

# The Universities of Christian Inspiration and the Catholic Social Thought Confronting the New Millennium

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I take this opportunity as a "sign of the times," an opportunity to re-examine the work of Christian inspired universities--both in the North and the South--in order that we may confront the challenges which accompany the end of the century. Times of uncertainty and perplexity, implied by a period of rapid and profound change. For us, it is more than a epoch of change, but rather a change of epoch which, therefore, must signify profound changes for the University and for the Catholic Social Thought (CST).

## I. The University Challenge

Five hundred years ago, in 1492, humanity was discovered and known as a unit. Today, we are *one world, a global village*, and human beings can be citizens of the world for the first time in history. However "One World Divided", with winners and a majority of losers, with a global underclass and "there is nothing more expensive in the long run that building one up". (TIME Magazine, July 7, 1997, on the Special Report on Globalization)

More than 500 years ago, Latin America showed mankind that the world was one. Today, this unity is an astonishing reality, despite the fact that the gap between North and South, between capital and labor, between the "West and the Rest" continues to grow more polarized.

There are a series of concrete facts which reflect the profound crisis of our civilization. This civilization in the decade of the nineties is not *universalizable*, it cannot be extended to all of the world's citizens due to ecological, social, gender and political limits. It is unstable, and cannot continue to reproduce itself in its current form, as a democratic society, for all world citizens.

Scandals are the bread and butter of the mass media today; but the greatest scandal of our age receives all too little attentions from not only the mass media, but also from our university communities, even from our jesuit university communities.

As we prepare to enter the 21st century, the fact that in Central America, as well as in Africa, we have "quality of life" levels today that are lower than the levels reached by the indigenous peoples of Central America and Africa 500 years ago, is the scandal of our age. More than 70% of our sisters and brothers in Central America live in poverty - 50% in economic misery, and these percentages continue to rise each year. This scandalous

situation that touches thousands of millions of women, men and childrens around the world today implies --- or rather, shout out to us --- that something is profoundly wrong and sinful in our present civilization.

I'll now mention some of the critical aspects of this change of epoch, in order to illustrate the nature of the crisis which our civilization is experiencing and our universities and the CST have to confront.

1) *A Champagne Glass Civilization*, reflecting the antagonism and asymmetry in the distribution of income, between the top 20% of humanity who control 83% of the world's wealth, and the bottom 20% which survives with only 1.4%. In other words, more than one billion human beings survive on just US\$1.00 per day. This injustice in the distribution of wealth has tended to grow. The United Nations report on Human Development for 1994 indicates that the gap in the distribution of wealth is growing, with the income of the richest 20% increasing from 30 times greater in 1960 to 61 times greater in 1993.

2) There is an even greater *concentration of knowledge*. The disparity of investment on Research and Development means that it tends to be concentrated more and more in the nations of the North, at a time when the intensity of knowledge is the key to accumulating wealth. This is an era in which *flexible capital*--a product of the revolution in management and electronics--allows power to be centralized and concentrated as never before in history. Five hundred years ago, the metropolises and empires, which were founded on the basis of colonial exploitation, never achieved this level of concentration and centralization of power. Nor did they achieve the abysmal differences between the standards of living of the metropolis and the colonies, as exists today between a small group of privileged countries in the North and the great majority of nations of the South.

Today, however, the North and the South are not only geographical concepts, but socio-economic and ethical ones. In the South, we also have a "North", and you of the North also have some of the conditions of the South for your minority immigrants, indigenous groups, and citizens who have been marginalized by growing unemployment and other forms of discrimination.

3) The *accelerated growth of super-millionaires*, or billionaires, who have more than one thousand million dollars, is also a phenomenon of this change of epoch. The July 1994 issue of *Forbes Magazine*, which analyzes great world fortunes, provides some statistics which, from a Christian perspective, are truly scandalous. 358 individual people--we are not speaking of transnational corporations--have a personal, accumulated capital worth of some US\$ 762 billion. In other words, they possess the equivalent of the per capita income of 45% of the world's population, or 2.5 billion human beings. These billionaires have *tripled their income between 1987 and 1994*. The nation with the highest growth rate of billionaires is Mexico--a country which the IMF and the World Bank have painted as a *good example* of what neo-liberal structural adjustment policies can achieve. The world's billionaires have increased by 140% in these seven years, and the nation with the greatest growth is Mexico. It is not surprising, then, that the Chiapas phenomenon

coincides with the explosion of billionaires. Similarly, passage of Law 187 in California makes it perfectly clear that NAFTA is only a free market for capital and its products, for rich people, but not for labor.

4) With the end of the Cold War and despite a reduction in the world's military budget, annual military spending in 1993 was, surprisingly, US\$ 815 billion, or 50% of humanity's per

capita income. Who are these arms to be used against? Who is the enemy? Somalia, Rwanda, Haiti? We have passed from the Cold War to a war of social and citizen insecurity. Private security spending increases to the same extent that military spending decreases. The 200 million arms in the hands of North American citizens indicates that the end of the Cold War has not brought the peace which was previously attributed to the threat of the *evil empire*.

5) According to INTERPOL's report of May, 1994, drug trafficking accounts for US\$400 billion annually, of which US\$100 billion are laundered by transnational banks. The UN-sponsored "Naples Declaration", supported by 138 nations, made the commitment to curb the international delinquency which generates some US\$750 billion annually from drug trafficking, illegal arms sales and prostitution. The absence of citizen security and the increase in crime are due to a lack of meaning of life, and the search for escape through the use of drugs, sex, or religious or political fundamentalism.

6) **The environmental crisis of our times** has been produced, on the one hand, by the over-consumption of a small number of nations and people, and by the growing impoverishment of the South. This poverty, and the consequent need to survive at any cost, has become the most significant threat to fauna, flora and the world's oceans. The South's growing megalopolises--produced by irrational development and the massive internal migration of peasants, as in Sao Paulo, Mexico, Calcutta, Shanghai, etc.--reveal the lack of direction, rationality and sense which exist in today's world of technological revolution.

This Champagne Glass civilization reflects a crisis of civilization, a crisis of instability, insecurity, and lack of meaning. This *antagonistic civilization* of North against the South, of white against color, of man against woman, of the present against the future, of consumerism as a means to happiness, and of growth against nature requires profound reflection by those institutions-- such as universities--which should act as society's *critical conscience*, as a *preventive and prospective conscience* against the threats of the future, as *the molders of generations* who can create a more humane, just, sustainable and harmonious world.

This global crisis demands new forms of organizing citizens, non-conventional university programs and different ways of training professionals, who **do not reproduce and amplify the present system but instead assume responsibility for it**, who are **capable of transforming it in the interest of all of humanity**.

These concerns oblige us to re-think the role of the university, to transform the university through a process of Reform which allows it to be **both "science and conscience"**, as John Paul II requested in the Church's call to universities, in the document "**Ex Corde Ecclesiae**."

I believe that catholic and jesuit universities must confront this scandal at the end-of-century and the beginning of a new millenium in an organized manner. This scandal and our efforts to confront it jointly is our principal challenge of our generation, as jesuits, as christian, just as human persons and citizens of our one global divided village.

Faced with this challenge, those of us working in jesuit universities in Latin America are continually asking ourselves whether we are part of the solution or part of the problem. In our educational efforts are we merely reproducing and/or strengthening a system that continually widens the gap between rich and poor, women and men, different races, and between increasing individual consumption and sharing more equitably the world's limited resources?. Are we producing successful professionals who merely take advantage of failed and/or oppressive societies in order to enrich themselves?.

Recently in March, at St. Joseph's University in Philadelphia I presented this challenge to my jesuit brothers in the United States. It is not sufficient today for the jesuit university to pursue academic excellence locally, or even nationally; nor it is sufficient to tranquilize our individual and institutional consciences, and/or bolster our social image by participating --sometimes more, sometimes less-- in activities in the world of the excluded. Excluded people which exist in all our countries, north and south.

The crucial character of the crisis at the end of the XXth century and at the beginning of a new millenium is the rapidly increasing chasm between rich and poor throughout the world. This crisis demands that we create an international consciousness, an international program and a genuine community of jesuit universities to make it possible for us to go beyond the local campus, or city, or even nation in our planning, research, teaching and personal commitment. The jesuit university exists primarily for the world; and 2/3 of this world is excluded from the wealth, comfort, knowledge and power of the privileged 1/3.

Is this vision of our world a partial, parochial, distorted, unjustified perception of our world or is it the real challenge before us as jesuit universities to confront this crisis of our present civilization --and confront it **jointly**—?. Probably does not exist another organization as the 180 jesuit universities all over the world, IF, and this is a big if, if we would be able to work together forming a coherent strategy (global, national and local) a "**gloncal strategy**" to confront this crisis.

Working together, possibly we will may come to the conclusions that the basic roots of increasing worldwide poverty and oppression, social and economic exclusion, and environmental destruction are not only economic, but rather ethical, social and cultural. International AID, economic cooperation does not touch fundamental international inequities; it is basically insignificant and, as a matter of fact, is declining rapidly. Also,

traditional international cooperation between North and South tends to increase the dependence and subordination of the latter on the former.

To attack the roots of the widening chasm between rich and poor requires, I believe, a three-tiered strategy: ethical, cultural and theoretical. The almost 200 Jesuit universities throughout the world ought to have the ethical, cultural and theoretical competency to at least begin to deal jointly and effectively with this crisis, not as colonialists nor as saviours, but with a fundamental commitment to engage ourselves seriously **in the struggle to humanize our civilization and evangelize our humanity.**

We don't lack international calls to action in the face of this crisis. A mammoth collection of United Nations data and recommendations, and international summits in Rio de Janeiro, Cairo, Geneva, Copenhagen and Beijing all speak with one voice: ours is a civilization of the very few wealthy and powerful, a cognitive and financial elite that concentrate and centralize power, finance, technology, knowledge and the control of international institutions. On the other hand, the overwhelming growing majority of excluded of wealth, knowledge and power.

The Jesuit General Congregation 34 identifies four pillars that serve to re-inforce our options for the excluded and oppressed of the world: inculturation; the fundamental new role of women; the struggle against poverty and exclusions; and the need for a new spirituality and set of values to confront the 21st century. *"Today we bring this countercultural gift of Christ to a world beguiled by self-centered human fulfillment, extravagance, and soft living, a world that prizes prestige, power, and self-sufficiency. In such a world, to preach Christ poor and humble with fidelity and courage is to expect humiliation, persecution, and even death. We have seen this happen to our brothers in recent years".*

What is lacking?. From our Central and Latin American Jesuit perspective represented in AUSJAL (Association of Jesuit Universities in Latin America) and in the recent declaration of all our 18 provincial superiors who met with Fr. Kolvenbach in Puebla (México), what is lacking is the consciousness of the human tragedy, the recognition that the "free market" is in the hands of a financial elite that also controls the flow of knowledge and information in the interests of intensive and rapid economic growth and profits that the political willingness to engage ourselves on the humanizing struggle and the ethical vision that goes beyond reducing development to material progress. Let me add also my personal conviction of a lack of an integrated theoretical approach to overcome the paradigm of no alternatives, a sort of theology of inevitability that paralyse our creativity and our hope.

In spite of nominal ties, Jesuit universities do not form an organized group, and much less a community of purpose, nor a common project. Each one of our universities has a specific role in the city, region or country in which it is located. The international ties between our institutions, however, are very weak. We lack common objectives. How to make of ourselves a real international organization, a network of like-minded universities that complement and collaborate with each other in the effort to fulfill common goals in

order to face off the common problems and common threats of our global village in an alliance of common values and common interests?

How to begin a process of creating a joint project that involves all or a substantial number of jesuit universities?. From our local, regional and national bases, how can we develop a shared international commitment to confront the root causes of growing poverty, economic exclusion (unemployment; discrimination against women and youth, environmental destruction and cultural and spiritual opppression of the overwhelming majority of the world's population?.

I often ask myself if the main failure of the jesuit university is not in reality a sin of omission, or perhaps, in the Ignatian context of seeking always God's greater glory, a sin of mediocrity. With humility, but at the same time with a realistic appraisal of our potential (often perhaps wasted), we have to confront this end-of-millennium crisis, and seek the "magis", God's greater glory, from within this leash "minima", Company of Jesus, through a **ignatian discernment of our universities**. This may imply a profound transformation of our university life and "model". It may imply the creation of a network of jesuit universities, that goes beyond political and cultural boundaries, and embark upon a process of international formation of professionals prepared for a global citizenship, committed to integral human development based on equity, sharing a sort of geocultural development based on sustainable human relations.

What I am suggesting to jesuit and christian inspired universities does not consist in countries and universities of the North donating goods and services --and education-- to countries of the South. Rather, I am proposing that together, as a community of jesuit universities, we create within each country a "gloncal strategy" to form educated professionals with vision, commitment and talent to confront and solve the problems which are at the root of our crisis of civilization.

Structural change at a socio-cultural level in the countries of the "excluded South" is going to imply a transformation in the socio-cultural structures of the universities and societies of the North. This process will be a two-way street: the universities of the North will very likely receive as many or more benefits from this shared experience than the jesuit universities of the South.

While it is the university as institutions that is invited to take up this 21st century proposal, the project will probably be initiated by a few individuals or groups/departments within the university. This initiative will hopefully lead to an epistemological breakthrough in which the university can confront and possibly re-discover its identity and mission as a result of a profound end-of-century Ignatian discernment.

This discernment and accompanying transformation will demand a higher level of competence and professionalism in our universities, a more profound cultural and ethical underpinning, and a commitment to be agents of change and solidarities in the 21st century.

We are invited to be pioneers rather than excellent professionals, given that the task is more the creation of a humane civilization, a social development of all citizens than mere material progress for a minority.

I would like to offer some concrete ways in which we could initiate this project in 1997. As Jesuit universities, we could immediately initiate a series of discussions, and make proposals for university reform following the lines etched out in GC34. The 20th and 21st of October of this year, the Rectors of Jesuit Universities from all the world will meet in Santiago, Chile to prepare the Assembly of the International Federation of Catholic Universities. This meeting could serve as an opportunity to begin the slow and difficult process of conscientization, necessary before thinking of an institutional networking process among Jesuit – Catholic universities to face off the ethical challenge of the new millennium.

To facilitate this process of conscientization, it would be important to initiate some limited joint commitments --perhaps in the initial phases--, by sub-regions: for example, between Canada, the US, Latin America and the Caribbean; while Europe could do the same with the even more urgent needs in Africa, and a similar process for Asia and the Pacific.

In a meeting in Jakarta of the Association of Jesuit Institutes of Business Administration, it was suggested by Fr. Jaime Loring from Spain that all Jesuit universities contribute 0.7% of their annual budget to a common institutional fund that would serve to initiate a process of conscientization, research, networking and institutionalization of a Community of Jesuit universities for the 21st Century. Could the IFCU try a similar experimental project?

This fund could be used to facilitate international exchanges, the creation of joint research groups, joint post-graduate courses that would serve to reform our universities preparing a new generation of pioneers-professionals to confront the crisis of 21st century civilization. As I mentioned before probably no other institution in the world has the global potential and the value system to undertake a project of such ethical-cultural and intellectual importance. I think that, in a much closer collaboration with our lay partners, we can undertake this difficult but evangelical and academic challenge.

This joint enterprise will be slow and difficult to get off the ground; but it is a project that is essential if we are to confront effectively and jointly this threat to our civilization --a threat that is more critical and dangerous than was the so-called "Cold War"--. Our 21st century adversary is neither a doctrine nor a political system, but "an inhuman process....with neither soul nor direction.....blind and deaf, expert in prices, ignorant of values" (Mexican poet, Octavio Paz).

Albert Einstein brilliantly described the character of this crisis: "the civilization that perfected the means, but is confused about the objectives." Eduardo Galeano, author of *The Open Veins of Latin America*, synthesized the same thought in a question, which has profound meaning for the universities: "The West has sacrificed justice in the name of

freedom upon the altar of divine productivity. The East has sacrificed freedom in the name of justice on the same altar. The South wonders whether such a god deserves the sacrifice of our lives."

Humanity has the power to transform, change and conquer, but we seem to have lost the capacity to construct, to create harmony and stability, and to create beauty and happiness. Perhaps we will achieve the *talento*, the talent to do so, but not the *talante*, *the will or wisdom*. That is to say, we may achieve academic, research, and technological quality, but we won't contribute to the knowledge, ethics, aesthetics and harmony which are required in today's world if the meaning of life and history are to be found once again.

Will this be possible? Is it just a beautiful and utopian fantasy? Aren't universities part of the problem, rather than part of the solution? Do the universities of Christian inspiration have, or should they have, a special mission in this change of epoch?

Some days before Father Ignatius Ellacuría, President of the Universidad Centroamericana of San Salvador, was murdered, he was awarded a Peace Prize at the University of Barcelona and was asked how one might confront this crisis of civilization in a Christian manner. From which of the many angles and aspects of this crisis can a university perspective be found? Father Ellacuría offered a *locus teologicus* to interpret this reality: "The oppressor is incapable of discovering oppression; it is the oppressed who discovers the oppressor. The true reality of the oppressor can only be seen by the oppressed." In other words, analyze and understand the world from the point of view of those who history has crucified. Examine the alternatives to this antagonistic civilization from the perspective of those who have been excluded by it. Is this an alternative only for the universities of the South, or does it also have some reference for the universities of the North? Does this crisis only affect the citizens of the South, or is it a crisis which now affects all citizens of the world?

In this era of uncertainty and perplexity which accompanies a change of epoch, the Christian-inspired university must at least contribute to a "*spiritual discernment*" and "*attitude of conversion*" which Ignatius Loyola contributed throughout his life.

## **II. The Catholic Social Thought and the university common challenge.**

As Christians living the crisis that has been and still is Central America today, we recognize the enormous potential of linking our universities to a project of inculturation of the CST in the life and reality of the peoples who live in the southern half of our planet. We are by no means experts in the CST, but we would simply like to offer something of our Christian experiences and shared reflections.

Our experience indicates that the CST is theoretical and abstract, western in its culture, northern in its perspective. Four topics would seem to be crucial in considering a project of inculturation/incarnation of the CST in the reality of the South.

1. The CST shares with marxism 19<sup>th</sup> century roots based on a fundamental contradiction between capital and labor. This contradiction as a means of analysis has been surpassed today by several factors: the phenomenon of globalization, the explosion of knowledge and information, and new contradictions as the environmental crisis, the crucial question of gender, and the booming reality of the new generation, in which **more than 90% of new-borns are in the South**. These profound changes require theoretical and epistemological changes to make the CST a living element in the analytical and spiritual reality of christians in the South and the North.
2. These new contradictions –the environment, the culture, gender and the new generation- all of which **include** the historic contradiction of capital versus labor –bring with them **radical epistemological changes**, that is, new ways of seeing, analyzing and **feeling** reality. The need of an "intelligence that feels" ("la inteligencia sentiente" de Xavier Zubiri) -in the era of knowledge- demands intelligence in solidarity with the crisis of our civilization.
3. The change of epoch that we are living has provoked a breakthrough in our **cultural ethos** which is the basis of social and ethical consensus of any society.

This radical change in our cultural ethos engenders an equally radical change in the social contract of our society. This latter change is produced by the "financial and knowledge elites" who control and centralize power in the global society – which we have described as the "champagne glass civilization"- creating enormous inequalities in power, wealth and knowledge. Even in the relations between the imperial centers and its colonies of 5 centuries ago, were not there such enormous inequalities. This **new world colonization** by a financial knowledge elite brings with it also a colonization of the mind and heart.

This radical transformation in our cultural ethos also provokes the violence, the alienation that leads to drug addiction and sexual abuse, consumerism and individualism –all of which tear apart the social fabric of the local and world community-.

The global alliance between elites of the north and south on the one hand, and the "southernization" of excluded northern minorities on the other, create what we have called an antagonistic civilization.

The concepts of "nation" and "work" which were the basis of the cultural ethos and social contract of the last 200 years are rapidly losing their significance. That cultural ethos brought about norms, values, modes of behavior and symbols that gave meaning to social conduct. There was a culture of shared values which served as an ethical base of the social contract. The universities and the educational systems strengthened and reproduced this cultural ethos. Today, unfortunately, the educational system and especially the university reproduce the system that fits with the rules of the market and the symbols and ideology created by the "cognitive elite" and the "symbolic analysts". They create global dreams through television and other communications media inducing a cultural

narcissism in life styles that have nothing to do with neither local values and realities, nor with the economic capacity of the overwhelming majority of the populations.

The life styles glamorized in the global media are simply a reflection of the logic and symbolism of a market designed for paradises of the elite. In addition they design religious symbols and a moral discourse which on one hand legitimates this life style, and on the other try to limit the frustration and desperation of the excluded that could lead to chaos.

4. We see the church turning in on itself, reaffirming its historic identity and trying to bring the past to life again, incapable of projecting itself into the future sharing and embracing the reality of the world's excluded. The church's practices its liturgy, and its culture separate itself from the world's majorities. The church naturally tries to protect itself from being contaminated by the contemporary world, but finds itself more and more isolated from society and its conflicts. However, on the other hand the Church promotes religious practices which have popular roots, in an effort to "protect the masses" from being corrupted by a permissive society. This type of religious practice may help people survive and even resist in an environment of general indifference, but provides no creative message nor organizing force to transform the present reality.

**The creation of a cultural ethos for a democratic globalization** could be the challenge for the CST at the threshold of the new millennium. A cultural global ethos from the perspective and logic of the global majority, from within the various cultures, north and south, open and inspiring a world citizenship and an inter-cultural ecumenism. The cultural global ethos offers a field of research and academic enrichment for the end-of-millennium to christian inspired universities and a fertile ground for the revitalization of the CST. Christian inspired universities have to deepen their capacity for spiritual and ethical discernment, in the context of the social tradition and teaching of the Church, brought up to date by the current radical epistemological changes.

The development of this cultural global ethos from the perspective of the excluded and from within the christian community may help the CST inculturate itself in the contemporary crisis of work, gender, the environment, cultural diversity and especially, of the new generation. This offers the possibility of collaboration between the CST and christian inspired universities in the formulation of renewal plans. The universities have the task of research and the formation of the new generation, taking as a point of departure the current radical epistemological changes. The CST has the task of taking a new look –from the perspective of the gospels- and discerning spiritually this global village of ours –so divided and chaotic-. The revitalization of the strengths and christian charism of the universities and the CST is, on the one hand, a great challenge, and on the other, an even greater opportunity of the new millennium.

The wave of illegal immigration, delinquency and drug dealing –all desperate means in an equally desperate search for survival- are a direct result of the exclusion of so many from

the workforce and due to the "ruralization" of major cities which is the product of the flight and expulsion of millions of villagers from rural areas without the possibility of being integrated into the urban social and productive systems. This great mass of men, women and children trapped in our cities and megalopolis in the South are not and won't be considered citizens with full rights, nor can they participate in a "social contract" or "cultural ethos", unless we overcome the root causes of this crisis in our civilization.

In a provoking article José Comblin points out that the mass of men, women and children excluded, superfluous and disposable, will never have sufficient awareness nor power to confront this system of often hidden power in which the causes of injustice and discrimination remain subtle and almost invisible, due to its structural, low profile character. Low intensity warfare in Central America in the 80's takes the form nowadays of a so-called **low intensity democracy**, a system that tries to legitimise and formalise this exclusion and domination. The working class has been defeated, dismembered and demoralized by the liberalization of the market, by massive unemployment, by the so-called "virtual work" and union loss of negotiating power. Comblin maintains that the artisans of the new society will be the daughters and sons of the current elites, disillusioned by a globalization that offers neither happiness nor stability, nor governability.

From our experience in Central America, we believe that in our universities and with a renovated CST, from the new generation of the current elite may emerge some pioneering professionals, but that these will be an "Abrahamic minority". It is essential to look for and find agents of change within the impoverished middle class who has experienced and felt deeply the increasing intellectual and ethical decay of the present system and its lack of space for their participation and stability. If the university and the church are capable of identifying themselves with leaders of the excluded who are now emerging in various civic organizations; if the university is able to create the "missing link" in its relationship with rural communities, the small business, municipal and local leaders, and the web of popular organizations, a rising convergent generation of intellectual and ethical pioneers may come into being in order to confront the challenges of social disintegration.

These emerging pioneers could develop into a new sort of "religious orders", ecumenical, for the most part lay, independent of political parties –although exercising an important role on them-. These new "comunidades de solidaridad", solidarity teams, would have **organic autonomy** in their relation with church hierarchies. In place of the traditional vows of poverty, chastity and obedience, these pioneers would commit time to gratuitous service; will share an international vision and promote the creation of teams of professional volunteers; commitment to resist and overcome market determinations; and an obedience, based on solidarity, aimed at building a new global village citizenship, that knows no boundaries and allows no divisions.

We hope that the autonomy and inter-disciplinary platforms of "reformed universities" can help in this process and also recreate the CST itself. For its part the tradition of the ethical visions and discernment contained in, and developed over the years in christian

social thought can play an important role in the required reform of the university's ethical charism. Both processes are complementary and strategic in the development of a transforming evangelization of the new millennium.

Is it just another beautiful dream or fantasy?. Could our universities work together to find ways of joint our institutional global capacities in the creation of a cultural global ethos?. From our Central America perspective the formation of a new generation of professionals in a "solidarity communities network" all over the world, could be our contribution for the new millennium.