person's readiness to involve himself actively in the common actions for his own self-realization as well as the realization of the common good of the community. That person is always ready to take part with others in the process of acting together as well as in sharing its result for the goodness of each other and for the common good. In such attitude of solidarity, there may also be a free decision to sacrifice or actualize a self-giving for the goodness of the others and the common good. Meanwhile, the opposition cannot be considered as an opponent of solidarity. It just manifests different ways or forms, but its core is still participation to achieve the common good. Wojtyła asserts that solidarity and opposition are complementary so both have to be harmoniously lived in the community and the efforts to reach the common good become more lived and dynamic.

On the contrary, the common good in its objective and subjective dimension would never be realized if the persons of the community release non-authentic attitudes, namely, conformism and non-involvement.<sup>32</sup> In certain sense, conformism could be neutral since it expresses some efforts to adapt and synchronize with others in the community. However, if it is constantly actualized, it makes one involve only superficially and never makes one manifest his personalistic value through common action. As a result, the community would only establish uniformity. Meanwhile, non-involvement is a withdrawal from any kind of involvement. In a very particular sense, non-involvement can become an authentic attitude insofar as the social circumstance prevents participation so it could be a resistance against the impersonalistic social system.<sup>33</sup>

From the general description of participation and its relationship with community, the common good, and various attitudes, we can see that Wojtyła displays the dynamic fact of social

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Manuel Burgos, *Para comprender a Jacques Maritain*, Salamanca: Fundación Emmanuel Mounier, 2006, p. 154).

<sup>29</sup> Juan Manuel Burgos Velasco, "El personalismo de Karol Wojtyła: persona, prójimo, comunidad, sociedad," p. 29.

<sup>30</sup> Cf. PA, 393; AP, p. 271; Karol Wojtyła, "Participation or Alienation?" in Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, p. 202-203.

<sup>31</sup> PA, p. 409-411; AP, p. 284-287.

<sup>32</sup> PA, p. 413-417; AP, p. 289-291.

<sup>33</sup> PA, p. 416; AP, p. 291.

reality. In that dynamism, there are always differences, oppositions or even contradictories. However, he believes that living in a dynamism that exhibits various stresses and tensions is possible. The principle of dialogue would help us live in that dynamism.

### 3. The Principle of Dialogue

In the *Person and Act*, Wojtyła only alludes a little to dialogue in its relation with the authentic attitudes. Dialogue, therefore, never intends to seek uniformity or even to eliminate the differences between solidarity and opposition, but it really reveals the openness and acceptance to live in a dynamic situation between various differences while still looking together for the realization of the common good of the community. Wojtyła also adds some aims of dialogue.<sup>34</sup> Firstly, dialogue brings to light what is the true, the right, and the just for the community in the middle of controversial situation between solidarity and opposition. For him, it is clear that the good, the right and the just should develop and enrich each person as well as the community. Secondly, dialogue aims to eliminate any subjective views, trends and dispositions which would be a source of strain, friction and conflict without evading those.

From those considerations, it can be resumed that dialogue in Wojtyła's thought should be considered in three inseparable dimensions. Those dimensions are the anthropological dimension which can explain the fundamental foundations of dialogue in the structure of the human relation and of the community, the epistemological dimension which can explore the relation between dialogue and man's searching for the truth, and the ethical-axiological dimension which can draw how a dialogue leads the persons and the community toward the common good for a certain community, for the human communities, or even for the entire humanity.

#### 3.1. *Dialogue in Its Personalistic Basis*

Dialogue takes place in the realm of participation and participation explicitly reveals the openness, the acceptance, and the affirmation of the otherness. I am indeed different from others, and my existence is neither formed nor determined, neither by the other nor by my relationship. I am really autonomous with all my unique and unrepeatable consciousness and experiences. I can, however, understand the other as he or she really is, insofar as the other is, for me, an I. As an I, the other has his or her own dynamism similar to my own dynamism as a person. The other also manifests his or her personalistic value or dignity through the action, and by realizing an action, the other could obtain his or her self-realization. The other is not a barrier, but is like a gift for me to manifest the personalistic values and achieve self-realization of each other through the realization of existing and acting together.

Therefore, the openness, the acceptance and affirmation of the existence of the other would be fully actualized if I and the other share together our concrete humanity without any border. It may also happen because, thanks to the personal structure of self-possession, every

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<sup>34</sup> PA, p. 412; AP, p. 287.



person fundamentally possesses himself so he is able to actualize self-giving to each other for some good. Dialogue is thus defined as that which supports and guarantees the realization of participation in every level of the human relationship.

### 3.2. *Dialogue as a Path of Searching Together for the Truth*

Wojtyła follows the Aristotelian-Thomistic doctrines about the truth as a correspondence between human intellect and reality, *adequatio intellectus et rei*<sup>35</sup>, and about human natural inclination to the truth.<sup>36</sup> This truth is not only bound with the human knowledge of reality, but, thanks to this knowledge, the man can effectively act. The knowledge is not merely a set of facts, but it is indeed a human comprehension of the reality as a whole.<sup>37</sup> In it, man can believe that he is capable of conforming, adapting and developing himself through his action in the world.

Wojtyła was also interested in the Thomistic doctrines which disclose the connection between the reason and the will with respect to the truth and the good. Every human act tends itself not only toward a mere good, but the truth of the good since freedom, which is a manifestation of the will as self-determination, and reason closely work together and thus cannot be separated (*utraque ad actum alterius operator*).<sup>38</sup> On the one hand, the will wills so that the reason knows, and on the other hand, the reason knows that the will wills and also knows what the will truly wills. Therefore, both the reason and the will include one another. When the reason sees that the will wills a certain good, and when the reason knows that something is good, such good would be the object of the reason, and that object would be a particular truth. On the contrary, the truth is the good of the reason and the truth is also the ultimate end of the will which urges the reason to the truth.<sup>39</sup>

In the presence of reason, the good has both theoretical and practical sense. It has a theoretical sense since the reason by a speculative way defines its essence and reflects the principles that play a role in it. It also has a practical sense when the reason discloses it as the object of an action.<sup>40</sup> Thanks to the role of the reason, the man can know the essence of the good. Among various goodness which he could gain by his action, it may be found that there is a hierarchy of the good which reveals the lower or the higher level of good in accordance with

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<sup>35</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *De Veritate*, I, 1; Karol Wojtyła, "The Problem of Experience in Ethics," in Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, p. 116-117.

<sup>36</sup> Aristotle, *Metaphysics* I, 1.

<sup>37</sup> Cf. Miguel Acosta and Adrian J. Reimers, *Karol Wojtyła's Personalist Philosophy*, p. 67-68.

<sup>38</sup> Cf. Karol Wojtyła, "On the Directive or Subservient Role of Reason in Ethics: in the Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas, David Hume, and Immanuel Kant," in Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, p. 58; Cf. Karol Wojtyła, "On the Metaphysical and Phenomenological Basis of the Moral Norm: In the Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and Max Scheler," in Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, p. 80.

<sup>39</sup> Karol Wojtyła, "On the Metaphysical and Phenomenological Basis of the Moral Norm," p. 80.

<sup>40</sup> Karol Wojtyła, "On the Directive or Subservient Role of Reason in Ethics," p. 58; Cf. Karol Wojtyła, "On the Metaphysical and Phenomenological Basis of the Moral Norm," p. 80.

a certain measure relating to the Supreme Good. The reason can thus recognize such measure since it can know the essence of the good.

The good itself, according to St. Thomas, is an analogical concept which covers all good which is generally an object of the will. The reason can apprehend not only the different objects of the will, but also can point out the distinctions among those objects. St. Thomas makes three distinctions of the good: *bonum honestum*, *bonum utile*, and *bonum delectabile*. *Bonum honestum* refers to the good as an end, whereas *bonum utile* points out a means to reach the end. Both are also distinguished from *bonum delectabile* which is a “subjective good of satisfaction or pleasure.”<sup>41</sup> If those former goods correspond to the will in its close connection with the reason, the latter is rather a good which flows from the passivity of the will. Since St. Thomas considers the superior role of the reason in human life, he posits *bonum honestum* as a priority to any normative function although it is also the immediate basis for them. *Bonum delectabile*, on the contrary, refers to a satisfaction or a pleasure whose sensory characteristics does not directly point to the human perfection as a rational being. Finally, *bonum utile* which is always apprehended as a means, may be directed toward *bonum honestum* in its correspondence to the role of the reason, or toward *bonum delectabile* in its accordance with the sensory pleasure. If *bonum utile* is directed to *bonum honestum*, it can thus be called “a true *bonum utile*”. However, if *bonum utile* is directed to *bonum delectabile*, it can only be a mere tool to obtain a partial good.

Therefore, Wojtyła says, “The search for means to an end takes place on a level compatible with our human dignity only when that end conforms to our rational nature.”<sup>42</sup> He also adds that in the Thomistic doctrines, satisfaction or pleasure is not only a domain of the senses because the man who leads himself toward *bonum honestum* through “a true *bonum utile*” can also experience a perfect satisfaction or pleasure which corresponds to the power of reason.<sup>43</sup>

For that reason, when he analyzes the correlation between the person and the action, Wojtyła always asserts that the person manifests his personalistic value through the action so that when he performs an action, he fully realizes himself. This self-realization, Wojtyła argues, cannot be separated from its correspondence to the good, that is, the true good which refers to *bonum honestum* and the “true *bonum utile*”.<sup>44</sup> Without it, according to Wojtyła, there would not be self-realization in the full sense through the action.

In both the interpersonal and the social dimensions, the persons perform a common action through which they still manifest their personalistic value and thus reach their self-realization, manifest their unity and try to actualize the common good. Just as a person directs

<sup>41</sup> Karol Wojtyła, “On the Directive or Subservient Role of Reason in Ethics,” p. 58.

<sup>42</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>43</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 61.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. Karol Wojtyła, “The Person: Subject and Community,” p. 249.

himself toward the true good through his personal action, so through the common action, the persons within the interpersonal and the social relationships direct themselves to the true good of each person and the community.

This common searching for the true good is never easy. Every community consists of the multiple free persons who naturally have ability to incline themselves toward a true good. It can easily be imagined that each of them has different level of that ability which depends on various factors, both the internal and the external factors so each of them by his very lived experience could understand the reality and what the true good is, and also expresses and manifests all his understandings in different ways. It is never easy to unify or synchronize them in the common action for the true good of the community. Even though each person is aware of his existing and acting together through participation, and of the importance of the common good as a constitutive element of his community, it is still difficult to bring that awareness into practice, especially within a pluralistic reality, and tension, friction or even conflict may emerge.

Dialogue thus becomes an opportunity that brings the persons to think and act together for the common good. Such dialogue can only take place when, first of all, as a free being, each person in the community is aware of and believes in human capability to recognize and direct himself toward the truth and the true good. Love for the truth is an essential element because the truth clearly transcends the subjective opinions, tendencies and dispositions. Those differences are often seen as a part of the historical and cultural identity that have shaped one's identity. Through dialogue, Wojtyła believes that the truth can be revealed and can also illuminate the process of dialogue since the culture is, above all, understood as a result of the actions of the personal subjects.<sup>45</sup> Through this dialogue, each person actualizes his participation in the humanity of others.

If each person really shows the love for the truth, he would also posit and consider others with all their rich personalistic values as a truth which must be respected more than all other objective realities. The respect for others is thus not something that is forced to accept, but it comes by nature as a free human being who searches for and loves the truth, and the loveable truth now concretely presents itself in its fullness as the presence of another person who stands, lives, and acts next to me. Each of them has the same sense of obligation and responsibility within his or her personal subjectivity, not only for themselves, but also for others so the truth and the man's love for the truth always guide every person to search for a true common good for their community.<sup>46</sup>

The love for the truth and the mutual respect for each other encourages each individual person to be ready to sit and talk together, listen to each other as they really are, ask each other, explain each other, see and evaluate together the problems they faced, examine together the

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<sup>45</sup> See. Karol Wojtyła, "The Problem of the Constitution of Culture through Human Praxis," in Karol Wojtyła, *Person and Community*, p. 263 – 275.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. PA, p. 255-257; AP, p. 173-174.



prejudices and the assumptions of the subjective opinions, tendencies or dispositions that may prevent the individuals from seeing the truth clearly and respecting the others sincerely. By engaging a dialogue based on the love for truth which provokes a mutual respect for each other, each person freely determines and attempts to obtain together some certain common goods. This mutual understanding and respect precede any form of consensus or agreement since the persons with their personalistic value in the common action are fundamentally more valuable. The consensus and the agreements are nothing more than a fruit of dialogue.

### 3.3. *Dialogue as a Path toward the True Common Good*

Every person is always a member of a certain community. One may, at the same time, be a member of some diverse communities. One is a son who is a member of certain family; he is also a member of certain neighborhood, of certain friendship community, of the labor union, etc. All those communities live together in the rich and complex fabric of a society. The common good is thus recognized as a transition key from the interpersonal dimension of “I-Thou” to the social dimension of “We”.<sup>47</sup> Without ceasing to be themselves, “I” and “thou” consciously and freely enter into a new reality of “We” through participation. The encounter between multiplicity of the persons, of many “I”s, constitutes a reality of “We” bound by the common good through participation.<sup>48</sup>

The common good becomes, therefore, a binder of the community because the social relationship between the persons of the community leads to some good which can only be achieved through common action. With respect to the relation between the individual and the common good, Wojtyła argues that the common good is superior over the individual good not because of its quantity, but primarily dealing with a particular feature of the person in participation.<sup>49</sup> By acting together with others, I manifest myself and reach my self-realization, including my innermost property as a person who exists and acts together with others and, simultaneously, share a concrete humanity with the other. All those can only happen in the social order with the common good as its end, not in the individual order. In this sense, the common good is superior than the individual good. For Wojtyła, submitting to the common good by the act of sacrifice can never be forced, but it is always an *actus personae* to manifest the personalistic value and thus attaining a true self-realization.

Such common good is indeed difficult to be attained by all members when the community is established. There are always challenges from various views such as individualism, utilitarianism, totalitarianism, etc. The greater quantities of the “I”, the more difficult and more complicated for the community to establish the unity of “We”, and of course, to reach the true common good of that community. Wojtyła consider the sense of dialogue as a path which has to

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<sup>47</sup> Cf. Sergio Lozano Arco, *La interpersonalidad en Karol Wojtyła*, p. 277.

<sup>48</sup> Karol Wojtyła, “The Person: Subject and Community,” p. 247-248; Cf. Sergio Lozano Arco, *La interpersonalidad en Karol Wojtyła*, p. 278.

<sup>49</sup> Cf. Sergio Lozano Arco, *La interpersonalidad en Karol Wojtyła*, p. 263-264.

be taken to be gradually closer to the true common good which the community aims to. In the light of the truth, dialogue can step-by-step guide all members of the community toward the true principles about a true relation between person and community which are always in the risk of falling into any kind of the extreme views, especially individualism and totalism, utilitarianism and materialism. In such dialogue, all members should be daring to clearly re-evaluate and reconsider all assumptions behind their views, opinions, dispositions, and considerations about the good for the community. Such dialogue also encourages each person who participates in it to emerge and then develop some compatible attitudes for living together.

## 4. Living in Dialogue

### 4.1. *The Practical Character of a Dialogue*

Through his writings and actions during his papacy, John Paul II shows that dialogue has its fullest meaning through a concrete action which is rooted in a free decision to manifest himself, to obtain self-realization as well as to realize the common good. A true dialogue should be thus an *actus personae*. He believes that dialogue is a path for reconciling the man with nature, his neighbors and God. Dialogue is a path to achieve peace for all mankind, struggling to overcome any human division and separation which are radically rooted in sins.<sup>50</sup> He also affirms that there is an inseparable relationship between dialogue, peace, the truth, and the true freedom. The true peace fundamentally requires the sincerity and the truth, whereas non-truth in its various forms of lies, impartial information, hoax, sectarian propaganda, manipulation, etc., are the only causes of violence and war. He also emphasizes that one of the most fundamental non-truths is a denial to believe in the man with all his ability to reach the truth, the good and the just, and simultaneously, with all weaknesses as a sinner who really needs the grace of God to overcome evil and sins.<sup>51</sup>

There were many dialogical actions performed by John Paul II in several types, such as ecumenical dialogue, interreligious dialogue, intercultural dialogue, dialogue as a diplomatic path for peace, and dialogue between sciences and faith. He confirmed many times that ecumenical movement was one of his priorities in his pontifical ministry in accordance with Jesus' prayer.<sup>52</sup> He asserted that the freedom of religion and the role of religious tradition and spirituality are very important to establish the world peace so he initiated the world prayer for

<sup>50</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Apostolic Exhortation "Reconciliatio et Paenitentia"*, published in December 2, 1984, art. 2, downloaded from [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_exh\\_02121984\\_reconciliatio-et-paenitentia.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_02121984_reconciliatio-et-paenitentia.html), accessed in December 10, 2021 at 10.08 UTC. (It is henceforth simply called, *RP*)

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the Day of Peace: Truth, The Power of Peace*, Januari 1<sup>st</sup>, 1980; Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the Day of Peace: Dialogue for Peace, A Challenge for Our Time*, 1<sup>st</sup> Januari 1983.

<sup>52</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Encyclical Ut Unum Sint: On Commitment to Ecumenism*, published May 25, 1995, art. 2, 9-11, downloaded from [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_25051995\\_ut-unum-sint.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_25051995_ut-unum-sint.html), accessed in December 10, 2021 at 10.45 UTC. (It is henceforth simply called *Ut Unum Sint*)

peace in Assisi in 1986 and continuously spread the spirit of Assisi.<sup>53</sup> In some conflicts between nations, he himself or his personal messengers always tried to initiate a dialogue for peace.<sup>54</sup> He also enthusiastically made a set of dialogue between sciences and faith in the Castel Gandolfo where he invited many experts, philosophers, theologians, believers or non-believers to make a dialogue and dedicate their investigation for a better civilization.<sup>55</sup>

#### 4.2. *Some Required Attitudes for Living in a Continual Dialogue*

John Paul II many times emphasized that dialogue is a difficult path to take, but it is possible to realize. He, therefore, explicitly explained several general attitudes that must be developed by everyone who is called to make a dialogue for peace. The first and foremost attitude is the love of and the openness to the truth. The pope believed that all human beings have by nature a capacity to disclose the truth about themselves and the world around them, and to direct themselves toward the Absolute truth.<sup>56</sup> He said clearly in *Fides et Ratio*:

“It is the nature of the human being to seek the truth. This search looks not only to the attainment of truths which are partial, empirical or scientific; nor is it only in individual acts of decision-making that people seek the true good. Their search looks towards an ulterior truth which would explain the meaning of life. And it is therefore a search which can reach its end only in reaching the absolute.”<sup>57</sup>

This attitude also stimulates people to seek continuously and be open to the truth, be critical, analytical and reflective in the face of various offers of the truth. The man does not passively accept the truth, and can eliminate the errors, falsehoods, and various understandings that reduce the truth.<sup>58</sup>

However, man’s searching for the truth often neither goes smoothly nor works successfully as expected. Of course, there are many factors that could be the cause. Nevertheless, according to John Paul II, the first and foremost factor is the fact that the human reason is limited and it

<sup>53</sup> George Weigel, *Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II*, New York: HarperCollins Publisher, 1999, p. 513-514.

<sup>54</sup> For examples, he sent Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez, SDB, to guide and accompany the process of a bilateral dialogue between Argentina and Chile which were in conflict during 1978-1984 (George Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, p. 532). He also sent Cardinal Roger Etchegaray, the President of the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace in very special mission to Teheran (Iran) and Baghdad (Iraq), to design any possible way for peace in the middle of the Iran-Iraq war in 1980s. Cardinal Etchegaray himself saw that his very special mission was, first of all, not an official diplomacy task, but it was rather more a representation of Pope himself who was concerned very much with any conflicts around the world, so he described the pope as well as himself as “a man above, not outside, politics.” (George Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, p. 532).

<sup>55</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery*, Chapter IX: “Being a Priest Today”, downloaded from [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/books/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_books\\_19960301\\_dono-e-mistero.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/books/documents/hf_jp-ii_books_19960301_dono-e-mistero.html), accessed in January 11, 2021 at 18.47 UTC; cf. George Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, p. 467-468.

<sup>56</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Encyclical Letter “Fides et Ratio”*, published in September 14, 1998, blessing before introduction, downloaded from [https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_14091998\\_fides-et-ratio.html](https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091998_fides-et-ratio.html), accessed in January 10, 2022 at 11.45 UTC. (It is henceforth simply called *FR*)

<sup>57</sup> *FR*, art. 33.

<sup>58</sup> Pope John Paul II mentions some ways which reduce the truth in his Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, such as *eclecticism, historicism, scientism, nihilism* (*FR*, art. 86-90).

is further exacerbated by a certain internal conditions that can obscure and distort the search.<sup>59</sup> Therefore, the love of truth must be accompanied by the attitude of humility in the face of the truth. This humility means firstly awareness of one's limitations in order to fully understand the truth, acknowledging that the measure of the truth is not in oneself, and strengthening a sincere and honest openness to the truth. This kind of humility strengthens the courage to keep searching for and listening to any source of the truth, including the truth of the others because, above all, every person can and must preserve enough confidence in the man, in his capacity of being reasonable, in his sense of the good, the just and the fair, and also in his brotherly love and hope.<sup>60</sup>

The man's search can never ignore the role of others because in the process of knowing, man entrusts himself to the knowledge that has been given to him by others in his family, in his school, etc. This truth of the person is certainly not an abstract truth, but the truth that comes from a dynamic relationship of a mutual trust and self-giving with others.<sup>61</sup> Therefore, the openness and acceptance of others based on the love of truth, the humility before the truth, and the awareness of the role of the others in the search for truth is a necessity. In those attitudes, listening to others with all their personal richness (knowledge, beliefs, principles of life, ways of thinking, cultural identity, etc.) as they really are is the key to enter into a true dialogue. On the contrary, refusing to listen to others actually builds a wall which would separate us.<sup>62</sup>

Moreover, dialogue thus also requires, for Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II, some other attitudes, such as: reciprocity: mutual understanding, mutual respect, etc.; solidarity, including the opposition, or a readiness to join with the other in the common action and in a contribution to the community for the good of each member and the common good; the rejection of the non-authentic attitudes; 'metanoia' or a radical transformation of life toward the truth and the good.

## 5. Conclusion

Karol Wojtyła/John Paul II considers diversity, and all dynamism which emerges due to it, as a gift as well as a challenge for human unity through participation by manifesting the attitude of solidarity as well as opposition. Dialogue is thus a pathway to guarantee participation through the attitudes of solidarity and opposition to reach common good for each person who exists and acts together and for the community wherein the persons have bound themselves. Due to the person's inclination to the truth and the true good in both individual as well as common action, a true dialogue also has its principal and undeniable references to the truth and the good.

<sup>59</sup> FR, art. 28.

<sup>60</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the Day of Peace: Dialogue for Peace, A Challenge for Our Time*, Januari 1, 1983.

<sup>61</sup> Cf. FR, art. 32

<sup>62</sup> Cf. Pope John Paul II, *Message of His Holiness Pope John Paul II for the Celebration of the Day of Peace: Dialogue for Peace, A Challenge for Our Time*, Januari 1, 1983.

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