



Rescuing Fraternity
Together

Rescuing Fraternity - Together

Summary

<http://www.academyforlife.va/content/pav/it/salvare-fraternita.html>

<http://www.academyforlife.va/content/pav/en/salvare-fraternita.html>

"Rescuing Fraternity - Together" is a call, written by a group of ten theologians, summoned by Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia and Msgr. Pierangelo Sequeri. This is a call to the Church in all its components, and to the Wise, men and women of good will. This is a call for conversation, not simply an analysis that is to be accepted or rejected. This is not a handbook of "blueprints" to which one is asked to adhere, but it is a collection of issues we think need to be reflected on and considered. This call has grown out of the provocation offered by Pope Francis' Encyclical "Fratelli tutti." What we want to do is capture the deep meaning of this encyclical - which is addressed to a Church that is urged to open up, and to a world that is tempted to close itself off - by creating an atmosphere of "intellectual fraternity" that reinvigorates the noble sense of "intellectual service" that culture professionals—theological and not—owe to the community.

The Lord is the only Savior. «This is our unwavering certitude. In today's kairos of the Church there are many troubling signs that this shining truth is being hidden. The off-putting fussiness of hair-splitting and stuffy polemics that turn the practice of theology into tribal warfare ("I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Kephass," 1 Cor 1:12), is today even surpassed by obvious failure to see through the fakery and perversions that characterize the exercise of pastoral responsibility. The excessive ineptitude of the ecclesiastical structures is now widely known. The conflicts and immorality that affect the ecclesiastical world are now seen as revelatory of the weakness of the system, not simply as occasional failings».

In line with the Encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, «we wish to share with theologians, pastors, disciples, and the whole believing people an awareness of the crisis that today's circumstances have forced upon us and the resolve to the metanoia that faith demands of theology. In the face of a human coexistence shaped by the values of self-interest and indifference to an ethic of sharing, ecclesial theology must adopt with all a style of creative and open thinking, not one communicated in cant for initiates. It seems obvious that this will entail significant change within Church organization».

This call «is an impassioned plea to professional theology—and to every believer—to offer a privileged spot and common space to the commitment to deconstruct the twofold dualism that currently holds sway, separating the ecclesial community from the secular community, and separating the created world from the saved world. The Church is not a spiritual aristocracy of the elect, but a welcoming tent that shelters the rainbow of the covenant between God and human creatures. Faith will learn to dwell within the languages of the secular world, without prejudice to

its proclamation of God's closeness. And the ecclesial closeness of faith will also welcome the Canaanite woman, the woman at the well, Zacchaeus, and the Centurion. Without worrying about how far away they are».

It is also a call to the Wise. «We propose to reverse the way of thinking in our times. Do not despise the Name of God, to whom the prayers of sincere believers are addressed for all the men and women of the planet, and to whom these same believers make themselves available to intercede for all the poor and abandoned. Criticize us when you must—and even when you should not—but guard respectfully the mystery—even though unfathomable to you—of the Name of God».

It is more necessary than ever to rescue fraternity in order to remain human. «Without the contribution of the human reasons of meaning, which are always being sought after through trial and error, Christian thinking about faith cannot truly dwell on the Earth with the intellectual honesty that its witness to the incarnation of God demands. After seeing several centuries spent imposing on consciences the need for generalized and partisan estrangement, we are convinced that the time has come to experience the freedom of empathic associations, springing from new policies of the spirit. Willing to scorn sublimely all religious and secular structures that, in fratricidal wars of religion and against religion, have thrived far too long, at our expense and that of our children. All of us, not even one less, are brothers and sisters».

As Archbishop Vincenzo Paglia explains in the Afterword closing the call, «ecclesial institutions are called upon to play their part in promoting a deeper and more continuous dialogue between the intelligence of faith and the human dimension. In this renewal, theology and pastoral care converge, as two sides of the same coin. The recent encyclical *Fratelli Tutti* urges us to imagine the new perspective of this dialogue as the effective and necessary expression of an intellectual fraternity at the service of the entire human community. Theology's urge to rediscover the inter- and multi-disciplinary approach goes in this direction (*Veritatis Gaudium*)».

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