



Globalization

The globalization is the highest state of internationalisation.

The process of exchange among countries, which has marked the development of capitalism from the mercantile era in the XVII and XVIII centuries, was expanded with industrialization, gained new bases with the big industry at the end of XIX century, and today it is acquiring more intensity, more extent and new functionalities. The whole world is involved in all kind of technical, commercial, financial and cultural exchanges.

We are living a new period of human history. The basis of this real revolution is the technical progress, obtained as result of scientific development and based on the importance that technology is achieving, the so-called science of production.

Unfortunately, the current stage of globalisation is producing even more inequality. And, unlike to expectations, unemployment, poverty, hunger and daily precariousness are increasing, in a world that is fragmenting and where the social fractures are widening.

It is from the social fractures which world population live where affiliated movements to WMCW of the four continents: Africa, America, Asia and Europe present in their articles the

harsh reality lived by workers and their families before the new technologies.

■ The national coordination of MCW Reunion: ***The reality of life in Reunion Island on new technologies in the lives of the poor.*** In fact, the course of this forced modernisation affects all the social categories. It worsens the living conditions... Could this new technology create material and heart poverty?

■ Catholic Action of Workers Japan: ***Taking care of the poorest.*** «Let us take care of the needs of every man and woman, young and old, with the same fraternal spirit of care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan» (Pope Francis, Fratelli tutti).

■ MCW England: ***New technologies in the lives of the poor.*** The scale of poverty in our country has been exposed by the pandemic. The socio-economic position affecting families illustrates the divide between individuals, families and communities. One aspect of poverty is the lack of access to communication technology and these results in severe consequences and implications for the poor.

■ Marc Alarie, MCW Québec: ***The impact of telecommunication technologies in our lives.*** Having chosen by the principles of voluntary simplicity, these technologies incite our partici-

pation in the excessive consumption because we are exposed to a lot of advertisements.

■ Adilton R. Gonçalves, MCW Brazil: ***The reality of life in Xique-Xique (BA) inhabitants through new technologies.*** In a region where the new technologies are very present, particularly in the production of renewable energies as the wind one, the environmental and human consequences also exist.

■ Jean Claude Tolbize, WMCW CoChairman: ***On the way to International seminar and General Congress 2023, social justice in an economy for life.*** The importance of meeting, of discussing together, of measuring the importance of belonging to WMCW, of reflecting on its action, its structures to be always at the service of movements and the life of men and women of our time.

■ Bernard Robert, WMCW International Chaplain: ***The Bible and the mobile.*** Can you imagine what would happen if we treated the Bible in the same way as our mobile phone? ■

Mariléa Damasio
General Secretary
of the WMCW



The reality in Reunion Island on the new technologies in the lives of the poor

In Reunion Island, when you look at the lives of most of the inhabitants, you get the impression that the new technologies have brought about new changes, progress, openings to the outside world, all this, at a very high speed and at low cost, according to the mass media.

However, is this reality lived in the same way by all the inhabitants, especially by the poorest? Which are their real expectations before this modernisation imposed? Which role must the movements of Catholic action play to help the forgotten by the digital gap?

Regarding to new technologies, they have no choice, they are conditioned. They have to adapt, no matter which their situations are. Did they really choose it?

In reality, the race for unconscious modernisation concerns to all social categories that are dragged along by this trend. It gives us the feeling of belonging to The Society; last generation Smartphone, television connected, very high speed connection, connection to the called «social» networks.

The services offered to public in general by the global giants of new technologies give us the illusion that the digital gap does not exist anymore. Because everyone can access easily to multiple, often virtual, surroundings.

On the other hand, making a personal approach to the administrative, educational or even social institutions to assert our rights reveals a real digital gap, which goes hand in hand to social gap. The excluded, the isolated elderly, the poorest, are the first ones in living these situations. We are faced as the exclusion as the additional poverty.

The poorest suffer from this lifestyle, to the detriment of some decent living conditions. In fact, the budget devoted to equipment in new technologies is increasing while the purchasing power keeps unchanged.

Indebtedness, over-indebtedness, the digital overconsumption, difficult end of month, exclusion from real social relationships... is becoming commonplace. Is the new technology creating material and heart poverty?

Pope Francis in his encyclical *Fratelli tutti*, at number 44, reminds us that: «Even as individuals maintain their comfortable consumerist isolation, they can choose a form of constant and febrile bonding that encourages

remarkable hostility, insults, abuse, defamation and verbal violence destructive of others, and this with a lack of restraint that could not exist in physical contact without tearing us all apart. Social aggression has found unparalleled room for expansion through computers and mobile devices».

Whether we like it or don't, the new technology will continue developing.

However, the virtual entertainments must not hide the real difficulties, the excluded of our society. For that reason, we must, together with other associations and organizations, warn about the misuse of new technologies, must provoke the reflection, to sensitize to encourage our members to a reasoned use.

As movements of Catholic Action, we must also keep awake in our mission with the neediest in our country, our regions and our neighborhoods. The forgotten by the digital world wait, without asking for too much, a discreet but a concrete support, to assert their rights: right to a decent housing, right to work, right to a decent wage, right to education.

Like Christ, we must make the poorest our priority, always approaching physically to them. ■



National Coordination
MCWR Reunion

New technologies in the lives of the poorest

Let us care for the needs of every man and woman, young and old, with the same fraternal spirit of care and closeness that marked the Good Samaritan (Pope Francis *Fratelli tutti*).



SEE JUDGE ACT

ACO members in Japan share information and where we can find the gospel of the Lord in our lives, while many members are getting older, living in pensions, and becoming no longer active workers. We have been continuing to support the poorest workers in solidarity not only materially but also mentally.

The lives of the poorest workers

- The current situation in which the poorest workers due to COVID-19 are being driven into the corner and excluded is becoming more and more prominent, and the gap between rich and poor is widening.
- Workers and their families have difficulty living, and single parent families are in dire straits.
- The number of female and child suicides continues to increase.
- Due to the number of workers including non-regular ones dismissed and stopped hiring, unemployed people has been increasing. It is same to foreign workers.

Foreign technical intern trainees are an important labour force for Japanese society. Currently, most of them come from Vietnam, about 209,000. There are many trainees who work without the education necessary for practical training, including Japanese language. They are treated like disposable labour force with their human rights violated, with low-wage. In addition, they often borrow money in their mother country and come to Japan, paying about 1 million yen per person. Therefore, there are many trainees who are cornered and disappear due to remaining debt.

The activities of ACO Japan

- ▶ We have been working with trade unions and grassroots groups to restore the human rights of dismissed and stopped hiring workers (including foreigners). The Catholic church has set up a consultation hotline for foreign technical intern trainees and international students in cooperation with trade unions and NGOs, and supports them.
- ▶ The activities of children's cafeteria (provide free or low-priced meals to children who are unable to eat well due to poverty), kitchen truck, and soup kitchen for street dwellers by connecting with the community.

The following is a report of Fr. Nakai, the chaplain in charge of ACO.

A year ago we started a children's cafeteria for poor families. Children's cafeterias are spreading all over the country. The number of children who cannot eat three meals properly due to poverty is increasing. However, when it comes to the question whether children from poor families actually come to the children's cafeteria or not, there are complicated circumstances and it is difficult to reach out to these children if we just wait in one place. So we bought a kitchen truck last summer. We go out by this car and distribute meals in areas where poor families are likely to be. As we proceed these activities, I realized that there was a big need. At a meal distribution party in front of the city hall, a mother with a child, who had known me when I was working at a kindergarten, saw me and called out to me.

She became a single mother and was very grateful for such an opportunity. Not only for children, but we also drive a kitchen car for homeless. And at Easter, we plan to hold a meal distribution event in cooperation with young people from Vietnam.

Although there are few opportunities to actually hear about the harsh circumstances of each family, what I feel while working is that the number of poor people is steadily increasing in Japanese society. It can be said that Japanese society is in a serious situation where the number of young people who have no choice but to be placed in the problem of dismissal and being the unstable situation of non-regular employment is increasing. In the local place, we are trying to enlarge the human network to support these people by the way we can do. ■

Catholic Worker Action
ACO Japan

New technologies in the lives of the poor

The scale of poverty in our country has been exposed by the pandemic. The socio-economic position affecting families illustrates the divide between individuals, families and communities.

One aspect of poverty is the lack of access to communication technology and these results in severe consequences and implications for the poor. The closures of schools and need for «home schooling» exposed a «new view» into the lives of poorer households. It was estimated that 9% of families in the UK did not have a laptop, desktop or tablet. It became apparent because equipment and internet connection was needed to access video school lessons.

The Government funded laptops and routers for «vulnerable» children. However, only 37% of these identified children received a device. Numerous other disadvantaged children were not even recognised within the «vulnerable» category. Ofcom (Regulator for UK Communication Industries) «estimated that between 1.14m and 1.78m children... in the UK» had no access to the equipment necessary. Other voluntary campaigns encouraged donations of equipment but in practice led to a «scatter-gun» distribution. Although equipment was a bonus some families still had no on-line service; some only had one phone between them relying on the mobile data facility. What became clear was «that proper access to the internet is not a luxury, but a ne-



cessity. It is the same as not having a book or a pen and must be recognised as such⁽¹⁾. The importance of access to technology is becoming just as significant to adults.

Throughout the years of austerity banks and building societies have closed. Public libraries providing alternative access to free use of computers have also closed. Applications for jobs, contacting local or national government for advice, services or access to state benefit income are now almost entirely dependent on technology. Those without the skills or wherewithal

are reduced to making phone calls which takes an inordinate amount of time and can be expensive.

Social tariffs are offered by several broadband providers but are «not actively promoting them» (Ofcom). As the UK's digital strategy (2017) «aims to become a world leader in serving it's citizens on-line» it should also seek to enable access, to and for all, so future prospects and potential opportunities are assured.

This snapshot illustrates the implications of a lack of access to communication technology for the poor: The consequence is one of isolation. Lack of access to technology intensifies the inequality between those able and unable to afford on-line activity and serves to create a greater «inequality, separation and detachment» from the advantages such activity facilitates. This exclusion underpins the «profound inequality» that is experienced⁽²⁾. ■

National Coordination
MTC England



⁽¹⁾ www.childrenscommissioner.gov.uk

⁽²⁾ Holmes & Burgess, www.cam.ac.uk

INTERVIEW TO DONALD HANEY

The impact of telecommunication technologies in our lives

Nowadays, for many people, the issue of the access to telecommunication technologies makes a generational and social class gap.

If, *a priori*, access is relatively universal, equipment costs and required subscriptions represent a significant barrier to access. As Mr. Haney puts it, «Why would I have to pay more than \$40 a month to get Internet access at home to check two or three emails a week?».

For many people who live on modest incomes, the technology is a luxury. The expenses related to this are the first ones which we look to reduce, particularly in times of high inflation as we are living now. It is important to mention that Canada is among the most expensive countries in the G20 of the cost of mobile phone and Internet subscriptions.

Moreover, the multitude of options and functionalities, makes the use of these technologies not be easy, being a source of many frustrations. You will agree that nobody likes to look ignorant. In addition, during many busy days, in the context of work/family conciliation, it limits the available time to surf the net or to answer text messages.

Mr. Haney points that having chosen to adopt the principles of voluntary simplicity, these technologies encourage our participation in the excessive consumption because we are exposed to a multitude of advertisements. Not to talk about the limited lifespan of these devices whose obsolescence is programmed.

When you are well-organized, he adds, an active life without all these technologies is possible. The paper tools still exist and it is enough, besides, to use our mind. However, the mobile appears as a possible purchase considering that, for certain emergencies, it would be useful. For the rest, some public buildings, included the municipal libraries, offer free access to Internet, Mr. Haney reminds us.

Another reason for hesitation in the use of telecommunication technologies is the importance of the social networks from where much misinfor-



mation and a level of violent conflicts against people come.

If, in some cases, the quick access to information could be translated into a social life, apparently, nothing less certain than truth. Because, above all, we must recognize that the pandemic has shown the gap of accessibility to information technologies among people who can afford to acquire all the paid services and those who have only television and the home telephone as means of communication and access of information. These later people are who have found more isolated during the great confinement and in an intensive way. The times we have been invited to make an appointment by Internet or by a «smart» telephone are countless. For others, «...your call is important for us» and you are put on hold and you hope of not getting into a voicemail or a robot which will give you a procedure that you cannot follow. This is another example of the injustice which provokes the lack of access to technology. Attending a meeting or taking news of the family by platforms such as zoom or Skype, implies access to telecommunication

technologies and also knowing how to use them.

In the background of these disparities, there is a Government project under consideration which consists of the disappearance of paper money and currency. For people with little access to technology, this would be a catastrophe and terribly disabling. We would be watching helplessly to the triumph of greedy capitalism where the credit card would share its throne with PayPal, Mr. Haney regrets. ■

Marc Alarie
MCW Quebec

The reality of life of Xique-Xique town (BA) inhabitants through the new technologies

Xique-Xique is a town placed in Identity territory of Irecê-BA, to 590 km from the capital Salvador (Brazil). It has a population around 48,000 and 50,000 inhabitants, with a very high rate of people at risk of poverty, people without incomes and others, who live off of the town dumping site, very lower the poverty line.

Its greatest income comes from the wind energy production parks, with more than 100 aerial turbines, generating incomes for the municipality with hiring workers, renting lodging and residences, trade in motion. Another one is the subsistence from fishing and family farming.

Baixo de Irecê, placed in the rural area of Xique-Xique, today in Brazil and Bahia, is the largest watering project in Latin America, still carried out by the Government of President Dilma, however, the migrations of rural mega producers of Rio Grande do Sul have already happened and in other Regions and there is very little left for indigenous, family farmers of the surrounding region.

The Baiano Federal Institute also joins to this development of employability of 12 outsourced workers and security guards; small enterprises of the municipality that provide services to the facility. Training and monitoring of family farmers, as of 50 civil servants, among administrative technicians and teachers who boost the local economy with rent, entertainment, market, etc., but the great merit of Baiano Federal Campus Xique-Xique is the training of students, above all the most needy, in the area of environment and agriculture techniques, with student aid, food, etc.

The technology is very present in the town, as the wind energy production. However, there are some environmental and human consequences, such as:

1. Birds that are leaving from the region due to disorientation caused by wind turbines.
2. Deforestation of CAATINGA, for installation of parks and towers.
3. The poisonous animals which invade the farmers' houses that live near



these parks, once they have lost their habitat.

4. Increase of youth prostitution by several workers from other Federation States, especially from the South and South East, as consequence of unwanted pregnancy, induced abortions, disease transmissions. However, there is not such fateful calculation in any municipal body. That is, the technology linked to the production of «clean and renewable» energy, brings many benefits for the municipality among others that were not counted in this text, nevertheless, the consequences above mentioned are very present and a reality.

Unfortunately, in addition to this kind of technology that does not take into account, hug or include the neediest families, other kinds of technology have the same role. Excluding, closing in a niche to those involved and considered ones.

In the period of pandemic, the municipal, state schools and Baiano Federal Institute made teaching and remote activities with the students, but, many of them had not any technological

devices to monitor these lessons, Internet connection due to several factors, so geographical as financial ones, support, despite these schools and Federal Institute used part of their resources to purchase equipment for students of the needy families, Internet assistance and broadband, nevertheless, it was not enough to cover everyone's needs.

At last, the technology, in Xique-Xique reality, is very important, but it does not cover to everyone, above all in education area, given the permanent cuts and blockades of the Secretary of Education and Culture, Federal Government, in terms of costs and capital budget, preventing a greater covert of the most and excluded ones in the access of the new technologies. ■

Adilton Rubens Gonçalves
MCW activist (Catu-BA)

On the way to the International Seminar and the General Congress 2023

XIV WMCW General Congress will be held from 29th to 31st March, 2023 in Europe. It will be preceded by the International Seminar from 24th to 28th March in 2023.

XIV WMCW General Congress was to be held in October 2021 in Lisbon (Portugal). Due to the Covid 19 pandemic that has shaken the whole world, the International Council, after having discussed, took the decision, in March 2021, to postpone the general congress (7 for and 2 against).

After the vote, the General Secretary took the initiative to inform the movements of this situation and come to them with this postponement, as well as, the extension of elected members' mandates. 39 out of 44 movements answered to this enquiry. 37 voted for the postponement and the extension of mandates, 1 for a General Congress in mid 2022 and 1 against the postponement.

With the support of the great majority of movements, the International Council, in February 2022, decided to accept the proposal made by HOAC Spain, supported by MCW Quebec, to set the date of the International Seminar and General Congress in the first term in 2023, that is, from 24th to 31st March.

This event will be held in Europe for reasons of easy access and more affordable airfares. The General Secretariat has got in touch with several movements in Europe, that should make their decisions known very soon. The movements of the country hosting of Congress will be informed as soon as possible.

WMCW has always appealed to aid agencies to finance its General Congress. In the current circumstances and given the difficulties faced by many movements and organisations, it was decided that each movement would be represented by only one delegate (instead of 2) to reduce costs.

The call of General Congress, in accordance with the statutes, was sent to member movements one year before.



This international seminar and general congress are very important. The Covid 19 pandemic has had very serious consequences on the lives of men and women of working and popular class. All WMCW movements have experienced great difficulties linked to the absence of face-to-face meetings, the loss of jobs and resources of some of their members, the disorganisation of bodies by confinements or difficulties of moving, etc. to all these difficulties we must also add the death of elderly or ill members of movements.

The meeting in March 2023 will be, therefore, an opportunity to meet again, exchange and share the lives of our countries and movements, the difficulties found but also the initiatives taken, in this crisis, to keep in touch with our members, on the solidarity actions undertaken to help the most deprived. We will also talk about how our faith in Risen Christ has pushed us to go beyond ourselves, to be watchmen, to revive the flame of hope, to believe against all odds that there is a future for humanity made of solidarity and fraternity.

This general congress will be also an opportunity to reiterate how much we value this international move-

ment which obliges us to go beyond our borders, to widen our view, to fight constantly for justice, not to forget our deprived brothers and sisters. A movement which reminds us that we are one humanity and we must take care our Mother Earth, with all that implies in relation to changes in our styles of living and consuming. The challenges are great. The field to be reaped is vast and the workers are few. But our faith pushes us to go beyond. We are sowers following Christ.

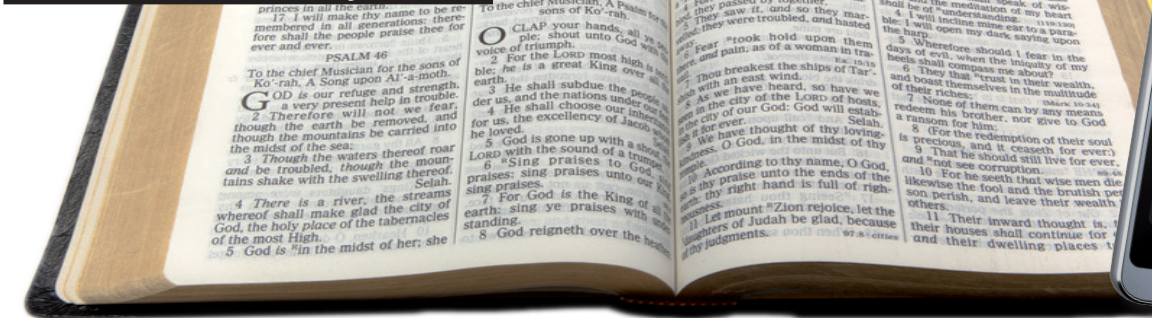
Two questionnaires were sent to movements to help with the preparation and to reflect collectively on the theme of the seminar and WMCW future. WMCW invites to all movements to discuss these two themes in the teams and to make proposals for a renewed and combative international movement.

We know that we can rely on each one and every of you. ■

Jean Claude Tolbize
WMCW Cochairman



The bible and the mobile



Do you imagine what would happen if we handle the **Bible** in the same way as our mobile?

...And if we carry the Bible everywhere, in our briefcase, in the belt or in the pocket of our jacket?

...And if we see it several times in an hour or in a day?

...What about if we come back and recover it when we left it somewhere?

...And if we treated it as if we could not live without it?

...If we travelled with it, in case we needed help or rescue?

...What about if we put in our hands in case of emergency?

...If we keep as a precious possession

Unlike **mobile phone**,

–The Bible still has a network and with all operators!

–We can connect us to it anywhere and any moment!

–We don't have to worry because of the lack of credit because Jesus already paid the bill (by his death on the cross) and the credits are unlimited, because he died once and for all.

–Even better: the communication is never cut off, because the battery is loaded for life and even eternal life!

**«Seek the Lord while he may be found, call him while he is near» (Is 55:6)
For that, here you are some emergency numbers:**

If you are sad, dial ***John 14**.

If people talk against you, dial ***Psalm 27**.

If you are annoyed, dial ***Psalm 51**.

If you are worried, dial ***Matthew 6: 19-24**.

If you are in danger, dial ***Psalm 91**.

If God seems distant to you, dial ***Psalm 63**.

If your faith needs to be strengthened, dial ***Hebrew 11**.

If you feel alone and are frightened, dial ***Psalm 22**.

If you are harsh and critical, dial ***1Corinthians 13**.

For knowing the secret of happiness, dial ***Colossians 3: 12-17**.

If you feel sad and alone, dial ***Romans 8: 31-39**.

If you want peace and rest, dial ***Matthew 11: 25-30**.

If the world seems greater than God, dial ***Psalm 90**.

Take note these numbers in your diary! They can be important for you in

any moment in your life! Pass them... by email or phone! ■

Bernard Robert
WMCW International
chaplain



For working in the MCW team

1) Which emergency number (biblical reference) strikes me to share? Why this one? And if I find other biblical references, we can share them.

2) What does this Infor page inspire me, about my way of being connected to others and being in solidarity with them... Being connected to God through the life of others, the life of the world, and the life of the Church?

3) What can I do to improve my «Christian connection» (personally or as a MCW team), to improve my listening to the world and to the Word of God?

Who will be happy to receive your reflections and meditations in the following email:
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