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The United Nations, the Holy See, and the Global Reset

Abstract: The purpose of the paper is to consider the Holy See's position on what has been called the "global reset" through a consideration of its key statements and activities in relation to the World Economic Forum, a non-governmental organization (NGO), and the United Nations Organization (UN), an intergovernmental organization. To this end, the paper is divided into three parts. Part I defines terms and presents a backdrop for the discussion. Part II discusses the work of Klaus Schwab, Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF), who views COVID-19 as the trigger to launch what he describes as the "global reset", which is discussed and critiqued. Part III provides an overview of the current activities of the Holy See within the UN system, which seems to closely align with global reset initiatives of the WEF. Justifications for the Holy See's position are considered as well as voices critical of the same. The paper concludes that the Holy See has embraced certain global reset initiatives and is intentionally using language like that of the WEF; however, it claims that its approach is grounded in scripture and a prudent application of the social doctrine of the Church. Others disagree.

Key words: The Holy See, "global reset", UN, World Economic Forum

Abstrakt: Celem niniejszego opracowania jest przyjrzenie się stanowisku Stolicy Apostolskiej w sprawie „globalnego resetu” poprzez analizę jej kluczowych wypowiedzi i działań w odniesieniu do Światowego Forum Ekonomicznego (WEF), będącego organizacją pozarządową (NGO), oraz Organizacji Narodów Zjednoczonych (ONZ), będącej organizacją międzyrządową. Artykuł został podzielony na trzy części. W części pierwszej zdefiniowano pojęcia i przedstawiono tło dyskusji. W części drugiej omówiono i poddano krytyce prace Klausu Schwaba, przewodniczącego Światowego Forum Ekonomicznego (WEF), który postrzega COVID-19 jako impuls do rozpoczęcia procesu określanego przez niego mianem „globalnego resetu”. Część trzecia zawiera przegląd obecnych działań Stolicy Apostolskiej w ramach systemu ONZ, które wydają się ściśle powiązane z inicjatywami WEF dotyczącymi globalnego resetu. Rozważane są zarówno uzasadnienia stanowiska Stolicy Apostolskiej, jak i głosy krytyczne wobec niego.

Artykuł stwierdza, że Stolica Apostolska przyjęła pewne inicjatywy globalnego resetu i celowo używa języka podobnego do tego, którym posługuje się WEF, jednocześnie utrzymując, że jej podejście jest ugruntowane w Piśmie Świętym i stanowi roztropne zastosowanie społecznej doktryny Kościoła. Nie wszyscy zgadzają się z taką oceną.

Słowa kluczowe: Stolica Apostolska, “globalny reset”, ONZ, Światowe Forum Ekonomiczne

Introduction

The purpose of the paper is to consider the Holy See’s position on what has been called the “global reset” through a consideration of its key statements and activities in relation to the World Economic Forum, a non-governmental organization (NGO), and the United Nations Organization (UN), an intergovernmental organization. To this end, the paper is divided into three parts. Part I defines terms and presents a backdrop for the discussion. Part II discusses the work of Klaus Schwab, Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum (WEF), who views COVID-19 as the trigger to launch what he describes as the “global reset”, which is discussed and critiqued. Part III provides an overview of the current activities of the Holy See within the UN system, which seems to closely align with global reset initiatives of the WEF. Justifications for the Holy See’s position are considered as well as voices critical of the same. The paper concludes that the Holy See has embraced certain global reset initiatives and is intentionally using language like that of the WEF; however, it claims that its approach is grounded in scripture and a prudent application of the social doctrine of the Church. Others disagree.

I. Terminology

The constitutional structure of the UN is governed by the 1945 Charter of the United Nations. The UN consists of six principal bodies: Secretariat, General Assembly, Security Council, Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC), Trusteeship Council (now defunct), and the International Court of Justice (ICJ). Today, with 193 members states, a quick perusal of the UN Organization Chart displays a sprawling network of principle organs, subsidiary bodies, funds, programs, and semi-autonomous specialized agencies, all of which are commonly referred to as the “United Nations System”.

The Holy See, the Pope in the narrow sense, and the Pope and Roman Curia, in the larger sense, has been a non-member permanent observer state to the United

Nations since 1964. After a failed challenge to reduce the Holy See's state-like status to that of a NGO, due to bitterness over the Holy See's strong negotiating skills at the major UN conferences in the 1990s, its state-like status was reaffirmed in the 2004 General Assembly Resolution (A/58/314) on the Participation of the Holy See in the work of the United Nations. The Holy See is the name given to the international personality of the Pope within the international legal system, which is separate and distinct, on the one hand, from Vatican City State, a sovereign state under the authority of its Monarch (the Pope), and on the other hand, from the Catholic Church, a visible and invisible faith community.

In 1971, the economist, Klaus Schwab, founded the WEF and made the case for companies to serve not only its shareholders but all stakeholders. WEF promotes what is called "valued stakeholders" to work in partnership with governments and the UN. The WEF is not an accredited NGO within the UN system, which would confine it to lobby states and UN bodies in the hallways where decisions are not made, and so WEF does not appear on the list of accredited NGOs, with consultative status, on the website of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). On the contrary, WEF presents itself as an international body equal in status to states and the UN, in terms of influence and prestige. The underlining premise of the valued stakeholder approach is that states and intergovernmental entities are no longer the dominant actors on the international level but should work alongside private stakeholders in international governance (e.g., big tech, pharm, and business).

II. The WEF, UN, and Global Reset

A. General Considerations

For fifty years now, Schwab has been developing his theory of economics, private-public partnerships, and international governance through books, WEF reports, and activities, in Davos, Switzerland, and in collaboration with world leaders. WEF activities and statements are available on its website. WEF is an international body under Swiss law, pursuant to a 2015 agreement entered into between WEF and the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs. Schwab's theories are explained in his books which include: "Fourth Industrial Revolution" (2016); "Shaping the Future of the Fourth Industrial Revolution" (2018); and "Stakeholder Capitalism: A Global Economy that Works for Progress, Peoples and Planet" (2021).

In 2020, Schwab popularized the term "global reset" with his co-authored book "COVID-19: The Great Reset" [2020]. On the website of the WEF, Schwab is quoted

as saying that the COVID-19 “pandemic represents a rare but narrow window of opportunity to reflect, reimagine, and reset our world”. In other words, it is the impetus to transition into a new international form of governance characterized by Public-Private Partnerships (PPP). For the purposes of this paper, based on the discussions *infra*, the “global reset” refers to those who embrace strategic PPPs based on a socio-economic hybrid theory for international relations, which combines elements of capitalism, socialism, and communism with a co-relative reduction of the democratic processes.

WEF describes itself as an international organization for public-private cooperation, which entered into a strategic contractual relationship with the UN, on 13 June 2019. The UN-WEF Strategic Partnership Framework was signed by UN Secretary-General António Guterres and World Economic Founder and Executive Chairman Klaus Schwab. The purpose of the agreement is to accelerate the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. According to the pact, the UN and the WEF will work together on “private sector engagement, youth empowerment, communications, and outreach to mobilize action” in the following areas: 1) financing the 2030 Agenda; 2) climate change; 3) health; 4) digital cooperation; 5) gender equity and empowerment of women; and 6) education and skills [UN-WEF Agreement 2019]. In practice, the partnership includes presentations of the UN Secretary-General and other UN program heads at WEF meetings and UN networking with WEF hubs at the national level [ibid.].

B. Agenda 2030 For Sustainable Development

Agenda 2030 for Sustainable Development is an all-encompassing global policy project that purports to offer a unified world vision of “sustainable development”, one that requires a transformation in economic, social, and environmental priorities and policies. Comprised of non-binding United Nations (UN) General Assembly Resolutions, the Agenda includes:

- 1) a non-binding Declaration “Transforming Our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” with 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 Targets [A/RES/70/1, 2015]
- 2) an implementation review process with over 200 indicators related to the 169 targets of the UN Statistical Commission [A/RES/71/313, 2017; UN Department of Social and Economic Affairs (UNDSEA) Statistics Division]
- 3) the global financial framework, “Addis Ababa Action Agenda” (AAAA), which finances sustainable development through cooperation of multi-stakeholder

partnerships, including big tech, pharm, and business [A/RES/69/13, 2015; UNDSEA, Briefing Note].

In brief, Agenda 2030 includes SDGs that range from ending poverty and hunger to ensuring healthy lives, education, work, gender equality, sanitation and drinking water to the adoption of green policies related to food and agriculture, clean energy, human settlements, consumption and production, biodiversity, conservation, climate change and to the promotion of global partnerships for purposes of their implementation.

The High Level Political Forum (HLPF), comprised of Heads of State and government and other representatives, on sustainable development, plays “a central role in overseeing a network of follow-up and review processes at the global level” [Agenda 2030 Decl. 90]. It is held every four years under the auspices of the General Assembly, which includes input from UN organs. For example, the review process is informed by certain reports, including:

- 1) an “annual SDG Progress Report” prepared by the Secretary General “in cooperation with the UN System, based on the global indicator framework and data produced by national statistical systems and information collected at the regional level” [ibid., no. 83].
- 2) the Global Sustainable Development Report “aimed to strengthen the science-policy interface at the HLPF [ibid.; cf. UN DESA Global Sustainability Report].
- 3) the AAAA, the outcome document of the Third International Conference on Financing for Development, which sets out a comprehensive set of policy actions to help provide the trillions of dollars needed annually to implement Agenda 2030. It has its own review process which feeds into the Agenda 2030 review process.

Agenda 2030 has the goal of empowering domestic and international public finance programs and PPPs [Agenda 2030 Dcl. 43; SDGs 17.16, 17.17]; international financing institutions [Agenda 2030 Dcl. 44]; and the United Nations system [ibid. 46]. Taxation is to be expanded [ibid., SDG 17.1] as well as social welfare policies, “especially fiscal, wage and social protection policies”, under the guise of achieving “greater equality”. This will, in turn, improve “regulation and monitoring of global financial markets and institutions” and strengthen “implementation of such regulations” [ibid., SDGs 10.4, 10.5]. In addition, there is to be access to universal health coverage [ibid., SDG. 3.7], including universal access to “sexual

and reproductive health and reproductive rights” [ibid., SDG 5.6], generally interpreted by UN organs and like-minded partners and states to encompass access to sterilization, contraception, and abortion. Finally, there is to be universal access to “modern energy services” [ibid., SDG 7.1] and the mobilization of \$100 billion annually for climate change initiatives for developed nations [ibid., SDG 13.a].

While few would complain about certain goals, such as ending poverty and hunger, there are no assurances that the overall global vision will not regress into “brutal forms of coercion” or a failed green plan that puts “our common future at risk” [Matikaninen 2019]. In support, one need only consider Agenda 2030 green policies implemented by global elites in Sri Lanka and The Netherlands [Blair 2022; Colton 2022]. Radical restrictions on fertilizer, livestock farming, and meat production have caused protests and riots, food shortages, starvation, and loss of livelihoods, while conflicts of interests of political leaders abound as they invest in projects designed to solve the problems their policies have created [ibid.]. Indeed, green policy supporter Bill Gates has recently “invested a half-billion dollars into [a] major online grocery retailer”, presumably to meet the needs associated with food scarcity problems created by the same policies [Mercola 2022].

What is clear is that “transforming our world” will cost an enormous amount of money and could cause untold human suffering under the guise of implementation through a violation of fundamental human rights, suppression of livelihoods, expropriation of property, and control of food production and distribution (referred to as “food security”). These negative effects, of course, which are considered as the price to be paid for the transition, would not slow but continue ever supported by continuous fear-based propaganda facilitated by big media, ever justified by collectivist or communist theories largely enforced through technological means and state law enforcement. By analogy, what should come to mind is Mao’s “Great Leap Forward” for China, launched in May 1958, pursuant to which he knew that “half of China [might] well have to die” [Chang, 2006: 519]. The plan was to “overtake capitalist countries in a fairly short time, and become one of the richest, most advanced and powerful countries in the world,” but without spending any money [ibid.]. It forced peasants to work longer and harder in the absence of safety measures and medical care, which resulted in failed public works, slave labor camps, and death by accident, overwork, and starvation [ibid., 519-535]. For some, Agenda 2030 represents a push for an advanced and powerful one world PPP regime, which has little empathy for the masses, while those in favor of such

a regime in the era of sustainable development, would likely protest the analogy noting that Mao failed because he did not invest money, which is not the case in Agenda 2030.

The totalitarian nature of Agenda 2030 is discernible from a quick perusal of the:

- 1) conception as a vision “for all nations and peoples and for all segments of society,” (no. 4) and where “no one will be left behind” (preamble para. 2).
- 2) Breadth, since it touches on all areas of “critical importance for humanity and the planet” (preamble para. 4).
- 3) end to “free the human race from the tyranny of poverty and want and to heal and secure the planet” (preamble para. 2).
- 4) means that involve “bold and transformative steps...to shift the world on a sustainable and resilient path,” (preamble para. 2), which we have already seen in Sri Lanka and The Netherlands will, by necessary implication, involve the sacrifice of certain fundamental human rights.
- 5) standardization of terminology, creation of structures, mechanisms, and coordination of financial partnerships to promote the narrative of “transforming our world” for a sustainable future.
- 6) applicability, in that “universal goals and targets” are said to “involve the entire world, developed and developing countries alike” (para. 5).

It is noteworthy that as an integral part of the global reset, Agenda 2030 has its roots firmly set in the UN Major World Conferences 1990s and 2000s [Agenda 2030 Decl. 11], where the Holy See (Pope), discussed *infra*, and like-minded states, battled against dehumanizing ideas that sought to limit freedom of religion and conscience, on the one hand, and to promote a universal right to abortion, disintegration of the natural family, and gender ideology, on the other hand. Such ideologies were promoted by certain like-minded member states, UN bureaucrats, and NGOs at each international meeting on development and related themes, such as the environment, human rights, population, women, children, and human settlements [Marucci 1997]. Such efforts were an attempt to generate a shared global vision of development through separate non-binding outcome documents, generally referred to by UN bureaucrats and like-minded states and NGOs as UN policy statements or soft law. The ideological battles have continued into the conference review processes that followed the original meetings. Disagreements among states remain to this very day.

Equally noteworthy is the current effort to strengthen the World Health Organization (WHO) [Agenda 2030 Dcl. SDG 3.9a]. With reference to the “Global Health Security Architecture”, in 2020, Director-General of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus, advocated at the World Health Assembly (WHA) for a pandemic treaty between states for the purpose of strengthening pandemic prevention, preparedness, and response. [Hemmati 2022]. The treaty drafting process was launched the following year [WHO WHA Press Release]. The Council of Europe favors the treaty [Council of Europe Policies], while the case against it has been made by others who favor “multi-stakeholder collaborations in which governments, intergovernmental institutions, and non-state actors” make and sustain commitments “without creating treaties” [Fidler 2021]. Others oppose the initiative because of an erosion of trust in the WHO over “the ineffective (and often harmful) management” of the COVID crisis, and its unwillingness to thoroughly investigate its origins, “seemingly giving in to Chinese resistance” [Hemmati]. Still, others oppose an expanded role of the WHO’s power on the grounds that it would minimize national sovereignty, and in effect, constitute the first department or Ministry of an impending one world government [ibid.].

C. The WEF’s Global Reset Initiative and the CCP

The WEF website sets out elements of the “Great Reset Initiative”, namely the new ideas for “this unique moment in history”, which has been provided “by the disruption to economics, politics and our everyday life” that can be used “to catalyze a new approach to how our societies are run” [WEF The Great Reset]. According to the 2019 UN-WEF Strategic Partnership Framework for the 2030 Agenda, among other things, there is collaboration to

support countries to realize universal health coverage to achieve good health and well-being for all, within the context of the 2030 Agenda [and to] focus on addressing key emerging global health threats, including antimicrobial resistance, mental health and other issues that demand stronger multi-stakeholder partnerships and action.

On the topic of digital cooperation, the two organizations will “meet the needs of the *Fourth Industrial Revolution*”; advance global “digital governance and digital inclusiveness”; and promote “public-private partnerships” to address global reskilling for transition of about 1.8 billion young people (Emphasis is mine).

The expression, the “Fourth Industrial Revolution,” is the name of a book written by Schwab [2016]. He sums up the thesis in an interview, wherein he states that such a revolution changes who we are as human beings through digital, physical and biological systems [Epoch TV Loudan, 2022]. He foresees that within ten years, microchips will be inserted into our clothes, necks, and brains to connect us directly to the digital world; presumably, the same means will also bring man under control of the new regime [ibid]. He also foresees human beings as eating insects, something good for man and the environment; and foregoing property ownership, for presumably the same reason [ibid] Schwab recognizes that such a revolution might “robotize” humanity, which he views as dehumanizing, yet he fails to admit that subjecting man to a collectivist vision of the world is equally dehumanizing [WEF Fourth Industrial Revolution].

In its most pessimistic, dehumanized form, the Fourth Industrial Revolution may indeed have the potential to “robotize” humanity and thus to deprive us of our heart and soul. But as a complement to the best parts of human nature—creativity, empathy, stewardship—it can also lift humanity into a *new collective* and moral consciousness, based on a shared sense of destiny. It is incumbent on us all to make sure the latter prevails. (Emphasis is mine)

Schwab, in his book on the global reset, offers reflections on what the “post-pandemic” world might look like from macro and micro perspectives. Three defining secular characteristics or forces are considered: interdependence, velocity, and complexity, as well as five macro categories: economic, societal, geopolitical, environmental, and technological. Regarding certain micro trends and industry resets, only two possible paths are anticipated: one positive: inclusive, equitable, and environmentally friendly with harmonious societal repercussions under a surveillance regime; and one negative: individualistic, unequitable, wasteful with violent societal outcomes, not under a surveillance regime.

The global reset book rejects the idea of objective truth, underemphasizes the role of human rights, and omits any reference to the rule of subsidiarity. Moreover, the global surveillance network is seen as a positive development, and China is discussed without reference to the daily atrocities committed by the Chinese Community Party (CCP) against its own people. A revealing passage in its discussion about US-China relations is the following:

Views, of course, differ radically on which country is ‘right’ or going to come out ‘on top’ by benefiting from the perceived weaknesses and fragilities of the other. But it is essential to contextualize them. There isn’t a ‘right’ view and a ‘wrong’ view, but different and often diverging interpretations that frequently correlate with the origin, culture and personal history of those who profess them [Malleret, Schwab 2020: 120].

A few sentences later, the authors emphasize its fundamental relativistic viewpoint:

Pursuing further the ‘quantum world’ metaphor mentioned earlier, it could be inferred from quantum physics that objective reality does not exist [ibid.].

For those following events in China, we know that China’s social credit system, a digitalized personal identity and surveillance system, is used to control populations. This is just one of many tools employed by the totalitarian Chinese Communist Party (CCP), which also favors genocide of religious communities, slave labor, arbitrary imprisonment, torture, and forced organ harvesting [Adolphe, Szymanski 2021]. These atrocities are discussed in detail by a lay coalition formed to respond to the call of Cardinal Charles Bo, President of the Federation Asian Bishops Conferences, for an annual week of prayer, in May, for the “Peoples and Church of China” [Global Prayer for China; International Catholic Jurists Forum]. The details of the atrocities are recounted by experts and victims on two websites devoted to the cause [ibid.].

China’s zero tolerance approach to Covid has included, among other things, the lock down of millions of Shanghai’s residents without sufficient food, leading to death by starvation [Wolfe 2022]. More recently, about one million Chinese banking customers have complained after having their digitalized bank accounts frozen in rural Henan, which cited internal system upgrades as the problem. The amount frozen, in total, is about “39.7 billion yuan (\$5.91 billion)” [Li 2020]. After two months, hundreds of thousands intended to travel to the office of the banking regulator in Zhengzhou to protest, but were blocked by their COVID-19 apps, which displayed red, indicating that they were potential COVID patients. The result was the effective barring of these people from train stations and highway entrances, public restrooms, and shops with the possibility of facing “mandatory quarantine in centralized isolation centers”, if they did not return home [ibid.].

In response to the totalitarian measures of the CCP, a lot of Chinese have renounced their membership with the CCP according to the “End CCP petition” of the Global Tuidang Center, based in New York [End CCP; Eva 2022; WU 2022]. The website of “End CCP” claims that the CCP is promoting global communism through a number of means, including well placed politicians of Western democracies:

The CCP not only craves geographical power but also aims to inject the globe with communist ideology. Systematically, CCP is taking control of the narratives in the West: the mainstream media, big tech companies, Hollywood, the sports industry, and politicians ... we have watched them bowing down, again and again, self-censoring their speech in favor of Beijing.

Support for this thesis is found in the actions of numerous leaders of democracies with strong links to the WEF and the CCP, such as Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, and his equivalents in Australia, Austria, and Italy. For example, Schwab has proudly named some of the global elites who have been formed through the WEF young leaders’ program, such as “Prime Minister Trudeau and half of his cabinet.” [Epoch TV Loudon] Indeed, Trudeau reportedly told a women’s group, in 2013, that he admired the dictatorship of China, which permitted the CCP to do whatever it wanted, especially in regard to its green policies [Miltimore 2022].

There is a level of admiration I actually have for China because their basic dictatorship is allowing them to actually turn their economy around on a dime and say we need to go green, we need to start, you know, investing in solar.

He continues:

There is a flexibility that I know [Prime Minister] Stephen Harper must dream about: having a dictatorship where you can do whatever you wanted, that I find quite interesting.

These global leaders have suspended democratic processes, imposed mandates (e., mask, lockdowns, vaccine), implemented the “no jab, no job” policy, all of which have provoked political, economic, and social chaos [Oltermann 2021; Polumbo 2022; WSJ’s editorial board 2022]. Trudeau’s tactics have included the demonization of certain groups, namely the “unvaccinated” and peaceful protestors (e.g.,

members of the truckers' convoy), while the latter have been arrested, fined, imprisoned, and their bank accounts and funding platforms closed. A witty overview of the situation is available on Amazon, wherein in Dr. Zeus-like fashion, an author tells the story for children about "How Trudeau Stole Freedom" [Knipe, Smith 2022].

Schwab has admitted that the WEF has been working with China for the past "four decades" [Epoch TV Loudan]. He makes this admission in an intervention he gave at the 2022 World Youth Development Forum, in Beijing, China, organized by the All-China Youth Federation (ACYF), a puppet of the youth division of the CCP. [ibid; World Youth Development Forum]. One author and TV host, Trevor Loudan, has referred to it as a "communist gathering", [Epoch TV] because it drew 2000 young persons from various communist youth groups from around the world. These are listed on the conference website, along with the WEF [World Youth Development Forum]. Other listed sponsors include UN bodies, such as UN China, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the UN Development Programme (UNDP), and the UN Population Fund (UNFPA) [ibid]. Additional interviews with Schwab show him speaking with a bust of Vladimir Lenin, in the background, a hero of Xi Jinping, President of the People's Republic of China, who, in turn, is a philosophical, political, economic, and military ally of Vladimir Putin, President of Russia, who also admires Lenin [Epoch TV].

D. A Critique of the Private-Public Partnership Model

According to Jen Martens [2019: 207-209], WEF proposes a model that joins private-public partnerships in a system that would replace recognized democratic structures based on the underlying assumption that "global problems are too big, and the public sector is too weak to solve them alone". Martens describes the fight to redefine "global partnership" (between states) versus "multi-stakeholder partnerships" (corporations, or non-governmental organization and the state). He outlines how the WEF position is largely captured within context of 2030 Agenda's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) with reference to "multi-stakeholder partnerships" in SDG17. He states that "[in] the context of the 2030 Agenda, the difference between partnership and partnerships is not just semantic sophistry but reflects two fundamentally different views of the role of the State" [ibid.]. The former refers to a global partnership based on the idea that the state "as dutybearer, particularly with respect to human rights, and as central provider of public goods and services" [ibid.]. The latter refers to multi-stakeholder partnerships

based on the idea that the state is a “moderator and facilitator of actions of various public and private ‘stakeholders’ [ibid.]. In other words, the state, elected by the people, has authority and responsibility for the common good, including respect for fundamental human rights, while pursuant to the latter view, democratic governance has been dismantled, replaced by collaboration and cooperation of various bodies with no real responsibility to the common good, welfare of human persons, and their fundamental human rights.

WEF “postulates that a globalized world is best managed by a coalition of multinational corporations, governments (including through the UN system) and select civil society organizations (CSO’s)” [ibid.]. Martens, however, does not accept that the weakness of the public sector is inevitable, but rather has become weak do to deliberate decisions. He states:

What we see is a vicious cycle for weakening the State: the combination of neoliberal ideology, corporate lobbying, business friendly fiscal policies, tax avoidance and tax evasion has led to the massive weakening of the public sector and its ability to provide essential goods and services [ibid.].

Martens emphasizes that

corporations have a fundamentally different primary interest from that of governments, UN agencies, CSOs, and social movements: “corporations’ are primary interest-enshrined in their fiduciary duty to satisfy the interests of their owners, creditors and shareholders. The stakeholder discourse blurs this important distinction between the different actors [ibid.].

E. Various Critiques of COVID Policies

In June 2022, many people around the globe are questioning whether COVID-19 was ever an emergency, in the first place. This has nothing to do with one being against vaccinations *per se*. It is about people doubting the rationale behind COVID polices. The question is whether WEF and leading capitalists (e.g., CEOs, directors) have deliberately promoted policies and plans, in part or whole, as part of the implementation of Agenda 2030, in a way that has frustrated social, political, and economic systems to pave “the way for an autocratic global future more closely resembling the communist-capitalist system of an increasingly dominant China” [Pentin 2021d].

It is worth noting that within the UN, for years now, so-called “emergency” type arguments have been promoted within the United Nations to bring about massive changes in thought and action (e.g., so-called population crisis of the 1990s) [Brownstein 2019; Marucci 1997]¹. It is common knowledge that key UN bodies mobilize billions of dollars to create data, frame arguments, build networks, provoke changes in national legislation, and promote centralized planning ideas, which include a depopulation element (e.g., sterilization, contraception, abortion). The arguments are usually part of a larger theme devoted to the plight of refugees and migrants, violence against women, violent climates, and disaster relief. In the past, the Holy See consistently opposed depopulation elements, while at the same time accepted more positive elements of these discussions [Marucci 1997].

Of these “emergency ideologies,” one of the most effective has been the COVID pandemic, evidenced with the swiftness of the almost global measures. The reason for this is best articulated by Klaus Schwab [Malleret, Schwab 2020].

The spread of infectious diseases has a unique ability to fuel fear, anxiety and mass hysteria...it also challenges our social cohesion and collective capacity to manage a crisis. Epidemics are by nature divisive and traumatizing.

In sum, for Schwab and like-minded world leaders, COVID has exposed fundamental problems in social, political, and economic systems and presents an opportunity to reshape all aspects of our world by promoting new policies and structures on a more technological, sustainable, and environmentally friendly track.

Others claim that COVID policies demonstrate the birth of a new totalitarianism. A group of Catholic lawyers and scholars gathered under the auspices of the International Catholic Jurists Forum, in 2022, to study Aquinas, Law & Politics in Times of COVID, where Piotr Mazurkiewicz [Press release International Meeting, 2022] Professor and Director of the Political Science Department at the Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński University, in Warsaw concluded:

There is a real question about the extent to which the pandemic has changed the way Western democracies function. Theoretically, there is

¹ See e.g., Marucci 1997: Holy See’s Interventions at the 1994 UN World Conference on Population and Development, in Cairo.

a possibility of transforming liberal democracy into totalitarian democracy (J.L. Talmon). The essence of totalitarianism is when a government takes complete control, not only over the external behaviors of citizens, but also over their inner life - the way they think and evaluate the world. Through technology, the means to achieve total control over society no longer rests with 'naked violence'.

He continues:

Governments can take control over communication and educational systems with the possibility of excluding dissenting voices from public debate. Some Western governments have attempted to achieve just that through an informational monopoly over health policy. The fact that citizens often value security more than freedom makes it easier for them to succumb to health security propaganda.

The thought of Mazurkiewicz finds support in the work of psychologists, authors, politicians, and Catholic religious leaders, who view certain COVID measures as indicative of totalitarian regimes and the spread of Marxist materialism, rather than well-functioning democracies [Cristin, 2017; Desmet 2022; Gockowski, 2020; Hinchcliffe 2020; Slisco 2021; Wolf 2022]. Regarding cancellation culture that demonizes dissenters of the mass media's narrative on COVID and other issues (e.g., gender ideology, Black Lives Matter), the phenomenon has been compared to Maoism during the "Great Purge" of the cultural revolution, but with less blood [Adorney 2022]. Mao implemented a plan of terror against dissenters using the means of public humiliation, torture, and death [Chang, 2005: 635-637]. We know that many COVID vaccine dissenters have lost their jobs and have been otherwise ostracized or publicly humiliated, while families complaining of the adverse effects of vaccination, such as disability and death, have been largely ignored.

Regarding vaccine passports, David Thunder [2022] claims that "[by] excluding the unvaccinated from full and equal social participation, and applying significant pressure upon them to vaccinate," the system undermines two pivotal values to a free and open society, namely "the right to bodily integrity, and the equal standing of all citizens in the public square;" they have also "created social conditions propitious to resentment, public unrest, and political instability".

With respect to the job, groups of physicians and medical scientists have mobilized to question what they deem are scientifically untenable COVID policies in light of emerging evidence regarding vaccine and gene therapies, their ineffectiveness, and adverse side effects [Great Barrington Declaration 2020; Global Covid Summit Declaration 2021; Global COVID Summit Declaration 2022; MedEthica; Morrison 2022].

Still, others remain concerned about violations of freedom of conscience and religious freedom by coercive vaccine mandates [Press Release, ICJF, 2022] and forced closure of churches, when liquor stores (or even barber shops) remained opened as “essential services” [Sagers 2021]. Such actions indicate an animus against religion under the guise of COVID policies.

Lastly, many others wonder whether there is a depopulation theme, given the growing number of adverse effects, and early deaths associated with vaccinations. [Cotovio et al 2021; Gat et al 2022; Grome et al 2021].

F. A Critique of Schwab’s “Great Reset”

Schwab rejects a world view that he describes as promoting the idea “that humans are intrinsically selfish, uncooperative and aggressive, and without the civilizing influence of governments and leaders, order would soon break down and chaos reign” [WEF, Building Blocks of the Great Reset]. To the contrary, the website of the WEF argues that this vision of man “was simply made up. And made up by a surprisingly small but depressingly influential number of individuals – from Machiavelli and Adam Smith to Milton Friedman and William Golding”. For Schwab, COVID has provided the possibility to “make it up again,” that is, to recreate man and mold him into the new man for the Fourth Industrial Revolution, computer chips included [ibid].

As articulated, after dismissing centuries of philosophical thought about man and his world, Schwab admits that he has no firm vision of man, although intends to make one. His new vision will presumably conform with Agenda 2030 to serve the new multistakeholder paradigm of public-private partnerships. It is beyond the scope of this paper to present an overview of ancient, medieval, and modern philosophy on the topic or even a rapid and cursory review that is available elsewhere [e.g., Rommen, 1998; Pope John Paul II, 1998]. Suffice it to say, we know that Schwab’s “global reset” certainly does not embrace the Judeo-Christian vision of man, created in the image and likeness of the Triune God, with faculties

of intellect and will to know the truth and choose the good through the practice of virtue, which, in turn, leads to the right ordering of society and openness to the grace of God ordered to contemplation of the Blessed Trinity. Rather, Schwab negates the existence of objective truth, along with any notions of right and wrong, meaning there is no foundation for man to engage in a deeper understanding of the meaning of life based on faith and reason [Ibid; see also Bushman 2008; Greene 2020]. Schwab's economic vision promotes the collective at the expense of the individual, who can take on multiple identities (male, female, other), congruent with gender ideology entrenched in Agenda 2030 [Dcl. SDG 5]). In the end, man is a mere cog in an environmentally friendly, economic machine shaped by socio-economic forces in a universe devoid of transcendence or the divine [ibid.].

Schwab's vision of man seems to dovetail nicely with Agenda 2030 [Dcl. preamble paras. 5 -10]. Sustainable development, an ambiguous term capable of multiple meanings and nuisances, is based on three pillars: social, environmental, and economic, neatly summed up in the preamble with the five Ps: people, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership. The "people principle" reads: "We are determined to end poverty and hunger, in all their forms and dimensions, and to ensure that all human beings can fulfill their potential in dignity and equality." That the term "people," not "person" appears implies that humanity is "one people", with a nod to gender ideology (male, female, other) and fluid sexuality. Current efforts to redefine the term "woman" to include men who think they are women, in turn, might be used to reinterpret every international document and provision pertaining to women on the international level. Moreover, that "dignity" is not defined, nor prefaced by inherent (or transcendent) means that purely material considerations will likely rule the day, and possibly justify euthanasia, abortion, or sterilization in the name of dignity. The approach seems reminiscent of the "people" in the "People's Republic of China," under the CCP, where human beings are the means to carry out economic, social, and political projects determined and imposed by the state, something WEF refers to as state capitalism.

Contrast this approach with that of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), where "mankind" is one "human family." [UDHR] [preamble paras. 1, 5], founded upon the "human person" [ibid., preamble para. 5], male and female [ibid], "endowed with reason and conscience" [ibid., art. 1], who come together in marriage to establish the family, "the natural and fundamental group unit of society...entitled to protection from society and the state" [ibid., art. 16]. Fundamental human rights flow from the "inherent dignity" of the human person

[*ibid.*, preamble paras. 1, 5], essential characteristics of which are recognized in article 1, which, together with freedom of religion and conscience, in article 18, implicitly recognize both the material and spiritual dimensions of the person. Both of these dimensions form part of “integral human development”, a broader concept than sustainable development and the one promoted by the Holy See.

In sum, Schwab’s understanding of man is dangerous. He is promoting a form of global totalitarianism, where a human being’s value or importance is determined by his or her usefulness to the state working with private partnerships in a purely material world. His promotion of PPPs reads almost like a type of a deification of this new global regime that could command absolute adherence through the priorities and policies of Agenda 2030, and which is implemented by nation states through financial agreements with the assistance of big tech and big media. In short, the vision of Schwab has the appearances of a Marxist project.

III. The Holy See and the Great Reset

A. General Considerations

The Holy See does not operate in a vacuum. The Holy See has a specific vision of God and man [Catechism 1994; Compendium 2004]. It commences with the Triune God (Father-Son-Holy Spirit), who created the world and man out of love to draw all men to himself. Made in the image and likeness of God, man’s inalienable dignity is founded on his worth to God, gratuitously bestowed upon him; he is a child of God, capable of communion with him, which, in turn, constitutes the foundation of the equality of human beings.

Man has a resemblance to God in his very being, not merely in memory, intellect, free will. We are made for a loving relationship with God and others, and, as such, ought to live an ordered and virtuous life in view of man’s dignity, origin, and destiny, ever cognizant of the tragedy that accompanies human freedom - that fallen human beings can choose to reject God. In brief, the economy of salvation is a love story with three distinct chapters: man (the creature), man (the sinner), and man (redeemed in Christ).

That man is a child of God means that he is called to love as a member of a family, the first expression of which is the human family, the natural and fundamental unit of society, based on marriage between a man and a woman, in a loving union that is fruitful, faithful, and forever, which creates, nurtures, and educates new citizens. Family members and groups of families create larger social groupings

from intermediate local groups to villages, towns, cities, nations, and to the international community of nations. The natural family unit, in turn, requires protection from wider social groups and the state.

Authority is founded in the social nature of man, and consequently, God, as its author. All persons in positions of authority must be guided by the moral law. There is value in the democratic system characterized by free elections, holding elected officials accountable, and replacing them with peaceful means. Yet, one “cannot encourage the formation of narrow ruling groups which usurp the power of the state for individual interests or ideological ends” [Compendium 406]. Neither can one accept that there is “no ultimate truth to guide and direct political activity, [since] then ideas and convictions [could] easily be manipulated for reasons of power” [Centesimus Annus (CA) 46]. One finds support in history that demonstrates, “a democracy without values easily turns into open or thinly disguised totalitarianism” (ibid.).

For human relationships to develop in a harmoniously way, key principles must be applied, such as the common good, justice, solidarity, and subsidiarity. Developed in accordance with scripture, tradition, and the magisterium, these principles are proposed by the Holy See to all persons of good will.

Since man is made to love and serve God and others, man cooperates and collaborates with others to create something good for all people and the whole person, so that all can live in a common good. It is defined as “the sum total of social conditions which enable individuals, families, and organizations to achieve their own fulfilment more fully and easily” [Gaudium et Spes (GS) 26, 74; Catechism 1877-1948, Compendium 164-170].

The principle of justice – to give to the other what is his or her due (or own) – presupposes the possession and ownership of property as well as right and wrong based on objective truth. There are different types of justice, depending upon the social relationship in question [Catechism 2411]. Yet, respect for rights and duties is the bare minimum; the human person is called to act in charity to go beyond justice, to give to the other what is his own. [Caritas in Veritatis (CV) 6] Whether a law is just or unjust is determined with reference to “the moral law inscribed in [man’s] nature” (Pacem in Terris (PT) 5–6), which is “revealed to him by his [well-formed] conscience and insists upon preserving it” (GS 16). The natural Law, founded in human nature and the ends of man, is the “common

moral ground that is right for all human beings and at some level known to all human beings”, something fundamental to the idea of fundamental human rights [Budziszewski 21].

The principle of solidarity highlights the intrinsic social nature of man, the equality of each person in his or her inherent dignity, the rights and duties that flow therefrom, and the common and interdependent path that man treads ever tending towards a genuine ethical-social unity [Compendium 192-196]. Solidarity is also a moral virtue which means to commit oneself to the common good: “the good of all and of each individual” [ibid., 193].

The principle of subsidiarity implicitly recognizes that the fallen human being tends to accumulate power for himself and treat human beings as “members of a hive or herd, dominated by the pressures of the collective, or the will of some tyrant who could control the collective” [Caldecott: 2001, 21; See also Compendium 185-188]. Consequently, the principle requires authority or power to be exercised in the service of others at the lowest or most local levels compatible with the common good, which determine its limits. In this way, “everyone is given the maximum scope to exercise their own free will”, [Caldecott] and so according to the principle of the common good, cited above, “achieve their own fulfilment more fully and easily”. In this way, the concept of hierarchy is not rejected, but the authority or power continually flows toward the base and empowers human persons to act freely and responsibly [ibid., 22].

The combination of the principles of solidarity and subsidiarity brings one to the option for the poor – to love and serve the most vulnerable, those at the bottom of the world’s hierarchy [Ibid., 23]. The two principles are also vital for a humane economic system, founded on a correct understanding of the human person. The economic system, according to the philosophies of socialism and communism, are fundamentally flawed in their materialist vision of man, elimination of the right of private ownership, diminishment of the personal responsibility of the worker, threat to the family, religion and the very existence of the Church, and lack of subsidiarity, since the party (e.g., CCP) imposes a state-controlled economy. The Church has a long institutional history of fighting the errors of both socialism and communism [e.g., *Qui Pluribus*, 1846; *Nostis et nobiscum*, 1849; *Quanta cura*, 1864; *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, 1878; *Rerum Novarum*, 1891; *Quod Apostolici Muneris*, 1878; *Divini Redemptoris*, 1937; *Decree Against Communism*, 1949; and so on].

The system us according to the capitalist or free market economy us promotes ownership of private property, incentivizes the worker, and has “subsidiarity in abundance”, since control is exercised at the local level [Caldecott 24]. Unfettered capitalism, however, is a problem. The free-market economy needs to be circumscribed within a “strong juridical framework which places it as the service of human freedom”, to avoid consumerism and other abuses associated with caprice and greed [CA 42], although, it would “appear to be the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs” [CA 34].

The question is whether the vision being promoted by Schwab, seemingly accepted by the Holy See, as discussed *infra*, constitutes an “alternative” or third way: a market “appropriately controlled by the forces of society and by the state so as to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are recognized”, in accordance with a proper understanding of man [CA 54]. It must be a “sustained commitment to promoting a relational-based universal integration that is open to transcendence” (CV 42); for communion and the sharing of goods (CV 42); and for the principle of unity in diversity, obviously opposed to cultural leveling and syncretism (CV 26, 55). This would presumably require the elites, who are promoting the global reset, to have well-formed consciences and to utilize a discernment process based on the criterion of “charity in truth”, which seeks, above all, the development of “the whole man and all men” (CV, no. 55).

B. The Holy See and the “Global Reset”

The Holy See, under the papacy of Pope Francis, seems to have its own socio-economic agenda, and one which it intends to carry out with the assistance and collaboration of UN bureaucrats, like-minded world leaders, and influential NGOs or international bodies. For example, Pope Francis commenced his papacy with attention to the global theme to end international human trafficking and gathered like-minded persons, believers, and non-believers, alike [Francis 2015a]. He was invited to push for an item on human trafficking to be included in Agenda 2030 Sustainable Development Goals [San Martin 2015], and the Holy See was criticized for failing to lobby aggressively on life issues [Ballinski, Crane 2015]. On the first anniversary year of these goals, however, the Holy See sent a “Note” to the United Nations that detailed its reservations and maintained its position of challenging ambiguous language, akin to the days of the UN World Conferences, in the 1990s.

The Holy See [2016] actively supports the United Nations Global Compacts on Migration and Refugees [Gomes 2018] and has its own UN affiliated Global

Compact for Education, whose aim is to create a “global change of mentality” through education of “young people to fraternity, to learn to overcome divisions and conflicts, promote hospitality, justice and peace” [Vatican Global Compact on Education]. The Holy See is also engaged in “transformative education” [Mission 4.7], which refers to sustainable development goal 4.7 on education for “sustainable development, global citizenship education, environmental education, climate education, peace and human rights education, and others,” and draws upon the “global leadership” of UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) [Vatican Mission 4.7].

In addition, the Holy See supports “inclusive capitalism”, through the Council for Inclusive Capitalism with its sister Coalition of Inclusive Capitalism [Bank of America 2020; Coalition for Inclusive Capitalism; Council for Inclusive Capitalism]. Thomas Storck [2021] argues that the Holy See works with a long list of “leading capitalists” (e.g., CEOs, directors, officials), including the Rockefeller and Ford Foundations, as well as Lady Lynn Forrester de Rothchild; “in short, many of the richest people in the world, people who, hitherto at least, have profited quite well on account of ‘the absolute autonomy of markets and financial speculation’”. Storck is skeptical of the initiatives, suggesting that only time will tell whether “the entire effort is little more than a public relations gimmick to make people less likely to get angry on account of their unemployment or poverty” [ibid.].

The Holy See is also open to the climate change movement as evidenced in the encyclical of Pope Francis on the environment [Francis 2015b] but has been criticized for participating in UN conferences on climate without speaking out about its negative aspects [Pentin 2021b].

C. The Holy See and COVID

The Holy See has been extremely active on the COVID issue, and the following represents only a few examples. On January 2020, Pope Francis penned a message to Schwab, on the fiftieth anniversary of the WEF [Francis 2020c]. That WEF annual meeting in Davos, Switzerland was devoted to the theme “Stakeholders for a Cohesive and Sustainable World”, where the Holy See was represented by Peter Cardinal Turkson, Prefect of the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.

In the message, Francis praises the WEF for providing “an arena where political will and mutual cooperation can be guided and strengthened in overcoming the

isolationism, individualism and ideological colonization” [ibid.]. Francis articulates the “overriding consideration” that “we are all members of the one human family,” from which springs the “moral obligation to care for one another” and “the correlative principle of placing the human person, rather than the mere pursuit of power or profit, at the very center of public policy”. He also emphasizes the need “to give full consideration to the ethical dimension in seeking resolutions to present problems or proposing initiatives for the future”. He laments “materialistic or utilitarian visions, sometimes hidden, sometimes celebrated, [which] lead to practices and structures motivated largely, or even solely, by self-interest”. He also criticizes using “others as a means to an end” thereby preventing “truly integral human development” that allows everyone “to be included, and contribute to, pursuing the common good”.

In December 2020, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [CDF 2020] found COVID vaccines “morally acceptable to receive”, even though they “have used cell lines from aborted fetuses in their research and production process.” Due to the ongoing pandemic, the CDF states that “all vaccinations recognized as clinically safe and effective can be used in good conscience, with the certain knowledge that the use of such vaccines does not constitute formal cooperation with the abortion from which the cells used in production of the vaccines derive.” The CDF underlines, of course, that it does not “judge the safety and efficacy” of the vaccines, and emphasizes that “vaccination is not, as a rule, a moral obligation and that, therefore, it must be voluntary.” Key elements of the analysis include recognition: 1) of one’s conscience in making vaccination decisions; 2) of having reasons to refuse vaccines due to links with aborted fetuses or other reasons (e.g., medical); 3) of having the duty to the common good, that is, to protect “the weakest and the most exposed”; and 4) of the duty of states and organizations to ensure that vaccines are “effective and safe” and “ethically acceptable” and “accessible”.

Unfortunately, to the contrary, global elites have offered questionable interpretations of the common good, rejected reasonable limitation of measures to only the most vulnerable, refused to accept reasons for refusal of vaccinations, and have used laws to coerce people into vaccination. Pope Francis, in his personal capacity, seems to have followed this path. For example, in an effort, to encourage vaccinations globally, in August 2021, he described getting vaccinated as an act of love [Watkins 2021] and later made statements underlining his doubts about whether any reasons might be offered to refuse the vaccinations [Francis 2020b; Associated Press 2022; Francis 2022; Winfield 2022] and followed up by implying that taking

COVID vaccinations was a moral obligation [Francis 2022; Winfield 2022]. Then, as sovereign of Vatican City State, he seemed to reject the CDF document, when he endorsed a “no jab, no job” policy, in October 2021, which reportedly resulted in three Swiss Guards leaving the Pope’s service, and another three being “temporarily suspended after they refused to comply with compulsory” Covid vaccinations [Pentin 2021c].

Further, on 20 March 2020, Francis requested the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development (DPIHD) to “create a Commission, in collaboration with other Dicasteries of the Roman Curia and other organizations, to express the Church’s solicitude and care for the whole human family facing the COVID-19 pandemic” [Vatican COVID-19 Commission]. In Schwab like terms, COVID-19 is described in the following terms:

the defining crisis of this generation, from which we can either emerge for the better or the worse. It has laid bare the inequities and injustices that threaten people’s well-being, safety, and lives, and exacerbated an interconnected set of crises – economic, ecological, political, social.

Among other things, the Commission intends to usher forth “the transformation of hearts, minds, and structures toward a new model of development”. A quick perusal of the Commission website reminds one of United Nations’ websites with its glossy reports containing photography of vulnerable peoples and succinct one-page factsheets. The Commission’s website also displays links to resources of the World Health Organization, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), UNICEF and others [Vatican COVID-19 Commission, Documents, Reports, Audiovisual material].

In the Commission’s Report, “Prepare the Future,” of March [2021], the Commission is said to have been “Inspired by [Encyclicals] *Laudato Si’* and *Fratelli Tutti* [Brothers All]”, only two documents from the deep reservoir of the social doctrine of the Church. It also called to “prepare the future through science, theological reflection, and collaboration with others, while prioritizing the least among us.” Working Group I, for example, provides a section on “Local Practices and Good Practices”, where the following appears, with an emphasis on socio-political work:

Campaigns by local churches to combat misinformation. Church infrastructures repurposed for quarantined populations and as COVID-19

treatment centres. Chaplains providing spiritual support and trained to monitor communities and assist treatments. Local churches engaged in political advocacy vis-à-vis national governments [ibid. at 3].

Consistent with the current thrust of the global approach to the pandemic, there is no mention in the report of fundamental human rights, including religious freedom.

It is noteworthy that in response to one of the Commission's pillar Encyclicals, "Fratelli Tutti" [Francis 2020], an essay published on the WEF website describes the document as an effort "to shape what's been termed a Great Reset of the global economy in response to the devastation of COVID-19" [Letzing 2020]. The picture chosen for the article is one depicting a group of priests praying with Pope Francis, which, upon first glance, looks like they are bowing their heads in allegiance. The picture is attractive for those who would like Francis to act like a CEO, and strong arm all members of the Catholic Church into submission. The author writes:

Pope Francis criticizes the 'dogma of neoliberal faith' in his encyclical, adding that 'the fragility of world systems in the face of the pandemic has demonstrated that not everything can be resolved by market freedom.' He advocates for a political life not subject to the 'dictates of finance,' and for making human dignity the focus of new, 'alternative social structures [ibid.].

D. Justifications and Criticisms

Clearly, the Holy See has embraced the idea of a global reset. The question is whether the Holy See's "encounter with the world" is one that constitutes an unfortunate "accommodation of itself to the world," rather than a genuine call to "conversion in obedience to the divine law written on every human heart and revealed in its fullness in the redemptive incarnation of God the Son" [Gockowski 2020].

The Holy See and its supporters maintain that it engages in dialogue with all interested fora and parties, even those who are hostile to Christianity, generally, and have devoted their lives to agendas opposed to key elements of the Catholic faith, for example, the right life from conception (e.g., Jeffrey Sachs, Melinda and Bill Gates) [Pentin 2020]. They view this as congruent with the Holy See's spiritual and moral mission, founded on scripture and the social doctrine of the Church.

For example, Cardinal Turkson reportedly states that the Holy See is open to initiatives of the great reset: “The objective for us and from the point of view of Pope Francis is to reimagine a social order with more justice, equity, where social injustices are overcome” [Pentin 2021a].

Turkson confides that sharing information at meetings with the UN and WEF means that the language between the Holy See and WEF “now begins to be closer” [ibid.]. The crucial difference for Turkson is that the Holy See’s position is rooted in Scripture. The Holy See also claims that those who oppose COVID and its policies have been hypnotized by misinformation or “conspiracy theories” about a new world controlled by elites [ibid.]. Indeed, Francis has invited Catholic organizations to devote themselves to addressing misinformation [Watkins 2022].

On the contrary, others argue that the Holy See moves well beyond dialogue, to initiate and promote a global social-economic vision based on Third World economic and theological-political principles linked to liberation theology, which, in turn, is “anti-Western (and especially anti-US), anti-capitalist, progressive, pro-Marxist, and essentially communist” with a “parallel praise of poverty as an effective instrument for approaching God” [Pentin 2021e].

Raymond Cardinal Burke does not mention Francis directly but has some harsh words for Church leaders. He states: “[many] have manifested a woeful lack of sound catechesis,” a lack of “understanding of how Christ continues his saving work in times of plague and of other disasters” [Gockowski 2020]. In brief, members of the faithful are not receiving responses from shepherds based on unchanging faith and morals, but “from secular managers” [ibid.]. The consequences are grave, not only for Americans, but for mankind. In the words of Burke, for the last two years, we have been focused on finding a way “to understand and direct” our lives “in disease and its prevention,” instead of “in God and in his plan for our salvation” [ibid.].

Similarly, along the lines of Burke, some have challenged the authority and analysis of Catholic leaders to coerce members of the faithful to submit to experimental vaccines and gene therapies as well as related policies that support coercive mask and vaccination mandates, along with green passes and the shutting of Churches [Buscemi 2021; Facchinei 2021; Gondreau 2022; Sullivan 2022; Sammut 2021; Smith 2021].

An “Appeal for the Church and the World,” addressed to “Catholics and all people of good will, was released in May 2020 [Pentin 2022b] with more than 80 signatories, Catholics, and non-Catholic alike, including Cardinals Joseph Zen, and Gerhard Müller. The document underlines the following points, namely that under the pretext of COVID:

- 1) the inalienable rights of citizens have been violated, including “the exercise of freedom of worship, expression and movement, [which] have been disproportionately and unjustifiably restricted;”
- 2) powers are deliberately creating panic “with the sole aim of permanently imposing unacceptable forms of restriction on freedoms, of controlling people and of tracking their movements;” and
- 3) certain “containment measures” have “precipitated a crisis that has brought down entire sectors of the economy” which, in turn, encourages “interference by foreign powers and has serious social and political repercussions.”

In response, the signatories appeal to all people of good will to work within their respective fields to ensure that “centuries of Christian civilization [are not] erased under the pretext of a virus, and an odious technological tyranny to be established in which nameless and faceless people can decide the fate of the world by confining us to a virtual reality.”

Vatican journalist, Edward Pentin [2022a], has strong words for Church leaders, beginning with Pope Francis, and others in the Roman Curia. He claims that: 1) Church leaders have been “silent and complicit” in the face of grave wrongs regarding vaccination mandates, the danger of adverse effects, and lockdowns; 2) Francis, as Sovereign of Vatican City State, has perpetrated the injustices committed by other world leaders in his own territory by implementing “some of the world’s strictest vaccine mandates.”

Conclusion

This paper has offered an analysis of the Holy See’s position on its openness to the “global reset” through its increased cooperation and collaboration with global elites, including UN bureaucrats and the head of WEF. The Holy See and its supporters view this as congruent with the Holy See’s spiritual and moral mission in the world founded on scripture and in accordance with the social doctrine of the church.

Others disagree. They view the global reset as a new totalitarianism or type of global communism antithetical to the Holy See's spiritual and moral mission, the gospel, and a prudent application of the social doctrine of the church. They argue that the Holy See has lost its way, too involved in creating a socio-political new world order with interested fora and parties, many of whom are hostile to Christianity *per se* or otherwise devoted to agendas opposed to the Catholic faith.

The question remains whether the moral voice of the Holy See has been so compromised by its complicity in various great reset initiatives that it can no longer direct hearts and minds to the natural moral law, with reference to the specific Christian task, ever "motivated by the hope drawn from the saving work of Jesus Christ" [Benedict XVI 2008]. As Christians, we know that Jesus Christ is the global reset. Saint Pope John XXIII [in his opening of the Second Vatican Council] stated: "The whole of history and of life hinges on the person of Jesus Christ." Similarly, Pope Saint John Paul II [1979] in first Encyclical "*Redemptor Hominis*," states:

The Redeemer of Man, Jesus Christ, is the centre of the universe and of history... "The Word became flesh and dwelt among us" This act of redemption marked the high point of the history of man within God's loving plan...Through the Incarnation, God gave human life the dimension that he intended man to have from his first beginning.

As Christians, we can never forget that the battle here on earth is spiritual. We can never underestimate Satan's hatred for God and man, because "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son" (Jn 3:16). As Christians, when we pray that our father, with the phrase "thy kingdom come," we "commit ourselves to serve its coming by living in peace and by seeking peace and justice for all who suffer in our homes, our workplace, our neighborhoods, our world" [Magnificat 2021: 296]. As Christians, we do this knowing that, while we should care for our health, it is God who created us out of love and who maintains our lives in existence out of love [Schall 2018: 192].

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