



STUDIES

IN
THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS

**“True charity begins
where justice ends”**

*The Life and Teachings
of St. Alberto Hurtado, S.J.*

JOHN GAVIN, S.J.

43/4 • WINTER

THE SEMINAR ON JESUIT SPIRITUALITY

The Seminar is composed of a number of Jesuits appointed from their provinces in the United States.

It concerns itself with topics pertaining to the spiritual doctrine and practice of Jesuits, especially United States Jesuits, and communicates the results to the members of the provinces through its publication, *STUDIES IN THE SPIRITUALITY OF JESUITS*. This is done in the spirit of Vatican II's recommendation that religious institutes recapture the original inspiration of their founders and adapt it to the circumstances of modern times. The Seminar welcomes reactions or comments in regard to the material that it publishes.

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- Michael Barber, S.J., is dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo. (2010)
- Richard A. Blake, S.J., is chairman of the Seminar and editor of *STUDIES*; he teaches film studies at Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass. (2002)
- Mark Bosco, S.J., teaches English and theology at Loyola University Chicago, Chicago, Ill. (2009)
- Terrence Dempsey, S.J., teaches art history and directs the Museum of Contemporary Religious Art at St. Louis University, St. Louis, Mo. (2009)
- Paul Janowiak, S.J., teaches theology at the Jesuit School of Theology and Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Cal. (2010)
- Francis X. McAloon, S.J., teaches theology at the Jesuit School of Theology and the Graduate Theological Union, Berkeley, Cal. (2009)
- Robert E. Scully, S.J., teaches history and law at LeMoyne College, Syracuse, N.Y. (2011)
- Thomas D. Stegman, S.J., teaches New Testament at the School of Theology and Ministry at Boston College, Chestnut Hill, Mass. (2010)
- Gilbert Sunghera, S.J., teaches architecture at the University of Detroit-Mercy, Detroit, Mich. (2011)

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the first word . . .

What do saints do in their day job? Being a saint can't really be full-time work, can it? These questions may seem to push the frontiers of blasphemy, but I've found them quite helpful in my own spiritual reflections. Believe it or not, they grew out of a retreat exercise on the Hidden Life. Follow the logic. A hidden life remains hidden only if no one notices anything strange about it. Even the early chroniclers of the Gospels didn't find much worthy of including in their narratives. Matthew's story mentions that the Holy Family returned to Galilee after a trip to Bethlehem and a flight into Egypt. Luke includes family roots in Nazareth and the observance of ritual practices like circumcision, purification, and finally a near disastrous pilgrimage to Jerusalem, when the family became separated in Passover crowds. John has Jesus attending a wedding celebration with his Mother early in his public life, which would lead one to speculate that their joining in village social events was routine and that Mary had been widowed sometime between the finding in the Temple and the miracle at Cana. Matthew (13:55) includes a possibly dismissive comment about Jesus from an unknown critic, who refers to him as "the carpenter's son."

That's not much to go on. Essentially we're left with a gap that could be as long as thirty years, when the Holy Family went about its business in such an unassuming way that they fit right in as an ordinary family down the street. What did they do during those years? How did they live? Let's assume Joseph was a carpenter, as the tradition suggests, although he might have been another type of craftsman. When business was slow, did he worry himself sick about not being able to pay his bills? Did he haggle about prices, and if someone refused to pay the agreed-upon fee, did he pursue his wayward customer and threaten legal action? If traders kept raising the price of good cedar from Lebanon, did he fear that he would have to stop making luxury items, like carved boxes and chests, and limit his trade to window frames, doors, and tool handles? Any normal man leading an unexceptional life would surely have had friends in the neighborhood. Did he meet with other artisans on market days to trade tidbits of news and share a lunch of bread and fruit, and maybe a cup of fresh wine? Did they worry that if the Romans stationed another legion around Jerusalem, their taxes would have to go up to pay for it? Did they

have political arguments about the tactics of the Zealots, with some maintaining they were just trouble makers and others defending them as patriots? In more fanciful moments, I've often wondered about his reaction after smashing his thumb with a hammer. Did he dance around the shop with his hand squeezed between his upper arm and chest, while calling upon the wrath of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob to consign the malevolent mallet to the darkest pit of Sheol? I hope he did all those things.

Since Mary seems to have fit in as a wedding guest at Cana, we can speculate about her hidden life as well. No doubt she must have enjoyed a social life with the other young mothers in the village. Did they gather on certain days to wash their families' clothes and brag about their children? (It would be an odd group of mothers who did not do this.) Did they trade secrets about the tricks of getting colicky babies to sleep, or stretching a measure of flour into yet another meal, and did they complain that the price of a good iron pot had become outrageous? Perhaps they speculated about which families were getting really serious about discussing terms of a dowry. Did they tease one of their number about looking a little plump and perhaps keeping a little secret from her friends? Chatting around the well as they did their chores would enable them to warn one another about that traveling merchant who claims his fabrics are made of the finest Egyptian cotton when they're no better than Jericho homespun. I hope they were fashion conscious and compared colors of their clothes and the modest jewelry their village economy could provide.

To return to my initial question, I'd like to suggest that other saints had day jobs and lived hidden lives as well. We only get to know the public persona that biographers and artists choose to leave us. The imagination can help penetrate the unlit crannies of a human life lived humanly. For example, every late August I look forward to the snippets of the *Confessions* in the breviary that give some sense of the deep love between Augustine and his mother Monica. The excerpts are truly moving, but their unwritten biographies contain a lot more than mystical experiences in Ostia. Augustine was once a little boy, and if his adult achievement provides any indication of his childhood, he must have been quite a handful for Monica. The trouble probably started long before the famous pear tree incident. Imagine this exchange:

"Ma, can I go over to Marcus's house? His father just came back from Alexandria with a cool new game, and all the guys are going over to try it out."

"Did you finish your Plutarch?"

"Well, no. But . . ."

"You march right up to your room and get to it. You'll copy every word of that scroll before you set one sandal outside this house."

"Aw, Ma, but all the other kids . . ."

"I don't care about 'the other kids.' You're going to make something out of yourself."

"But Demetrius says . . ."

"One more word about Marcus or Demetrius and you'll have no figs for dessert tonight."

(Inaudibly) "It's not fair."

An older Augustine appreciated the fact that his mother had prayed him into Christianity, and in that respect, among many others, he owed her everything. It was a touching relationship, but I wonder if Monica's efforts might have gone a bit beyond prayer on occasion. It would be a strange mother who did not believe that divine intervention would be more effective if helped by direct maternal involvement.

"When are you going stop hanging out with those good-for-nothing idlers down at the bath house? Let your father and me find you a nice girl from a good Christian family. Settle down. Start your own family. Give me grandchildren to comfort me in my old age."

"May God give me a well-born wife and family, but not yet."

"You're impossible!"

It's hard to believe that the twins Benedict and Scholastica didn't have their moments of sibling conflict as children. The story about Scholastica's praying for a storm to keep Benedict from returning to his cell and ending their conversation about spiritual topics is familiar enough, but that tradition involves two mature adults well on their way to sainthood. As children, the dialogue may have been a bit different:

"You broke my doll, and I'm going to tell."

"Go ahead and tell. I don't care. It's only some dumb girly toy anyway."

"You are the meanest boy in the whole world!"

Our own Ignatius must have had his own hidden life. Biographers have not shied away from speculating about his days in the military and at court, but perhaps there was a hidden side to the mature Ignatius as well. The public persona of the mystic and founder has been packed into the psychic baggage of every Jesuit. No doubt more than one of us has awakened in a cold sweat after a dream like this. We've just gone through the intrusive biographical baggage check. Two surly,

unpleasant angels in uniforms of the Transitional Security Administration have checked our boarding passes and waved us through. St. Peter has stamped our entry visa. After all the hassle and red tape, we're home free. Then, at the entrance to the jetway we see Ignatius. In his left hand he holds a meticulously hand printed ledger with our name on the spine. He stops us by raising his right hand and says: "Before you go to get fitted for your wings, I'd like to see you in my office. Now." Divine comedy or paradise lost?

Despite the intimidating image that has come down to us, I'd like to think he had a hidden life that made him more like the Jesuits down the hall. Surely, the task of Jesuit administration then involved the same mind-grinding tedium that it does now. If he had never had a series of mystical experiences, written a text of spiritual brilliance, and founded a major religious order, he would without a doubt be canonized for his devotion to office work. Imagine a man of his stature having to involve himself in deciding which ministers had to serve how many chestnuts at dinner on what feast days. I can imagine Polanco bringing in the morning mail one dreary January morning. As they go through the contents of the pouch together, Ignatius finally loses it: "If I have waste my time responding to one more pointless letter from the Bishop of — or the Duke of — , I'm going to chuck the whole thing and join the Franciscans." Office work will sometimes do that to a man, even a great saint like Ignatius. Nonetheless, it was his life, and the ministry he was called to.

Are we ordinary Jesuits much different? Each day before liturgy, I take a look at the tri-province necrology, and the thought has come to me more than once that I have probably had the privilege of dealing with a good number of saints—no, I doubt that any of them will be raised to the altar—but I've had the honor of knowing dozens of great men whose hidden lives of ordinary, unremarkable service masked remarkable workings of grace. What we see in each other are the ordinary events that we can only imagine in the lives of the great saints. We see routine tasks and human interactions, like those of the Holy Family. We see moments of friction within the family, some frivolous, some regrettably destructive, among good men who are good but humanly flawed. We live among men who quietly correct student papers, preach when the Scripture doesn't speak to them, give retreats and spiritual direction when they are going through their own periods of desolation, raise money, and tend to administrative details that bore them beyond imagining.

This insight became particularly poignant one Saturday morning, on October 29, to be exact, when I was luxuriating in a leisurely weekend reading of the *New York Times*. There among the obituaries was a four-column notice, with photograph, about Dean Brackley, one of the New

York Jesuits who volunteered to go to El Salvador to help replace the six Jesuits who were murdered in 1989 along with their housekeeper and her daughter. The write-up, compiled by two *Times* reporters, certainly suggested the stuff of sainthood: working in a community center in the South Bronx after a doctorate at the University of Chicago; riding a bicycle to Fordham to teach part time; going to El Salvador and opting to stay there; choosing to end his days in hospice care in his adopted homeland. When these events are put together in one article, it certainly looks like a life of saint.

Was Dean in fact a saint? Who can say? I had met the man on several occasions; we were friendly, but we never stayed together in the same community. He did have an edge to him. He knew what he believed, said what he thought, and could be a bit short with those who reached other conclusions. What you saw is what you got. Dean was author of two issues of *STUDIES*: *Downward Mobility* (20/1, Jan. 1988) and *Expanding the Shrunken Soul* (34/4, Sept. 2002). I was on the Seminar in 2002 during our consideration of the latter article, and from our discussion I remember Dean as being one of those *quod scripsi, scripsi* types of contributors. Happily John Padberg assumed editorial responsibility for bringing the issue to light. No surprises. The exchange echoed previous dealings with him. One would expect him to have been a difficult man in community, but I never heard any such comments about him. He radiated a basic goodness and honesty that other Jesuits respected. He had many good friends who were terribly moved by his untimely death.

No doubt we have many other such Jesuits engaged in difficult apostolates around the world. This issue of *STUDIES* serves as an introduction to Alberto Hurtado, a recently canonized Jesuit saint who, it's fairly safe to say, is all but unknown in North America. As I read though John Gavin's summary of his life and thought, I wondered if many of his contemporaries knew that they were dealing with a man who would one day be entered into the liturgical calendar. The things he did seemed so ordinary, so modern, so hidden from public view. Any of us could probably name several friends engaged in the same types of ministries today: men quietly going about their work, trying to do some good for others or at least not make their lives any harder. He studied and taught. He wrote books and essays that furthered reflection on social issues among his contemporaries. He engaged in community organizing and became involved with government projects, with the predictable result that he was accused of being "political" and had to withdraw from some of his activities. He founded a journal dedicated to serious discussion of public affairs from a Catholic perspective. He preached and offered spiritual direction. Amid all these activities, he enjoyed a rich spiritual life that

became apparent in his personal papers. Intellectually and spiritually, he was a man of the first half of the twentieth century, a pre-Vatican II Jesuit, to be sure. His language may strike us as a bit quaint and off-putting, until we realize that this type of reflection, shaped in an era marked by war, depression, and ideological turmoil, laid the foundation for the policies adopted by the Church and the Society in the latter decades of the century. John Gavin has written an informative essay that *STUDIES* is delighted to provide for its readership.

Richard A. Blake, S.J.

Editor

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John Gavin, S.J., assistant professor of Religious Studies at the College of the Holy Cross, Worcester, Mass., completed his doctorate at the Institutum Patristicum Augustinianum and for three years taught theology and Greek at the Pontifical Biblical Institute, The Pontifical Oriental Institute, and the Gregorian University. He is the author of And They Will Be Like the Angels: Angelology and Anthropology in the Thought of Maximus the Confessor (Rome, 2009). He is also edited, with John McDermott, S.J., John Paul II on the Body: Human Eucharistic and Ecclesial (Turnhout, Belgium, 2008).

“True charity begins where justice ends”

The Life and Teachings of St. Alberto Hurtado, S.J.

A saint of our time, Alberto Hurtado balanced a rigorous political analysis with an intense spiritual life and personal dedication to the service of the poor. His thought emerged from the intellectual and political currents of his time, yet his writings foreshadow the papal and Society documents on social justice that form the basis of our ministries today.

I. A New Jesuit Saint

On October 23, 2005, I had the great privilege of being in Rome for the canonization of a Jesuit saint: Alberto Hurtado, S.J. Prior to the canonization, Hurtado was not much more than a name to me, a founder of institutions for the poor in Chile during the first half of the twentieth century. As the day approached for the canonization in St. Peter’s Square, I read some brief biographies that recounted his sanctity, his tireless efforts for the poor, his inspiring preaching, and his promotion of the Church’s social teachings. I found him to be an impressive figure and a fine example of our Jesuit charism.

Yet, it was the arrival of some Chilean guests in the community that truly piqued my interest. Among the pilgrims who came for the canonization, I met two Jesuits who had personally known Al-

berto Hurtado as a spiritual director. They spoke of a man burning with the love of Jesus, who inflamed others with the desire to transform the world for Christ. "He was a tough director!" said one of the guests. "But his first desire was always to lead us to do great things for Christ." The enthusiasm of those spiritual sons of St. Alberto would be confirmed by Pope Benedict XVI in his canonization homily.

"You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart. . . . You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22: 37, 39). This was the program of life of St. Alberto Hurtado, who wished to identify himself with the Lord and to love the poor with this same love. The formation received in the Society of Jesus, strengthened by prayer and adoration of the Eucharist, allowed him to be won over by Christ, being a true contemplative in action. In love and in the total gift of self to God's will, he found strength for the apostolate. . . . In his priestly ministry he was distinguished for his simplicity and availability towards others, being a living image of the Teacher, "meek and humble of heart." In his last days, amid the strong pains caused by illness, he still had the strength to repeat: "I am content, Lord," thus expressing the joy with which he always lived.

Unfortunately this saint, revered in Chile for his works and teachings, remains a rather obscure figure in the English-speaking world. His writings, a rich mine of spiritual guidance and profound theological thinking, have remained untranslated, and his primary social apostolate, *El Hogar de Cristo*, though present in the U.S., has not achieved the fame it holds in Spanish-speaking nations.

My hope, in this brief essay, is to present the example and teachings of St. Alberto Hurtado as an inspiration for Jesuits reflecting upon the complex challenges that our mission for faith and justice poses to us today. The example manifested in Hurtado's life found its foundation in a supernatural outlook that can be summarized in three points: the link between the social apostolate and the deification of the human person in Christ; the social apostolate as a participation in the Mystical Body of Christ; and the essential relation between the virtues of justice and charity. I would like to begin, therefore, with the life of Alberto Hurtado as an illustration of these doctrines in action, followed by a closer examination and analysis of these foundational points. The turbu-

lent world of St. Alberto—a period of history that included the Great Depression, the Second World War, and the constant threat of class conflicts and growing poverty—reflects many of the fears and horrors that Jesuits confront around the world today. This remarkable priest and religious, who strove to be “an image of the Teacher,” has much to offer his brothers laboring in the contemporary fields for Christ.

II. The Man and His Works

The Years of Preparation

Luis Alberto Miguel Hurtado Cruchaga was born in Viña del Mar, Chile, on January 22, 1901. His father, Alberto Hurtado Lorrain, a minor land owner, died when Alberto was only four years old, leaving the family in serious financial straits. His mother, Ana, moved the family to Santiago, where they depended upon various relatives for housing and support.

Though Hurtado’s family had to suffer some early years of financial instability, as a child he enjoyed the love and support of family and community. He began studies in the Colegio San Ignacio in Santiago in 1909, where he came to know the Jesuits. During these years of study and work, he exhibited a strong desire for forming a Christian character and for knowing God’s will for his life.

After graduating from San Ignacio, he studied law in the Catholic University and graduated in 1921, having written a thesis titled “The Regulation of Child Labor.” One friend during this period described the remarkable character of young Hurtado.

The virtues were flourishing and solidifying in him, shining forth. Above all, one could note his charity and his unquenchable zeal, which he had to moderate repeatedly in order not to arrive at the point of exaggeration. He could not see someone in pain without seeking a remedy, someone in need without seeking a solution.¹

During these university years he discerned his vocation, considering both marriage and religious life. In the end, however, the call to serve under the banner of Christ in the Society of Jesus would prove to

¹ A. Lavín, S.J., M. Holley, and M. Larrain, eds. *Biografía y testimonios del Padre Alberto Hurtado* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salesiana, 2005), 27.

be God's will. He delayed entry for two years, however, in order to settle the financial problems of his mother. At last, in 1923, he entered the novitiate in Chillán. In a letter composed during his second year of the novitiate to his friend Larraín Errázuriz, Hurtado expressed his joy in being a Jesuit at last.

Finally I am a Jesuit, happier and more content than anyone could be on earth. I am overflowing with joy and I do not tire giving thanks to our Lord for having led me to this paradise, where one is able to dedicate his life to Him twenty-four hours a day, serving Him and loving Him at all hours. Here all action bears fruit through the act of obedience. You cannot understand the state of my soul during these days. I could tell you that I almost cried with joy. The life of a Jesuit novice is, speaking in a Christian manner, the most heavenly in this world.²

The novitiate was followed by the juniorate in Córdoba, Argentina (1925–27) and further studies in the Colegio Maximo in Barcelona, Spain (1927–31). The declaration of the Second Spanish Republic in April 1931

He believed that the struggle for a just social order, rooted in Christian principles, gave witness to this truth and, through the grace of Christ, invested the natural with the supernatural gift of charity.

and the subsequent anti-Catholic attacks in the country, forced his transfer to Louvain in order to complete his theology studies (1931–33). During these years of intensive study, Hurtado developed a reputation for his joyful character, his love of prayer and Eucharistic adoration, and his great devotion to

Mary. In the words of one contemporary: "I met him again in Barcelona in 1931, and after a few hours of welcomed company, I was able to contemplate the transfiguration of Alberto Hurtado into a true saint, both as a religious and future priest."³

The years in Louvain also proved decisive in the formation of Hurtado for his future work as an educator and promoter of Catholic social justice. His rector, the future Superior General Jean Baptiste Janssens, S.J., told the zealous student, "You must take interest in the problems of

² Alberto Hurtado, *Cartas* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salesiana, 2003), 35.

³ *Biografía y testimonios*, 37.

the world in which you are going to work.”⁴ The young Jesuit took these words to heart and made sure that his intellectual formation received in the walls of the theologate would feed his reflection upon the critical social issues of the day. He found particular inspiration for his growing desires in such papal encyclicals as *Divini illius magistri* (1929) and *Quadragesimo anno* (1931), as well as in the theology of the Mystical Body as developed in the work of Emile Mersch, S.J. Through prayer and labor he acquired a thirst to translate his faith into great deeds that would give witness to Christ and transform the world into the Teacher’s image. In a letter on the Sacred Heart, composed during this period, Hurtado expressed this need to realize the power of Christian love and devotion through concrete acts of charity.

I believe that we must live the devotion to the Sacred Heart on the basis of a charity without limits, of a charity refined from every angle. It must make our brothers feel good in the presence of brothers and must make others feel moved not by our words, but by our human-divine charity for and with them. For this charity must be human, if it wants to be divine. In this age of skepticism that now reigns, I do not believe that there is any other medium, humanly speaking, to preach Jesus Christ among those who do not believe other than that of the charity which is of Christ.⁵

In this brief reflection one sees already the distinct character of Hurtado’s future work in the social apostolate: the desire to incarnate the love of Christ, to draw all into the life of the Mystical Body, to give life to the world through the pulse of the Sacred Heart. “For this charity must be human, if it wants to be divine.” Or in the words of Ignatius, “Love ought to manifest itself more by deeds than by words.”⁶

On August 24, 1933, Hurtado was ordained to the priesthood in Louvain. The joy of the new priest is palpable in a letter to a brother Jesuit, Sergio Salas.

Now I am a priest of the Lord! You will well understand my immense happiness and with all sincerity I can tell you that I am *fully*

⁴ José Maria Guerrero, S.J., “El P. Alberto Hurtado: Un gigante de la justicia y la caridad,” *Golletos con Él* 259 (Sept. 2005): v.

⁵ Hurtado, *Cartas*, 43.

⁶ *Spiritual Exercises*, no. 230.

happy. God has granted me a great grace since I have lived contentedly in all the houses through which I have passed and in all the companions that I have had. I consider this a grace. But now, in receiving priestly ordination *in aeternum*, my joy has arrived at its peak, or as we might say in philosophy, potency has arrived at act. Now I desire nothing more than to exercise my ministry with the greatest plenitude possible in the interior life and to have an exterior activity compatible with the former. The secret of this adaptation and of its success is devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, that is, to the overflowing Love of Our Lord that Jesus, as God and man, holds for us and which shines forth in His entire life.⁷

His ordination gave the final form to his unfolding vocation. From that point on, Alberto Hurtado desired that all his actions might flow from the grace of his priesthood. As a Jesuit he would imitate the self-emptying of Christ the priest through an outpouring of love incarnated in words and deeds.

Hurtado stayed on in Belgium for two more years in order to complete his doctorate in education at the University of Louvain, writing a thesis on the American pragmatist John Dewey (1935). While working on his dissertation, he received a commission from the Chilean government to study European educational institutions. This gave him the opportunity to visit—in addition to Belgium—Italy, France, Germany, and England. His observations made during this period, combined with his experience in Chile, would eventually lead him to advocate an educational reform, rooted in Christian principles, that promoted the formation of character in youth. Modern education, in his analysis, had adopted the reigning perception of man as a mere cog in a social machine, failing to form the person for the common good. The disorder and injustice found in so many nations emerged from the failure to educate *persons* for a higher end. “The cause of the actual crisis is neither economic nor political. It is above all *moral* and comes from a general lack of education. Wealth and pleasure govern a world of universal irresponsibility and ferocious individualism. It is time to

⁷Hurtado, *Cartas*, 42.

form militias of upright persons, armed with solid principles and completely resolved to form men!”⁸

Teaching and Catholic Action

He returned to Chile in 1935, after an eight-year absence. Now a priest and a fully formed Jesuit, he poured all of his reflection and training into confronting the spiritual and material malaise in his homeland. There was much to do. Though a stable constitution had been in place since 1925, the state was fractured between left-wing forces of Marxist inspiration, which had entered into the government in 1938, and a conservative party which considered itself the authentic voice of the Catholic Church and yet shunned the teachings found in the Church’s social doctrines. The civil instability also divided Catholic voices in the public square, even leading to a division within the conservative party (the creation of the Falange Nacional).⁹ Finally, Chile faced enormous social problems, including acute poverty, moral laxity, worker exploitation, a rising number of abortions, and family breakdown.¹⁰

Though he would hold a variety of positions in his short life as an active Jesuit in Chile, one can perceive a common thread that would unite all of Hurtado’s ministries: the desire for the salvation of souls and unity with the Incarnate Word, Jesus Christ. He believed that the struggle for a just social order, rooted in Christian principles, gave witness to this truth and, through the grace of Christ, invested the natural with the supernatural gift of charity. Thus Hurtado sought to

Though Hurtado certainly sought to avoid getting involved with party politics, he did note a tendency in himself toward overwork and excessive activism.

⁸Alberto Hurtado, *Una verdadera education* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salesiana, 2005), 76.

⁹Jaime Castellón, S.J., *Padre Alberto Hurtado, S.J.: Su espiritualidad* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Don Bosco, 1998), 35–36.

¹⁰In writing on the issue of clandestine abortions, Hurtado spoke of the growing problem *worldwide*. “The number of declared abortions is alarming. This crime of homicide, as real as any other form of homicide, occurs hundreds of thousands of times a year” (Alberto Hurtado, *¿Es Chile un país Católico?* [Santiago, Chile: Editorial Splendor, 1941], 18).

incarnate the interior gifts that he received in his spiritual and sacramental life through service to the Church, while striving to lead others to the same outpouring of grace upon a creation yearning for union with God. He wrote concerning a “healthy Christian spirituality”:

A healthy spirituality is one that consists not only in pious practices or in sentimentalisms, but in allowing oneself to be entirely taken up by Christ, who fills his life. It is a spirituality that nourishes itself in deep contemplation, in which one learns to know God and his brothers, the men of one’s own time. It is a spirituality that will allow the apostolic victories that render the Church a leaven in the world.¹¹

Every apostolic endeavor undertaken by Hurtado would aim at “rendering the Church a leaven in world” and incarnating the truth of Christ.

Upon his return, Hurtado began teaching in the Catholic University and in the Pontifical Seminary in Santiago (1936–41). His teaching, combined with such other tasks as an examiner of postulants, province treasurer and consultor, and spiritual director to students, stretched him thin. Yet, he seemed to thrive on the intense activity, since at last he could let loose the energy that he had been storing through many years of prayer, study, and reflection. In his spiritual formation of students, he particularly tried to lead them to a fuller living of the Christian moral life through prayer and the virtues.

In 1941, however, he took on a new apostolate that would prove to be the ideal field for his talents and spiritual vigor—the Advisor to Youth in the Catholic Action (C.A.) movement. The Catholic Action movement had been promoted by Pope Pius XI in 1927 as “the participation and collaboration of the laity in the Apostolic hierarchy,”¹² and Alberto glad-

¹¹ Alberto Hurtado, *La búsqueda de Dios* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salesiana, 2005), 34.

¹² Pius XI, “Discourse to Italian Catholic Young Women,” *L’Osservatore Romano* (March 27, 1927): 14. The Pope would repeat this definition in the encyclical *Non abbiamo bisogno* (June 29, 1931), 5, in which he took an anti-Fascist stance and addressed Mussolini’s suppression of Catholic Action. “It has been for us an exquisite satisfaction to see the Catholic Action organizations of all countries, both near and far, united round the common Father, inspired by a single spirit of faith, of filial sorrow and of generous impulses, all expressing their astonishment and grief in seeing Catholic Action societies persecuted and assailed here, in the very centre of the Apostolic Hierarchy, where its ‘raison d’être’ is strongest. Here in Italy, as in all parts of the world where Catholic Action

ly embraced the task of realizing this goal in Chile. He sought to invest the youth of Catholic Action with a solid spiritual and catechetical formation that would inspire them to transform the world for the Reign of God through direct engagement with societal structures.¹³ In short, he desired that they be “contemplatives in action.” In a circular letter from 1941, Hurtado outlined his program:

We do not tire in inculcating in youth who generously interest themselves in the good of Chile, opportunely and inopportunely, this idea: that they will be able to do nothing great if first they do not transform themselves into integral Christians, into men who live fully for Christ and aspire to live life as Christ would live it if he were in their place. . . . The great crisis of our nation is a crisis of moral values, in other words, a crisis of Christianity, and this cannot be solved except through men who maintain the integrity of moral values that express a faith fully known and lived in all circumstances and moments.¹⁴

Hurtado worked to make Catholic Action a true spiritual movement that would take on the debilitating problems in Chilean society. He established C.A. groups throughout the country, gave retreats, and organized congresses. In 1943 he founded *Servicio de Cristo Rey* for those C.A. members “who aspire, with the grace of God, to live fully their faith and to accept all the sacrifices that the apostolate of Catholic Action requires for the extension of the Reign of God.”¹⁵ Members agreed to attend daily Mass, to do a half hour of spiritual reading and meditation a day, to do a three-day retreat with the *Spiritual Exercises* each year, and to commit themselves to regular confession and spiritual direction. The Eucharist,

exists, Catholic Action is true to its solemn and authentic definition. Obeying Our watchful and assiduous instructions (which you, Venerable Brethren, have so largely seconded), it does not wish to be nor can be anything other than ‘the participation and the collaboration of the laity with the Apostolic Hierarchy.’”

¹³This approach reflects Hurtado’s basic understanding of the realization of the Reign of God: “The Reign of God, which we are obliged to extend and preach in virtue of our faith and of the explicit commandments of Christ, presupposes two elements for its extension: the grace of the Lord, without which nothing can be done in the supernatural order, and free human cooperation” (Hurtado, *¿Es Chile un país Católico?* 48).

¹⁴ Id., *Cartas*, 91–92.

¹⁵ *Biografía y testimonios*, 61.

however, always stood at the heart of their formation. "One who receives the Eucharist strips himself of his ego and comes to have no other life but Jesus, the divine life—and there is nothing greater than this."¹⁶

His work, however, displeased some, both in and out of the Society of Jesus. Many of his Jesuit brethren accused him of being too worldly in his methods and of acting as a "Lone Ranger" apart from any oversight by superiors.¹⁷ Some members of the hierarchy also believed that Hurtado was mixing too much social activism and politics into C.A., especially in support of the recently founded conservative Falange party. He responded to some of these charges in a letter to Bishop Eduardo Larraín Cordovez in 1942.

In returning to Santiago after a long trip for Catholic Action in the South of the country, I met with Fr. Morales Delpiano in the college of San Ignacio, who, I believe, fulfilled a debt of charity in informing me that some were accusing me of mixing in politics and favoring the *Falange*, and that these rumors had reached your ears. . . . It is completely unfounded that I have engaged in political activities of any kind and that I have done anything to recommend or favor the *Falange*, or even to impede it. I strove to fulfill to the letter the norms of the National Episcopacy over the abstention of clerics from the struggles of party politics. . . . The National Council, under my inspiration as advisor, has sent out a circular letter regarding Catholic Action and politics which offers a summary of the pontifical documents and those of the National Episcopacy on this point.¹⁸

Though Hurtado certainly sought to avoid getting involved with party politics, he did note a tendency in himself toward overwork and excessive activism. His zeal to motivate youth to apply their Christian values to problems in society at times even led to a weakening of his spiritual life. Some years earlier, in 1936, after a retreat, he wrote:

I'm swept away too much by action, and the result is that I don't pay attention to the interior life, the necessity of which I don't feel

¹⁶Hurtado, *Cartas*, 95

¹⁷On Hurtado's struggles with brother Jesuits, see M. Ortega, *El Padre Hurtado: Un maestro para nuestro tiempo* (Random House: Santiago, Chile, 2005), 98–99; 202–3.

¹⁸Hurtado, *Cartas*, 93.

except in moments of great silence. I'm tempted to make a renewable vow each month to regulate my time in such a way that I may always do my prayer before the Mass and to say my breviary on my knees before the Blessed Sacrament.¹⁹

To overcome this personal weakness, he developed a particularly rigid spiritual program for himself, rooted in the Eucharist and in prayer.²⁰

In the end, however, Hurtado renounced his leadership in Catholic Action in 1944, after losing the support of the General Advisor, Bishop A. Salinas. Salinas feared what he perceived to be a cult of personality surrounding the young Jesuit, as well as an "activist" turn in C.A. that could ultimately lead to factions within the movement. Though some members of the hierarchy sought to dissuade him from his resignation, Hurtado believed strongly that it was time to move on. He wrote to Bishop Salinas: "I came to realize quite some time

In 1951 he also founded Mensaje, a "religious-social-philosophical" journal that is still in publication.

ago that I cannot count on your confidence 'from within,' that is, a complete confidence, the only form that one can accept between one friend and another, as you and I have been and as I desire to continue being." Yet, Hurtado had left his mark on the movement, as one contemporary collaborator in C.A. attested: "Father Hurtado was a man of unity. He formed our great internal communion. He united, in the essentials, thousands of young people who think in many different ways about contingent issues, always teaching them charity, comprehension, and joy."²¹

¹⁹ Castellón, *Hurtado*, 60.

²⁰ In a retreat meditation from 1941, Hurtado would write: "Jesus, after thirty years of prayer, goes into the desert and passes many nights in prayer while preparing for the day. Woe to the apostle who does not do the same. He will become a vender of human things and of personal passions, under the appearance of spiritual ministry" (Alberto Hurtado, *Un fuego que enciende otros fuegos: Páginas escogidas del Padre Alberto Hurtado* [Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salesiana, 2005], 30–31). For more on Hurtado's spiritual struggle, see P. Cebollada and C. Coupeau, "La novedad de una tradición: Dos testimonios," *Manresa* 77 (October–November 2005): 387–89.

²¹ *Biografía y testimonios*, 71.

Care of the Homeless

He would not remain inactive for long. On a rainy night in October 1944, he encountered a homeless man in the street, half frozen and ill. The chance meeting moved him to tears, because there was no Catholic home to which he could bring him. Some days later, on October 18, speaking at a women's retreat, Hurtado described the incident and spontaneously poured out his heart, giving form to what would become his greatest apostolic legacy.

Christ wanders through our streets in the person of so many poor and ill, those deprived of even a wretched domicile. Christ is huddling underneath the bridges in the person of so many children who have no one to call father, who lack, for many years, the kiss of a mother upon the forehead. . . . Christ has no home! [*Cristo no tiene hogar!*] Do we not wish to give Him ours, we who have the happiness of having a comfortable home, abundant food, means to educate and provide for our children?²²

After the service, the women insisted on giving him donations to help the poor in the streets. From that moment, he turned his attention more and more toward the problem of homelessness and poverty, planning a network of services—El Hogar de Cristo—that would not only provide temporary relief for the poor, but also would help bring about concrete solutions. During a six-month tour of the United States in 1945–46, Hurtado was in constant correspondence with collaborators back home regarding the development of El Hogar de Cristo, sharing his observations of programs in the U.S. and suggesting possibilities for Chile. From Washington, D.C., he would write: “When one sees this authentic democracy and thinks of how men, such as Lincoln and the current President of the republic [Truman] came from the lower class of the society, one is encouraged to hope that similar miracles might occur for our people, who have many superior aspects to this one, although in other ways less so.”²³

El Hogar de Cristo would eventually take on various kinds of social apostolates, though all aimed at alleviating poverty and providing the destitute with genuine independence and dignity within society. The

²² Guerrero, *Un gigante*, v–vi.

²³ Hurtado, *Cartas*, 145.

genius of Hurtado manifested itself in the collaborative nature of the enterprise: people from all walks of life came to contribute to the efforts and the poor themselves often took on roles of responsibility within the organization. One of the earliest works, a shelter on Chorillos Street in Santiago, eventually grew to about eighty beds. Another dormitory on Tocornal Street provided a home for over a hundred women and children. These "shelters," at Hurtado's insistence, were always to be called "homes," places that would provide an authentic loving and nurturing atmosphere for those so used to rejection and derision. "And like the mustard seed in the Gospel parable, [El Hogar de Cristo] grew in order to give a roof, food, and, above all, love to so many who only had scorn for their milk, misfortune for their bread, and an orphanage for their only family."²⁴

Thus "social humanism" demands the comprehension of the human person as a dynamic, free, rational being who is created for a supernatural end—a supernatural end manifested and realized in Jesus.

As an advisor and spiritual guide to those working for El Hogar de Cristo, Hurtado always taught the importance of combining a solid spiritual life with the apostolate. The spiritual contribution of collaborators shared equal importance with the physical works. In a letter to a sister who was lamenting her failure to give more time to the movement, he described the role of the Communion of the Saints, an essential part of his spirituality.

Up until now you have helped the children with your work, your lessons, your affection; now you continue helping them with your affection, your patience, your prayer, your very sincere desire to continue doing them good. There is a truly consoling dogma, that of the Communion of Saints. It teaches us that there is not a single one of our actions that lacks a social value. Never do we merit solely for ourselves, since all our actions hold a deep social value. In doing good, in suffering with patience, in praying, we always profit for others, for the entire Church militant on earth, for those

²⁴From the funeral homily for Alberto Hurtado, given by Archbishop Manuel Larraín, in *Biografía y testimonios*, 173.

waiting in purgatory; we give joy to the just in heaven, and, in a special way, we help those who are most intimately tied to us. In this way you continue working for *Hogar* not only with affection, but also with the same, or even greater, efficacy than before.²⁵

The ministry to abandoned youth became one of the major contributions of El Hogar de Cristo. Hurtado would often work late into the night gathering children from the streets and bringing them back to one of the homes. Once there, the children would receive housing, food, clothing, and education for future work and independence. The attentiveness of Hurtado to their needs was demonstrated in his establishment of a “receiving house” for the youth. He had noticed that when new children arrived—hungry, dirty and confused—they would often be held in contempt by the older children who had already adapted to their new environment. The “receiving house” served as a transitional center for new members of the community, where they would be welcomed and prepared for full integration into a home.²⁶

As the network of homes and educational services of El Hogar de Cristo grew, Hurtado noted the hunger of some collaborators for a deeper spirituality and sense of incorporation. In 1950 he founded the *Fraternidad del Hogar de Cristo*, in which members could make private promises of poverty, chastity, and obedience. The members of the *Fraternidad*, dedicated to the work of El Hogar de Cristo, were not religious, and thus their promises did not have a juridical weight. Yet, the fraternity did reflect a genuine commitment to a simplicity of life, a faithfulness to the Church, and a desire to deepen one’s spiritual life through prayer and acts of charity.²⁷

Another important initiative was the *Acción Sindical Chilena* (A.SI. CH.), an organization founded in 1947, with the permission of both Father General Janssens and of Pope Pius XII, to promote the right to organized labor in Chile. Hurtado attempted to mobilize leaders from among the workers, intellectuals, government representatives, and members of the hierarchy in order to address the abuse of laborers and the need for a more just economic order. Despite resistance from some corners, A.SI.

²⁵ Hurtado, *Cartas*, 157.

²⁶ Castellón, *Hurtado*, 103.

²⁷ *Ibid.* 108–14.

CH. succeeded in bringing the much needed voice of the Church into the debate over the dignity of workers. In a letter to his vice-provincial in 1949, Hurtado described the objectives of A.SI.CH.

[The objective of A.SI.CH.] is to awaken in Christian workers the awareness of organizing unions, and to gather the Christians who are already unionized in order that, with a full formation, they might struggle within the unions for the implementation of a Christian social order. . . . A.SI.CH. is not a movement of Catholic Action, nor does it claim to be an apostolate for winning individuals for the Church. It is a movement of economic and social action that gathers Catholics, as well as those who desire to implement the social order that the encyclicals envision.²⁸

During these years of intense apostolic activity, Hurtado also became known as a writer and editor of some importance. Some of his works, such as *¿Es Chile un país Católico?* (1941), *Humanismo social* (1947), *Sindicalismo: historia, teoría, práctica* (1950) and *Moral social* (1952, published posthumously), inspired debate over the Church's role in the social apostolate and politics. Others,

such as *La vida afectiva en la adolescencia* (1938) and *Puntos de educación* (1942), addressed issues regarding the formation of youth and the moral crisis in Chilean families. These books, along with numerous articles and talks, made him a significant figure both in and out of Catholic circles. In 1951 he also

A just social order that recognizes the supernatural end of man cannot emerge through totalitarian means or the brutal elimination of recalcitrant citizens, but through free cooperation of citizens aiming at the common good.

founded *Mensaje*, a "religious-social-philosophical" journal that is still in publication. In his inaugural editorial, Hurtado explained the mission of the new journal. "[The journal] has been baptized *Mensaje*, alluding to the message that the Son of God brought from heaven to earth, the resonances of which our journal desires to prolong and apply to our nation of Chile and to our turbulent times."²⁹

²⁸ Hurtado, *Cartas*, 231–32.

²⁹ *Biografía y testimonios*, 91. For more on the founding of *Mensaje*, see Hurtado, *Un fuego*, 23–24.

In May of 1952 Hurtado's health began to deteriorate, and a visit to the clinic at the Catholic University confirmed the worst—he had pancreatic cancer. In late May and in July he suffered two heart attacks. On August 14, 1952, he wrote a final letter to the community of El Hogar de Cristo from his hospital bed.: "Finally, as I return to God my Father, I entrust to you one last desire: that you work to create a climate of true love and respect for the poor, because the poor man is Christ. 'That which you do for the least, you do it for me.'"³⁰ Four days later Alberto Hurtado, at the age of fifty-one, died. During sixteen years of intense activity he had changed thousands of lives and had established a pastoral legacy that continues to serve the Church and the world today.

III. Three Essential Teachings

Alberto Hurtado, above all, taught by example. On the one hand, he diligently prepared himself for his future work through prayer and intense study of the Scriptures, the Tradition, Christian spirituality, and secular disciplines as well. He continued to nourish the fruit of these years of formation through a spiritual life rooted in the Eucharist and daily prayer. On the other hand, he read "the signs of the times" and applied his zeal for Christ to the concrete problems of his day. His interior formation incarnated itself in great deeds. "For this charity must be human, if it wants to be divine."

Three essential doctrines animated Alberto Hurtado's works and thought. These are teachings that made his approach to the social apostolate distinct from any secular struggle for justice and, in the end, made his contributions so significant and long lasting: the deification of the human person, the Mystical Body, and the relationship between justice and charity. These principles provide the spiritual and theological inspiration for Hurtado's remarkable apostolic success.

The Deification of the Human Person

The doctrine of deification (*theosis* in Greek, *deificatio* in Latin) states nothing less than that the human person has been created to participate in the divine life—the human person has been formed "to become divine." This teaching has received a great deal of attention in recent years

³⁰Hurtado, *Cartas*, 319.

in both scholarly works and books of popular spirituality. Long considered to be primarily an Eastern doctrine, more recent scholarship has come to recognize its influence in the Western tradition as well.³¹

In the tradition, the Church has come to define this doctrine in terms that avoid falling into the heresies of pantheism or the annihilation of human nature. In general, we can distinguish six points: (1) Deification is realized through the Incarnation of the divine Word. Jesus Christ, in the union of divine and human natures—“without confusion, without change, without division, without separation” (Chalcedon)—is the model and source of the deification of humanity, (2) the deified person does not become God by essence, but by participation or adoption, (3) in the union of deification, the integrity of the two natures, human and divine, remains intact, (4) in deification a genuine and authentic union occurs between God and the human person, (5) the human person cannot realize deification on his own, since it is beyond any natural power. The person requires the deifying power of grace for the elevation to divine union, and (6) God does not force this union upon the human person. Each person must freely cooperate with the action of grace through an abandonment in love to the absolute goodness of God and through growth in virtue. In the words of C. S. Lewis, for God “merely to override the human will . . . would be for Him useless. He cannot ravish. He can only woo.”³²

Hurtado’s works contain numerous references to this doctrine of the Church, making it an essential part of his apostolic vision. In fact, he regularly emphasized the centrality of deification for understanding the human person in reference to God and Society. He summarizes the teaching in his introduction to *Humanismo social*.

³¹One may consider the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which offers a catena of scriptural and patristic citations on deification: “‘The Word became flesh to make us “partakers of the divine nature” (2 Pet. 1:4). ‘For this is why the Word became man, and the Son of God became the Son of man: so that man, by entering into communion with the Word and thus receiving divine sonship, might become a son of God’ (St. Irenaeus). ‘For the Son of God became man so that we might become God’ (St. Athanasius). ‘The only-begotten Son of God, wanting to make us sharers in his divinity, assumed our nature, so that he, made man, might make men gods’ (St. Thomas Aquinas),” CCCG, 460. For two excellent recent introductions see N. Russell, *The Doctrine of Deification in the Greek Patristic Tradition* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004); S. Finlan and V. Kharlamov, eds. *Theosis: Deification in Christian theology* (Eugene, Or.: James Clarke and Co., 2006).

³²C. S. Lewis, *The Screwtape Letters* (New York: Time Inc., 1961), 38.

Christianity, in its foundations, is the message of the deification of man, of his liberation from sin, of his return to grace of his reception of genuine divine sonship. . . . We obtain this noted favor of the elevation of man to the supernatural order because the Son of God, in uniting Himself to human nature, through it elevated all of humankind. Our race is united to the principle of divinity and we reach this through our union with God. Christ is the first born of a multitude of brothers whom God makes participants of his nature and with whom he shares his own divine life. Through grace men come to be what Jesus calls the new commandment. From the moment of the Incarnation and through the Incarnation all of us are united at the right hand of Christ and many have [already] reached there; only the condemned are excluded from this union.³³

Hurtado offers here a succinct statement of the classical doctrine of deification: the elevation of man to the divine, the adoption as sons and daughters of God, the participation in God's very nature, the centrality of

Mercy, purity of heart, chastity, and above all charity—all these virtues and more reflect God's image in the human person.

the Incarnation, the free acceptance or rejection of the divine gift. What makes this summary so important, however, is its place in one of his most important books, *Humanismo social*. It comes right at the beginning of the work, in which Hurtado

establishes the ground for all social morality. Thus "social humanism" demands the comprehension of the human person as a dynamic, free, rational being who is created for a supernatural end—a supernatural end manifested and realized in Jesus.³⁴ From this foundation, Hurtado

³³ Alberto Hurtado, *Humanismo social* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salesiana, 2004), 23.

³⁴ In part, Hurtado's understanding of deification emerges from his experience of the Spiritual Exercises. Through the Exercises one seeks to imitate Christ and to incarnate him in one's life, to become like the God-made-man. "Like Ignatius, [Hurtado] synthesized the call of his Lord, who invited him to follow Him in suffering and in glory, to continue His, work, to be always with Him and finally to be as He is" (F. Montes Matte, "Alberto Hurtado: Un modo moderno de vivir la espiritualidad Ignaciana," in *Alberto Hurtado: Memoria y actualidad*, edited by F. L. Fernández [Santiago, Chile: Universidad Alberto Hurtado, 2005], 404).

draws three important conclusions that remain consistent throughout his works.

First, in responding to the social needs of the human person and in addressing the injustices of society, the Church must always remain conscious of the supernatural end of the human person. At first glance, such a teaching may seem counterproductive. If we focus too much on the “supernatural” end of man, shall we not simply overlook his essential, natural needs, clothing, for example, housing, food, and so forth? Yet, Hurtado insists on the importance of this Christian anthropological vision.

The richness of our social doctrine resides entirely in the principle of the dignity of the human person in the natural order, and much more in his elevation to the supernatural order. If this doctrine is a dead letter, we shall have nothing to oppose the consistent teaching of Communism, which is firmly logical, while at the same time departing from an erroneous supposition.³⁵

A focus upon the supernatural end of man, according to Hurtado, affirms his personal dignity and the dignity of the entire natural order. This principle becomes the essential basis for discernment in the social apostolate.

With this teaching, Hurtado directly contrasts Christian social doctrine with Communism. While Communism envisions a materialist denouement in the classless society, Christianity understands the unfolding natural order within a more comprehensive divine calling. It should be stressed that he includes “the dignity of the human person in the natural order” within this dynamic elevation to the divine. This means that Christianity does not conceive of a clean break between the “natural” and the “supernatural” orders, even though, paradoxically, this divine elevation is a gift that exceeds any created nature. Christian social doctrine, therefore, cannot simply overlook man’s natural needs in order to seek divine union, but must understand these needs as an integral part of this vocation. In short, while Communism shapes its ethic according to a truncated version of the human person and creation, Christianity seeks a social order according to a natural human dignity that fully unfolds only in an environment charged by grace.

³⁵Hurtado, *La búsqueda*, 157.

Only Christianity does justice to the human vocation through its doctrine of deification. The human person has a greater calling than a mere temporal classless society: he is destined for divine union. Each and every human person is a potential "god."

The plans of God are plans of sanctity, justice and love. To penetrate these plans is to enter not into one, but into the only plan that merits to be called real: into the great, eternal reality of being. In order to make him his son, God creates man; in order to divinize him by grace, in order to speak in him his Word; in order to unite him intimately to the divinity, so that the divine nature could be present in him, as the nature of the Father is in the Son.³⁶

Every person must therefore relate to his neighbor as another person sharing in a common vocation in God. One can never reduce the other to an object, to a service, or to a mere creature passing by. Further-

In the encyclical, the Pope taught that the faithful in the Church are mystically united to Christ, the head, and so form one body in which the members participate in the graces flowing from Jesus.

more, in seeking to form a common civil community, Christians must reflect the freedom and dignity that deification in Christ entails. "Whoever wants to persuade another of something must begin by persuading this 'someone' that he is a sincere friend who desires his good. The journey to the head

begins in the heart."³⁷ A just social order that recognizes the supernatural end of man cannot emerge through totalitarian means or the brutal elimination of recalcitrant citizens, but through free cooperation of citizens aiming at the common good.

Second, the doctrine of deification inspires the Church to form a social order conducive to the personal spiritual growth of the human person. The sanctification of the world is the primary mission of the Church: the Church exists that all persons might be one in Christ.³⁸ This

³⁶ Ibid., 254.

³⁷ Id., *Humanismo social*, 148.

³⁸ "The reason for the existence of the Church is the sanctification of the world. It desires to extend itself in order to extend sanctity to persons. There is no other mis-

must always remain at the heart of the Church's identity in the world. Yet, again, this does not mean that the Church looks in on itself, since the human person grows in holiness *within* the world. "One is deceived if he pretends to be a Christian, and 'regularly attends the temple,' but never goes to the shelter to alleviate the misery of the poor. . . . One is deceived if he regularly thinks of heaven, but forgets the miseries of the earth in which he lives."³⁹ Human beings are not angels; they are body and spirit, and therefore live and grow within a community of persons. The Church, therefore, embraces the responsibility to form a just society that allows for dignity and freedom.

The social ills that the Church needs to address are many, and these ills obscure the authenticity and joy of the Christian message. Hurtado looked upon his own times with a critical eye, cataloging the wounds that only the Christian faith could cure.

It is the misery of the world that gives it such anxiety. The insanity of men, their ignorance, their ambitions, their cowardice; the egoism of peoples, the egoism of classes; the stubbornness of the bourgeoisie who do not understand their moral mediocrity; the ardent and pure call of the masses; the narrow vision and, at times, hate of their bosses; the hatred of justice; the massive ranches and pig farms; the insufficient salaries used so poorly; alcoholism, tuberculosis, syphilis, promiscuity, unclean air; the banal spectacle, the carnal spectacle; so many bars, so many questionable cafes; such necessity to forget, such evasion; so many second jobs, such loss of the forms of life. There is as much mediocrity in the rich, as in the poor.⁴⁰

These ills that plague the social order, according to Hurtado, spew forth from the deep wound in the hearts of all men: the wound of sin. "Sin is ugliness: it destroys harmony. The work of God is beauty and

sion of the Church: its mission is not political domination, the construction of impressive buildings, the celebration of grand congresses. All the Church does is only for helping the sanctification of souls, which is the only proper end of the Church" (Hurtado, *La búsqueda*, 138).

³⁹ Ibid, 130.

⁴⁰ Ibid, 69.

harmony; sin is disharmony, a strident note."⁴¹ The Church brings the only hope for freedom from this horror and so she seeks to enter society in order to reveal the divine. "The Church is conscious of being the manifestation of the supernatural, the manifestation of the divine, the manifestation of sanctity. She is, under the appearance of passing things, the new reality brought to earth by Christ, the divinity that shows itself under a terrestrial cover."⁴² In seeking justice, in promoting the dignity of the human person, in addressing the crises of the times, the Church fulfills her mission of calling all persons to their true vocation: union with God. The transforming presence of the Church in the world adumbrates the wondrous transformation of the person in Christ.

Hurtado promoted a social order that reveals the goodness of God and encourages the free response to the divine invitation to man. It promotes growth in the virtues and the avoidance of vice. Thus excessive wealth and oppressive poverty encourage the vices of greed and pride in the rich, and envy and avarice in the poor. Squalor and over-crowded living conditions lead to sins of immodesty and impurity. Obscene luxury and comfort encourage sloth and spiritual mediocrity. While the social environment cannot be used as an excuse for personal sins, it certainly provides the circumstances for growth in virtue and vice. The doctrine of deification therefore demands that the Church seek to promote those conditions that best allow for the sanctification of persons: a society that promotes justice and the divinely endowed dignity of man.⁴³

Finally, the doctrine of deification requires that each person, in cooperation with grace, strive to acquire the "divine" characteristics manifested in the person of Jesus Christ, namely, the virtues expressed in God's love for humanity.⁴⁴ Mercy, purity of heart, chastity, and above all charity—all these virtues and more reflect God's image in the human person. Thus, while man depends entirely on grace for his union with

⁴¹ Alberto Hurtado, *Un disparo a la eternidad: Retiros espirituales predicados por el Padre Alberto Hurtado* (Santiago, Chile: Editorial Salisiana, 2002), 50.

⁴² Id., *La búsqueda*, 135.

⁴³ On the effects of moral laxity upon the social order, see Hurtado, *Un fuego*, 30–31.

⁴⁴ "This [imitation of Jesus] does not consist only in a historical 'praxis,' or in speculation, or in an ethic, or in apostolic activism. Christianity supposes all these dimensions, but surpasses them in a total identification with Christ" (P. Castellón Covarrubias, "La centralidad de Jesucristo," in *Hurtado: Memoria y actualidad*, 363).

God, he must cooperate with God's supernatural aid through the spiritual struggle to grow in virtue and overcome vice.

This *personal* struggle to manifest fully the divine likeness, however, has *social* obligations and consequences. While speaking at a university forum, Hurtado said: "It is essential that every student understand that his acts have repercussions on others in the infinite vibrations of joy or sadness. This fact renders even the smallest action important, right down to the humblest virtue, since it never ceases to have social repercussions."⁴⁵ The failure to grow in holiness ripples out into society: a lack of personal chastity contributes to the exploitation of persons in prostitution and pornography; a personal refusal of mercy manifests itself in unjust structures; personal covetousness contributes to a culture bent on greed and conquest. Thus Hurtado stressed that deification, in its demand for personal cooperation with divine grace and growth in the likeness of Christ, must also be the essential basis for the social transformation of the world.

In the encyclical, the Pope taught that the faithful in the Church are mystically united to Christ, the head, and so form one body in which the members participate in the graces flowing from Jesus.

In conclusion, it should be noted that, regarding deification, Hurtado was no universalist. The doctrine of deification can lead some to the conclusion that, no matter what one does or does not do, he will ultimately be united with the divine. Hurtado did not fall into presumption by teaching that divine union was a *fait accompli* in Christ that now overrides the human freedom to accept or to reject God's invitation. Though he lived a life of hope in Jesus and possessed a truly joyous optimism, he stressed the need for personal conversion and an active faith.

On the one hand, in all of his works, he focused upon the beauty of God's plan and the hope for the fullness of life through the transformation in Christ. He encouraged his hearers to dream of the happiness that can only be found in God.

⁴⁵Hurtado, *Humanismo social*, 171.

God, who is beautiful, more than the rising sun; tender, more than the love of a mother; caring, intimate, more than the highest peak of love; strong, robust, magnificent in his greatness. Holy, holy, holy, without stain. What can I dream of in my rapture that is more maddening? This will be the reality in all that possesses beauty, and much more. . . . Understanding, tenderness, intimacy, companionship? . . . Yes! I shall have it and without stain!⁴⁶

Yet, the human person could, through sin, refuse the gift of divine union. "To sin is to die to all that gives life value, and to die in the state of sin is to die forever! No more happiness, no more reconciliation! The Church has condemned the mitigationists. This game involves everything, forever. It's no joke! One who loses this match, loses everything. To be saved and to see God is to live."⁴⁷

The shocking reminders of God's infinite beauty, love, and mercy, along with the horrifying consequences of freely refusing that love, give further impetus to living out actively one's faith. For one's own salvation and deification and for the salvation of others, one must translate the love of Christ into *deeds* that in turn transform society into a testimony to the wonders that await in divine union.

The Mystical Body of Christ

Hurtado's formative years in the Society witnessed a great flowering in the recovery of the doctrine of the Church as the Mystical Body of Christ. A teaching with Scriptural roots (for example, 1 Cor. 12: 12–15; Eph. 5:23; Col. 2:19), it provided a vision of the Church as a living unity in the person of Christ, a powerful image that responded to a world fragmented by a terrifying war and threatened by a growing technocracy. The Jesuit theologian Émile Mersch's major work, *The Whole Christ: The Historical Development of the Doctrine of the Mystical Body in Scripture and Tradition*, had a great influence on the young Hurtado.⁴⁸

⁴⁶Id., *Un disparo*, 58–59.

⁴⁷Ibid., 54–55.

⁴⁸Mersch highlighted the implications for the social apostolate in the doctrine of the Mystical Body. "The precepts of justice, of mutual love, and of sincerity, which enjoin us to treat others as we ourselves would like to be treated and to regard them as other selves, are precepts of union" (Émile Mersch, *The Whole Christ: The Historical Development of the Doctrine of the Mystical Body in Scripture and Tradition*, trans. John R. Kelley [Milwaukee: The Bruce Publishing Company, 1933], 122).

But it would be Pope Pius XII’s encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943) that would fully open up the importance of this teaching to a world suffering the horrors of World War II. The Pope sought to correct two problems in contemporary ecclesiology: the tendency to limit the Church to a hierarchical institution and the newer tendency to view her as a mystical entity that required no visible structures. This meant addressing “the so-called *popular naturalism*, which sees and wills to see in the Church nothing but a juridical and social union” and the “false *mysticism* creeping in, which, in its attempt to eliminate the immovable frontier that separates creatures from their Creator, falsifies the Sacred Scriptures.”⁴⁹

In the encyclical, the Pope taught that the faithful in the Church are mystically united to Christ, the head, and so form one body in which the members participate in the graces flowing from Jesus. In turn, they also build one another up through the intimate union. In this Mystical Body of the faithful, there are not two Churches, hierarchical and lay, but all share in and contribute to the union formed in Christ.

One must not think, however, that this ordered or “organic” structure of the body of the Church contains only hierarchical elements and with them is complete; or, as an opposite opinion holds, that it is composed only of those who enjoy charismatic gifts—though members gifted with miraculous powers will never be lacking in the Church. That those who exercise sacred power in this Body are its chief members must be maintained uncompromisingly. It is through them, by commission of the Divine Redeemer Himself, that Christ’s apostolate as Teacher, King and Priest is to endure. At the same time, when the Fathers of the Church sing the praises of this Mystical Body of Christ, with its ministries, its variety of ranks, its officers, its conditions, its orders, its duties, they are thinking not only of those who have received Holy Orders, but of all those too, who, following the evangelical counsels, pass their lives either actively among men, or hidden in the silence of the cloister, or who aim at combining the active and contemplative life according to their Institute; as also of those who, though living in the world, consecrate themselves wholeheartedly to spiritual or corporal works of mercy, and of those in the state of holy matrimony.⁵⁰

⁴⁹ Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, 9.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 17.

Since Vatican II, this teaching seems commonplace. Yet, during a brutal period of world conflict, the Pope's words offered an ecclesiology that awakened a new sense of solidarity and active participation among the faithful. *All* the faithful share in the deifying union of the Body, *all* share in the mission of the Church to extend and manifest Christ in the world. "It is the will of Jesus Christ that the whole body of the Church, no less than the individual members, should resemble Him."⁵¹

Hurtado applied the doctrine of the Mystical Body to his own mission in the social apostolate, demonstrating how the Church's intimate

According to Hurtado, too many Christians content themselves with giving from their excess, while ignoring gross injustices in their midst.

union in Christ required an active participation in the transformation of the world. Above all, he stressed that the Church is a supernatural society, since she receives her life from the Incarnate Word and gives life to human beings for their union

with God. The Church must always be understood with this sanctifying mission in mind: she is a society "penetrated and given life through the energies of Jesus."⁵²

In the supernatural order there exists another society, the Church. . . . The highest end of all human life is to enter into possession of the supernatural end, that is, to possess God personally, to know him and to love him for eternity. Everything else is for man nothing but a means and holds a secondary importance before this end. *Seek first the reign of God and his justice, all the rest will be given to you in addition* (Matt. 6:33). The Church is the society instituted by Je-

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 47. The Pope goes on to note the sacramental and ministerial significance of this union in the Mystical Body. "And we see this realized when, following in the footsteps of her Founder, the Church teaches, governs, and offers the divine Sacrifice. When she embraces the evangelical counsels she reflects the Redeemer's poverty, obedience and virginal purity. Adorned with institutes of many different kinds as with so many precious jewels, she represents Christ deep in prayer on the mountain, or preaching to the people, or healing the sick and wounded and bringing sinners back to the path of virtue—in a word, doing good to all. What wonder then, if, while on this earth she, like Christ, suffers persecutions, insults and sorrows" (*ibid.*, 47).

⁵² Hurtado, *La búsqueda*, 136.

sus Christ, the true Son of God, in order to help man to fulfill his mission.⁵³

According to Hurtado, the supernatural society of the Church, whose mission is to elevate creation to the divine, contributes to the reformation of the social fabric of humanity in three ways. First, the Church, as the Mystical Body of Christ, serves as a model for a truly just and moral society. She manifests the joyful and intimate communion that exists among all persons by their common life in Christ, which naturally leads to a new vision of the human community in the civil order. Just as in the Church the individual members seek to contribute to the common good and sanctity of one another, so too in the civil realm the citizens give of themselves for the common good of the society.

Man enters civil society not immediately as an individual, but through the family of which he forms a part. And he forms part of the international society, through the nation. The comparison that St. Paul gives for the Church can be applied to natural societies as well: they form a great body, constituted by members. Each cell forms one great body, consisting of members. Each cell adheres to the body through the member of which he is a part.⁵⁴

The Church's society ideally should stand out as an example to the world. She exhibits a social consciousness, that is, the "spontaneous attitude to react fraternally before others, to place one in the point of view of the other as if it were one's own; to tolerate no abuse before the defenseless; to be indignant when justice is violated."⁵⁵ The teaching role of the Church unfolds not only in her words, but also through her example as a just and sanctifying body in the heart of the world.

⁵³ Id., *Moral social*, 51. Here Hurtado anticipates the teaching of *Gaudium et spes*, 45: "While helping the world and receiving many benefits from it, the Church has a single intention: that God's kingdom may come, and that the salvation of the whole human race may come to pass. For every benefit which the People of God during its earthly pilgrimage can offer to the human family stems from the fact that the Church is 'the universal sacrament of salvation,' simultaneously manifesting and exercising the mystery of God's love."

⁵⁴ Hurtado, *Moral social*, 51.

⁵⁵ Ibid, 205.

Second, the Church as the Mystical Body cannot remain turned in on herself, but must reach out through concrete deeds to the world. Though all are not members of the Church, all persons potentially may share in the saving grace that Christ offers through the Gospel. "The destiny of no man is foreign to a Catholic. The whole world is of interest to him, because the love of Christ is extended to every man: he gives his blood for each one, he desires to see each one of them incorporated into the Church."⁵⁶ Every Catholic—religious, clergy, lay person—must remain conscious of his or her intimate link with every human being. Every action and every prayer may change the lives of many and bring them to the love of Christ. "My action, my desires can have a divine significance, and change the face of the land. . . . I can be so much if I am in Christ, if I cooperate with Christ."⁵⁷ The building up of the body of Christ requires the cooperation of every member in the giving of him or herself to others.

We are responsible for the Church as collaborators in the great building of the Body of the Lord, in the redemption and sanctification of humanity, that which gives full meaning to creation. . . . The life in the Church, the unfolding of the faith, the explication of dogma, of its moral import, of its cult, of its right—all is in strict dependence on the personal faith and charity of the members of the Body of Christ.⁵⁸

Hurtado constantly reminded his listeners and readers that the fulfillment of the mandate to preach the Gospel and build up the Body required *deeds*. During the economic depression and the cataclysmic conflict of the war, the Church needed to shine as a light through her care of the sick, the poor, and the dying. She needed to immerse herself in the struggle of abused workers, in the pain of broken families, in the dirt and grime of the streets, since the harvest "only grows in the mud of the earth. For us, it is the earth of men where the redeeming plan continues and realizes itself."⁵⁹ The "unfolding of faith, the explication of dogma, of its moral import" occurs through a radical imitation of Jesus in hum-

⁵⁶Id., *La búsqueda*, 137.

⁵⁷Id., *Un disparo*, 137.

⁵⁸Id., *Humanismo social*, 162.

⁵⁹Id., *La búsqueda*, 143.

ble service to the least in every culture. "Whoever scorns the poor, scorns Christ. . . . The world is tired of words: it wants deeds. It wants to see Christians fulfilling the dogmas it professes. May the number of those who do so grow day by day through a profound meditation on the social meaning of our faith!"⁶⁰

Finally, the Church as the Body of Christ transforms society and culture through its sacramental life. One may think that the Church's celebration of the sacraments nourishes the faithful alone, with little effect upon those outside of the fold. Yet, the Church is truly a leaven in the world through her *supernatural* life, in particular through the Eucharist and confession. The sacraments form the Body of Christ and nourish the members with divine life, so that the members may in turn bring that life into the world. Thus the sacraments are an essential part of the social apostolate, since they "divinize" the members of the Christian society so that they may "go out to preach the good news" in word and deed.

Without priests, there are no sacraments; without sacraments, there is no grace, no deification of man, no heaven. Thus it has been rightly said that nothing is more necessary than the Church and in the Church nothing is more necessary than priests.

This explains why Hurtado placed the celebration of the Eucharist at the center of any social apostolate, since it transforms those who share in the Communion and unites their individual sacrifices to the redeeming sacrifice of the Cross. "In the Eucharist this change takes place: man is transformed into God, he is assimilated by the divinity which possesses him."⁶¹ Every celebration of the Eucharist unites the members so intimately with the Head of the Body, that they too become "priests" and "victims" who lift up a fallen world.

. . . in participating personally in the state of the victim of Jesus Christ, we are transformed into the divine victim. As the bread truly transubstantiates into the Body of Christ, so the human priest (and thus, all the faithful, the entire Church) is morally tran-

⁶⁰Id., *Humanismo social*, 65.

⁶¹Id., *La búsqueda*, 214.

substantiated into Jesus Christ, the only and eternal Priest, and so all of us faithful are transubstantiated spiritually into Jesus Christ the victim. Thus, our personal immolations are elevated to be Eucharistic immolations of Jesus Christ, who, as the head, assumes and makes the immolations of his members his own. A resentment, a suffering . . . immolated and offered in the Mass, are converted into immolations of Jesus Christ.⁶²

This passage also demonstrates why, in his principal writings on the social apostolate, Hurtado always dedicated a portion to the need for priests.⁶³ In fact, in *Humanismo social* he highlights the lack of priests in Chile as one of the major contributors to societal decay. Without priests, the supernatural growth of the Body of Christ is stunted and the gifts that the Body offers to the world cannot flow forth.

Without priests, there are no sacraments; without sacraments, there is no grace, no deification of man, no heaven. Thus it has been rightly said that nothing is more necessary than the Church and in the Church nothing is more necessary than priests. . . . The Church needs workers in a sufficient number, as the teachings of the Popes have constantly reminded us, echoing the Teacher, who taught us that the Good Shepherd has to know his sheep by name, he has to call them by name, he has to carry them to good pastures and lead them to the sheepfold.⁶⁴

The elevated depiction of the priesthood cited above may seem like hyperbole to those of the post-Vatican II generation, perhaps even an affront to the laity and lay religious. Yet, in his zeal Hurtado did not mean to take away from the role of other vocations within the Body of Christ. Rather, he sought to demonstrate that priests make their essential contribution to the social apostolate through their celebration of the sacraments, as well as through their "sacred duty of giving witness to the Christian truth in the social terrain with no less courage than in any other terrain in which supernatural revelation is involved. . . . To preach only

⁶² Id., *Un disparo*, 295.

⁶³ For the significance of the priesthood in Hurtado's own Jesuit vocation, see J. Ochagavia, S.J., "La 'ignacianidad' del padre Alberto Hurtado," *Manresa* 64 (Oct.-Nov., 1992): 455-56.

⁶⁴ Hurtado, *Humanismo social*, 66.

resignation and charity before great human sufferings would be to cover over injustice.”⁶⁵ Hurtado stressed that the absence of priests causes great social harm through a lack of the sacraments and the disappearance of the—ideally!—courageous priestly witness in word and deed.

Hurtado’s application of the doctrine of the Mystical Body of Christ to the social apostolate demands that Christians take the Incarnation seriously. “The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us.” And so all Christians must give the Word flesh in their daily lives, in their cultures and in their public witness. “The one who accepts the Incarnation has to accept it with all its consequences and must extend its gift, not only to Jesus Christ, but also to His Mystical Body. To neglect the least of our brothers is to neglect Christ; to alleviate one of them is to alleviate Christ in person.”⁶⁶

The Relationship Between Justice and Charity

According to Hurtado “true charity begins where justice ends.” One cannot fully realize the virtue of charity without striving for justice.

There are many who are disposed to enact charity, but are not resigned to accomplish justice; they are disposed to give alms, but not willing to pay a just salary. Even if it seems strange, it is much easier to be charitable (obviously only in appearance) than just. Such apparent “charity” is not authentic, because the true charity begins where justice ends. Charity without justice will not save us from social ills, but only creates a profound resentment. Injustice causes much greater evils than charity can repair.⁶⁷

At first glance this statement may seem problematic. Is not charity, a theological virtue, a “higher” virtue than justice?

While Hurtado certainly did not deny the superiority of charity as a supernatural gift, he did emphasize that charity separated from justice was not authentic charity. According to Hurtado, too many Christians content themselves with giving from their excess, while ignoring gross

⁶⁵Id., *La búsqueda*, 105.

⁶⁶Id., *Moral social*, 204.

⁶⁷Ibid., 214.

injustices in their midst. To follow Jesus, however, means to crush one's ego, to put on Christ, and to live in solidarity with those in need. It means to do as he did in "healing the sick, multiplying the bread, offering to relieve a burden and giving peace to spirits," since Jesus "showed himself to be the Son of Man before allowing himself to be known as the Son of God."⁶⁸ Thus justice and charity are complements, the essential virtues of Christian perfection and witness.

Justice and charity complement one another. A charity which does not have the strength to move us to give to our brothers that which we owe them is not true charity. And a justice that is not animated by charity is, in practice, an empty word. How can we hope that fallen man will come out of himself and give to his brother that which he owes if he is not animated by the fire of charity and the power of grace? In order to fully realize justice toward others, one must put himself in their place, to understand their reasons and needs. This is to understand the Gospel maxim: "Do not do to others what you do not want them to do to you; do to others that which you want them to do to you" (Tob. 4:15; Luke 6:31).⁶⁹

The link between the two virtues manifests itself in Hurtado's own life. Hurtado, in his own apostolic works, was never content to provide a temporary solution to grave social injustices. In his writings he taught that, on the one hand, one must respond immediately with the available

There is only one cause worth dying for: the love for Jesus Christ in mission.

resources in order to help alleviate the suffering of the poor and destitute. "A year of silence can seem very brief while one lives in an abundance that meets his needs, but it can seem very long for a class which is

suffering. The demon of novelty or haste is very dangerous, but no less dangerous are the demons of omission, of procrastination, and of waiting indefinitely."⁷⁰ On the other hand, he believed that a series of short-term solutions only allows the misery to continue and hardly constitutes

⁶⁸Id., *Humanismo social*, 83.

⁶⁹Id., *La búsqueda*, 221.

⁷⁰Id., *Humanismo social*, 81.

a sufficient Christian witness. Christians must work to change hearts and minds, while also leading society to a more just way of life. They must become leaders in reshaping their cultures and ways of being.

The misery of the people is of body and soul at the same time. To provide for the immediate essentials is necessary, but it hardly changes the situation if minds are not opened; if wills are not rectified and affirmed; if oppression and injustices are not suppressed, or at least attenuated; if one is not associated with the humble in the progressive acquisition of their happiness.⁷¹

In short, “It is not enough to attack the effects, as to attack the causes. What do we gain by moaning and complaining? One must go head to head with evil!”⁷² The struggle for justice therefore demands a complete gift of self—both immediate and durative—in the name of Jesus. This self-emptying is the true actualization of charity.⁷³

Regarding economic justice, how did Hurtado perceive the reigning capitalist system of his time, which was locked in a struggle with competing Socialist and Marxist visions? On the one hand, he criticized severely the Socialist and Marxist systems that tended toward a statism that “took economic activity from the hands of the family, businesses, and professions in order to entrust it directly to State.”⁷⁴ In fact, the mission of the state is “to protect private property from every unjust violation.”⁷⁵ Citizens have the right to pursue just economic enterprises and to benefit from their earnings.

⁷¹Id., *Moral social*, 61.

⁷²Ibid., 60.

⁷³Hurtado always called for an imitation of Jesus’ *kenosis* within the social apostolate:

“To give oneself is to fulfill justice.

To give oneself is to offer oneself and all that one has.

To give oneself is to orient all one’s capacity for action toward the Lord.

To give oneself is to widen the heart and to direct firmly one’s will toward that One who awaits them.

To give oneself is to love always and as completely as possible” (Hurtado, *La búsqueda*, 27).

⁷⁴Id., *Moral social*, 103.

⁷⁵Ibid., 109.

On the other hand, capitalism in itself hardly constituted the basis of a just society. Unregulated capitalism leads to the exploitation of the people, and the accumulation of wealth and power among a small elite.

The capitalist regime, as it has been lived up to this time, cannot be an admissible solution for the Catholic. The judgments of Popes and prelates establish a clear plebiscite that condemns it. Furthermore, Catholics must seek another system that avoids these errors, or they must purify the capitalist regime of its vices. If capitalism wants to survive, it must avoid the concentration of power with its consequent dehumanization. It must cease from its dominance over work, which is immeasurably more noble: work is something human and divine, despite its humble appearances.⁷⁶

This means that a form of limited state intervention is permissible. While Hurtado condemned collectivism and statism, he believed that some state regulation was necessary for a just economy.

Is a direct and positive intervention of the state in economic life permissible? Is a “directed economy” recommended? If we understand by “directed economy” a detailed organization of the economic activities in every particular, enclosing them in every way within the purview of the government, then this is statism with all its dangers. If we mean that the state, in agreement with professional organizations, directs the general economy of a country, as well as the movement of national and international exchange, and stimulates deficient production, such a system exists within just limits, and, rather than “directed economy,” it should be called “an organized economy.”⁷⁷

Hurtado’s critique and correction of contemporary capitalist societies emerged directly from his reflection upon papal writings such as *Rerum novarum*, as well as a burgeoning dialogue taking place within the Society of Jesus.⁷⁸ According to Hurtado, while the socialist solu-

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 173.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 106.

⁷⁸ On the Society’s growing awareness of the social apostolate, see Jean Baptiste Janssens, “De ministeriis nostris” (1947), *Promotio Iustitiæ*, 73 (May 2000): 7. Hurtado’s views would find later vindication in the writings of John Paul II: “. . . it is right to speak of a struggle against an economic system, if the latter is understood as a method of upholding the absolute predominance

tion leads to state repression, unbridled capitalism results in worker exploitation and class oppression. Yet "an organized economy," directed toward the common good, may produce a just order for the good of the human person.

Yet, Hurtado did not labor under any illusions regarding the establishment of the just society on earth: fallen man is incapable of realizing the perfect society in this age. In fact, the hubris of trying to realize the Kingdom on earth can only result in an even greater oppression. While Christianity does indeed mandate the struggle for justice in this life, it does not see justice as the goal of its earthly pilgrimage. The Church exists to lead men to holiness and divine unity, and the fight for a just society represents a form of concrete witness in the journey to the higher end. Hurtado always sought to ground his vision of justice in the higher end of the human person.

The Church exists to lead men to holiness and divine unity, and the fight for a just society represents a form of concrete witness in the journey to the higher end.

Is a perfect social order possible?

The individualists and the collectivists say, "Yes." The former say that the [just] social order will be obtained through the liberty of social factors; the latter believe that social harmony will be the fruit of the general planning with the help of science and technology. The Christian, as a realist, and recognizing the true nature of man, asserts that the [just] social order will always only be approximate. . . . The consequent weaknesses of original sin affect the mind, so that it is not capable of full luminosity, as well as the will, which is weak in its tendency toward the good and in its knowledge and application of the adequate means for perfect social cooperation. Since the first rupture from the state of grace in

of capital, the possession of the means of production and of the land, in contrast to the free and personal nature of human work. In the struggle against such a system, what is being proposed as an alternative is not the socialist system, which in fact turns out to be State capitalism, but rather a society of free work of enterprise and of participation. Such a society is not directed against the market, but demands that the market be 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 satisfied" (John Paul II, *Centesimus annus* [1991], 35).

which God created our parents, the earth has conceded its fruits only through labor, and will produce thorns and burs.⁷⁹

In the end, social reform must be the fruit of prayer, inspired by the desire to unite oneself with Christ and lead others to the joy of that unity. “The social action of prayer is the greatest of all, because, as St. Ignatius said, the one who prays works with God, the first cause and universal mover. But, in order that it may be called social, it must be done in a social spirit, thinking not only of oneself, but also of others, desiring for them the bounty of goods that one desires for oneself.”⁸⁰

Hurtado’s position regarding this relationship between justice and charity has found subsequent support in the Second Vatican Council, the general congregations of the Society of Jesus, and recent papal teaching. A few examples demonstrate how Hurtado anticipated a fundamental principle in contemporary thinking on social justice.

In the Second Vatican Council, the pastoral constitution *Lumen gentium*, in particular, reiterated this teaching regarding the charity that inspires justice. The council fathers directed the Church toward a more active engagement with the world, emphasizing that the faith “needs to prove its fruitfulness by penetrating the believer’s entire life, including its worldly dimensions, and by activating him toward justice and love, especially regarding the needy.”⁸¹ The social order must be “founded on truth, built on justice and animated by love.”⁸² The Christian seeking the Kingdom of God requires “a stronger and purer love for helping all his brethren and for perfecting the work of justice under the inspiration of charity.”⁸³ *Lumen gentium* clearly linked justice with charity, with justice as the essential virtue for the structuring of the social order and charity as the theological virtue that animates society.

The Society of Jesus would also develop its own social teachings through an emphasis upon the relationship between justice and charity.

⁷⁹ Hurtado, *Moral social*, 133–34.

⁸⁰ Id., *Humanismo social*, 168. Also see id., *Fuego*, 108: “Prayer, which at times seems useless—how great it becomes when one realizes that it means speaking with and being heard by the creator of all things!”

⁸¹ *Gaudium et spes*, 21.

⁸² Ibid., 26.

⁸³ Ibid., 72.

Hurtado's former rector from Louvain, Superior General Jean Baptiste Janssens, decried the indifference that many Jesuits were displaying toward the blatant injustices found among the working poor of the time. "Not a few of Ours, especially among the young, are extremely disturbed when they see that, held back by so many easier and less necessary ministries, we show little concern for those masses for whom hardly anyone cares."⁸⁴ General Congregation 31 (1974–75) responded to these concerns and highlighted the union of justice and charity that would direct the Society's response to the needs of the times: "But the social apostolate strives directly by every endeavor to build a fuller expression of justice and charity into the structures of human life in common. Its goal in this is that every man may be able to exercise a personal sense of participation, skill, and responsibility in all areas of community life."⁸⁵

The more recent *Complementary Norms* also stress the link between social justice and social charity: "Moreover, all should understand that they can and ought to exercise the social

*The Good News, the Gospel, which
Christ brought to the world, is the
reconciliation of souls
to the Father.*

apostolate in their spiritual ministries by explaining the social teaching of the Church, by stimulating and directing the souls of the faithful toward social justice and social charity, and, finally, by establishing social projects by means of the members of our organizations."⁸⁶

More recently Pope Benedict XVI formulated this truth in his encyclical *Caritas in veritate* (2009). The Holy Father teaches that "justice is inseparable from charity."

Charity goes beyond justice, because to love is to give, to offer what is "mine" to the other; but it never lacks justice, which prompts us to give the other what is "his," what is due to him by reason of his being or his acting. I cannot "give" what is mine to the other, without first giving him what pertains to him in justice. If we love others with charity, then first of all we are just towards them. Not

⁸⁴ Janssens, *De ministeriis nostris*, 7.

⁸⁵ GC 31, 569.

⁸⁶ *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms* (St. Louis: The Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 299.

only is justice not extraneous to charity, not only is it not an alternative or parallel path to charity: justice is inseparable from charity, and intrinsic to it. Justice is the primary way of charity or, in Paul VI's words, "the minimum measure" of it, an integral part of the love "in deed and in truth" (1 John 3:18), to which Saint John exhorts us. On the one hand, charity demands justice: recognition and respect for the legitimate rights of individuals and peoples. It strives to build the *earthly city* according to law and justice. On the other hand, charity transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving. The *earthly city* is promoted not merely by relationships of rights and duties, but to an even greater and more fundamental extent by relationships of gratuitousness, mercy and communion. Charity always manifests God's love in human relationships as well, it gives theological and salvific value to all commitment for justice in the world.⁸⁷

According to Pope Benedict, one cannot transgress the norms of justice "as the recognition and respect of the rights of individuals and peoples" without undermining the authentic charity that "completes the logic of giving and forgiving."

IV. A Life of Generosity

What, in the end, was the inspiration for Alberto Hurtado's remarkable synthesis of the spiritual life and apostolic vigor? Certainly his love for Jesus, his zeal for the salvation of souls, and his desire to give witness to the Gospel drove him to empty himself in the struggle for faith and justice. Yet his Jesuit formation and the influence of St. Ignatius must also be recognized as the major framework for his vision and manner of discernment. He was a true contemplative in action, dedicated to concretizing the Gospel message in word and deed.

Perhaps the characteristic that stands out most of all in his apostolic endeavors is his generosity, the total gift of self in Christ's name. In Hurtado's own words, this generosity was formed through the experience of the Spiritual Exercises.

⁸⁷ Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate* (2009), 6.

Generosity is the great instrument for accepting the Law and going beyond it in the service of God. The *Exercises* were made for generous souls, who have much zeal, who hunger to dedicate themselves in complete service to the Lord. . . . The *Exercises* were not made to create generosity, but to develop it in those who possess it. For this reason St. Ignatius always places the election in our hands and the key meditations always end with three possibilities: the “common” person, the good, and the distinguished (for example, the Meditation on the Kingdom, the Classes of Men, the Three Kinds of Humility). . . .

Therefore, through the *Exercises*, in our works of education and in spiritual direction, we take advantage of this glorious law of our nature in order to push souls to fly ever higher. We don’t multiply the commands, but manifest the ideals that are more valuable in life. Our own age does not lack generous people; rather it lacks internal knowledge of the cause for which it is worth sacrificing one’s life.⁸⁸

As a Jesuit, Hurtado cultivated and manifested the generosity of his soul in order to become a fruitful witness to the love of Jesus and, in turn, he inspired the generosity of numerous souls even after his death. In his life and works we find the inspiration of a saint, a fiery generosity that should ignite our own souls with apostolic fervor. There is only one cause worth dying for: the love for Jesus Christ in mission. “The Good News, the Gospel, which Christ brought to the world, is the reconciliation of souls to the Father. This Good News, preached and applied, is the apostolate.”⁸⁹ This great saint of the Society of Jesus will continue to inspire apostolic zeal for Jesus in the sons of Ignatius and in generous souls of every generation.

⁸⁸ Hurtado, *Un disparo*, 152.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, 103.

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