

# **THE ENTERPRISE AS COMMUNITY OF PERSONS: BIMBO CASE**

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## **Abstract**

“I think that the success of Bimbo is because of us that we have founded, we have seen it as, above all, a work to be created, and not as a simple business; due to we did it with our mind and with our heart, that we have believed on people, in the product and in the consumer public” These words, that belong to Lorenzo Servitje Sendra, one of the founders of Bimbo, explain, very clearly, the pillars of the success of this Mexican enterprise. At the time to meet it to deepen in the fundamentals of its achievements, we realize that we are in front of an enterprise that looks for the integration of the human aspect with the product, seeing the first one as carrier agent, origin and the end of the enterprise and the second one as a media to propitiate the economic development. It is a company that, understanding deeply the reaches of the business social responsibility, applies from its beginnings, the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church. The objective of this actual paper is to present Bimbo Case to be seen as a group of propositions that contributes to show the principles of the Catholic Doctrine about the social responsibilities of the enterprise.

## **I. Introduction**

“I think that the success of Bimbo is due to the people that have founded it, we have seen it, Above all, as a project to be created, and not as a simple business, to which we have done with Our mind and with our heart, in which we have believed in our people, in the product and in the Consumer public”. These words belong to Lorenzo Servitje Sendra, one of the founders of Bimbo and they explain, in a very clear way, the pillars of the success of this Mexican Enterprise.

At the moment to get into the subject to deepen in the fundament of its goals, it is very clear That we are in front of an enterprise that looks to integrate the human aspect with the productive, seeing the first one as the maker agent, origin and purpose of the enterprise, and the second one as a means to push the economic development.

It is about a company that, understanding in deep, the reaches of the business social responsibility, applies from its very beginnings, the principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church. The objective of this present work is to present Bimbo Case by the light of a set of prepositions that contribute to demonstrate the principles of the catholic doctrine over the social responsibilities of the enterprise.

## II. From a familiar baker's to a multinational bread maker

According to the willing of the founders, Bimbo was born with the clear idea of not being a simple business but an enterprise, conceived as an institution of service. This supposes a group of people that are associated to promote an economic project that, at the same time, it is unethical challenge because it implies the personal development of all the people that are involved in it. "In our beginnings, in 1945, we had the intuition that we assumed a double challenge: firstly, to get the small enterprise that we began in a very poor economic conditions, be viable, that is to say, that it can works properly and fulfil all its obligations. But in a parallel way, we knew that we had to ma a different enterprise. Different because not only should it to be productive but at the same time it should be a participated enterprise, in which, the persons, all of them, were involved and they had to feel themselves as part of it."<sup>1</sup>

The definition of enterprise that is supported by the founder of Bimbo, agrees with the Social Doctrine of the Church has matured through the years, and in any way, it can be summarized, with the words said by John Paul II, in that way: "The fundamental law of all economic activity is the service of the man, of all the men and of every man."<sup>2</sup>

This challenge began on July 4, 1944 in Mexico City thanks to the tenacity of six visionaries: Lorenzo Servitje Sendra, Jaime Jorba, Jaime Sendra, José Mata, Alfonso Velasco and Roberto Servitje Sendra who proposed themselves to produce and to distribute bread of box with high standards of quality and freshness. From its very beginning, it was an innovated enterprise, in fact it didn't exist the industry of bread maker in Mexico. Bimbo also revolutionized the concept of service introducing a personalized attention and it became itself in the only producer in Mexico that presented the package made of cellophane (then this material was substituted by polypropylene) through which the clients could verify the quality of the product.

The official presentation of the enterprise in front of the Mexican society was held on December 2, 1945. For then, the enterprise was composed of 38 workers, 10 of them were sellers that went out to cover their routes the following day of its inauguration of 10 units that were the fleet of the company. Today, the enterprise has more than 83.000 collaborators, it works in 16 countries and it elaborates more than 5.000 products, which are commercialised through almost 100 brands of known prestigious. It is one of the 4 biggest enterprises of bread makers all over the world, with a sale level of 4.6 billion of dollars in 2004. Its distribution network is one of the longest one of the American continent, it has 1.325.250 points of sale that are localized in 16 countries of the world, and it exceeds the 31.900 routes wit an own fleet of 29.000 units). A very demonstrative data: the quantity of kilometres the all the units go around daily would 45 times going around the earth in a circumference way.

Bimbo's background has received innumerable awards. Among them, to be chosen as the most worthy brand in Mexico in 2003 (Interbrand), the prize to the excellence given by The Economy America Magazine of 2003, the appointment as the best company in Latin American in the Food Sector (Finance Global Magazine, 2003) and One of Latin America's 20 most admired companies of 2002. It has also been chosen in repeated opportunities as one of the most attractive Mexican magazines to work. Therefore, it has international certifications. ISO 9002 as

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<sup>1</sup> Bimbo: 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 24.

<sup>2</sup> John Paul II, 1987: *Speech to the Argentine businessmen.*, IV-11-87, n. 24.

the first Latin American company on receiving this award due to its high quality in the process of ball and white bread and 28 plants in all its certified lines by ISO 9000 and by HACCP.

### III. The corporative philosophy: the pillar of success

How is this success explained? Which are the factors that help to this development? The answer to these questions must be looked for in its founders. Mr. Roberto Servitje Sendra states that, at the beginning, the worries that they had were dominated by the daily preoccupations to fulfil the economic and administrative pressures of the enterprise. While the time slipped by, they were clarified up to confirm a corporative philosophy that constitutes the authentic way of being. “Frequently I was asked to which principal causes I attributed the growth of the Group. The answer involves different aspects: service to the client, constant reinvestment, accessible prices, uniform quality, austerity, new technologies and hard work (...) but, invariably, I put ahead the factor that I consider is the fundamental one: our business philosophy with a strong social content, or said in other way, our unchangeable intention to make “an enterprise with soul.”<sup>3</sup>

In that way an enterprise responds to the “soul” of its starters and in Bimbo case, there is no doubt that the founders have known to give it a very particular impression to the company. Juan Pablo II has stated that “the enterprise must be seen as a place of meeting of many people that work altogether for the production of goods and services that is destined to the welfare of everybody. Only in an enterprise the is conceived as a community, the real dignity of work and of the workers can be kept”<sup>4</sup>. This is precisely what the founders of Bimbo have done. The sample of Mr. Lorenzo and of Mr. Roberto in their nearby to the people in their interest to deal with each personal problem as if it were the only one, in their human quality and in their congruence of life, shows that “the start, the person and the goal of all the social institutions has to be the human person, which due to its own nature has absolute necessity of the social life.”<sup>5</sup>

The declaration of a mission that has to be reached by everyone, implies the respect for the people that are going to carry it out and a way to be involved, to go out of the anonymous way. “An enterprise has to have something that encourages it, that it gives it sense, a purpose that is worthy, This purpose is, in certain sense, an illusion that is looked for, a why and a what for. To this purpose, it is called by us the mission of our enterprise.”<sup>6</sup>

Two words have summarized, at the beginning, the mission of Bimbo Group: To Believe-to Create and it was expressed, clearly, in the first publication in the newspapers dated on December, 1945 with the following words:

“On beginning, today, our operations, we want to communicate to Mexican public that we have pointed us as a rule to make always our products of an excellent quality and, besides, to give our distributors and clients, the right and efficient service the Mexico City, a great metropolis, requests duly.”

<sup>3</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 27.

<sup>4</sup> John Paul II, 1991: *Speech dated on III-19-91*.

<sup>5</sup> The Second Vatican Council: *Gaudium et spes*, n. 25.

<sup>6</sup> Servitje Sendra, R. 2003: *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 148.

From this mission on, that constituted a real reason of being, Bimbo Group was being built in such a way that its collaborators could, from the first moment, identify with their task. It was about to give them an important reason to work, in a way that the illusion to obtain it was a motivator to support the efforts that are involved to carry out. In this way, sources of work with a great sense for the workers were created. In these sources of work the task of each of them is linked with the task of the others, taking into account the intrinsic social dimension that the human work has.<sup>7</sup>

For everything that it has been mentioned above, it is not strange that the people from Bimbo is involved at their maximum with the enterprise. “The mission is, really, the agglutinated element of an enterprise. We can say that the soul of an organization is its people, however, we are not referring here to the quantity of persons that forms it but to the willing and to the passion of each person to serve. This, carried out altogether, constitutes the soul, the spirit that encourages the enterprise.”<sup>8</sup>

The definition of the mission of an enterprise is not other thing that the explicitation of its last purpose. John Paul II in the *Centesimus annus* has said very clear that “the finality of an enterprise is not only the production of benefits but instead the enterprise itself as community of men that, in different ways, look for satisfying their fundamental necessities and they constitute a particular group to the service of the whole society.”<sup>9</sup>

In Bimbo this ideal has been stated in its corporative mission:

“To elaborate and to commercialise food products, developing the value of our brands. We compromise ourselves to be a high productive enterprise and at the same time a human one, innovated, competitive one with a strong orientation towards its clients and to the final consumer. The world leader in bread maker and one of the best food enterprises to international level”.

This philosophy constitutes the support of all the enterprise and it is maintained like that without considering the economic and political fluctuations that can arise. Moreover, in environments of constant changes, specially due to the globalisation as well as the expansion of the company, to have a firm base is a warranty of reputation and of prestige. In this sense, “the personal and business succeed depend on different factors but in order to last in the time, they must be based on solid values and principles. Only the enterprises that prevail are, with a solid moral base, with a series of leading principles, those that are obtaining certain institutional force.”<sup>10</sup>

The business philosophy of Bimbo tries to foment the good habits among the collaborators in such a way that the development of the people is impelled. It can be said that the mission of the Group is built over the compromise of its people in such a way, to be in the service for everyone in the same way, the corporative values have the credibility and the support that are necessary to be translated in a philosophy supported by the facts. Basically, it is based in five universal principles which are adjusted perfectly well to the permanent principles of the Social Doctrine of the Church<sup>11</sup>:

**a) Dignity of the people:** that leads to deal with any person as a unique and irrepitable

<sup>7</sup> Cfr. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 273.

<sup>8</sup> Servitje Sendra, R, 2003: *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 150.

<sup>9</sup> John Paul II: *Centesimus annus*, n. 35.

<sup>10</sup> Servitje Sendra, R, 2003: *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. xxiii

<sup>11</sup> Cfr. *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 160.

human being, to respect and to deal with him with absolute justice. This is the principle or central value in which all the others are supported and it means that man has got his right to be respected and he has, at the same time, the obligation to respect the rest of the people.

- b) **Subsidiarity:** that the oldest does not make by himself what it must be done by the youngest. And that the youngest makes all his best, and the oldest only what it is necessary.
- c) **Solidarity:** it is understood as something reciprocal to be joined and compromised which lead to understand the condition of the other one and to want to help him. It includes the empathy, the service, the cooperation and the availability to share.
- d) **Common welfare:** the involves the set of material, cultural and spiritual conditions that allow and help to the integral development of everybody and of each member of the society. The enterprises must be entities with soul that are not only going to permit but at the same time they have to promote the realization of all their staff and the common welfare.
- e) **Authority:** it means to take all the right measures considering the common welfare and, projecting the means previously, to assure the existence of the society.

At the same time, from this business philosophy the corporative values of the Group are derived. Recently, the seven values of the company have been stated in a graphic way, in a way that one of the three primary or secondary colours corresponds to each one of them, forming six circles as a chain in whose centre appears, in white colour, the Person value, principle considered as the beginning and the end of the activities of the Group. Others values are: Passion, profitability, creativity, quality, trust and teamwork.

Therefore, according to the critical situations or problems that are arisen, specially with some custom or practice of the environment that supports its value, the enterprise has stated an ethical code that rules all its operations and that at the same time I considers the most frequent cases that can be against the principles or values of the company. Among other guidelines, it is stated what the attitude of the enterprise is according to the payment of the taxes, the suborning in the Custom Office, the fines in the routes, the relationship with the unions, the hiring and the staying of the directors. Besides, it is also applied some values that have a role in the daily operation such as the austerity in the business, the protection of the assets, the fulfilment of the laws. Finally, it is stated which is the compromise that the enterprise assumes considering its stakeholders; consumers, clients, shareholders, and partners, collaborators, laboral organizations, suppliers, with the society and with the competence and which is the compromise that is expected from the bosses. Facing 2010, Bimbo Group, has proposed itself to become the dominant leader of the bread maker in Latin American, and in order to get that, it has compromised itself to have an extraordinary place to work, an enterprise with leader and truthful brands for consumers, the supplier that is preferred by the clients and a solid enterprise for not only the shareholders but for the society too.

The business philosophy of the group involves, from the very beginning, and integral vision of the enterprise with social and economic purposes towards inside and outside that have been stated in the company in the following graphic:

| <b>THE ENTERPRISE HAS TWO PURPOSES:</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| <b>ECONOMIC</b>   | <b>SOCIAL</b>  |
| To satisfy the needs of the society, supplying goods or quality services.   | To contribute to the improvement and development of the society, to its good social being.           |
| To generate a great utility with which all the participants of the enterprise may obtain all the necessary things for their welfare and progress: salaries, services, security and profits. | To contribute to the improvement and to the development of its integrants, to its good social being. |

Behind this picture, the conception of the enterprise can be visualized as a community of persons that work in a permanent way to build a highly productive enterprise and specially a human one. From there that “the social internal purpose means, for Bimbo, to push and to support the integral development of the people that collaborate with the enterprise. For that reason, we say that the enterprise has to be a second school, not only because in it, its integrants take training courses, but it can also be formers of men through the work and through the relationship that is lived in it. We expect to have an enterprise that besides to serve to the society in a responsible way, it facilitates to its integrants to earn their living and at the same time to fulfil as persons.”<sup>12</sup>

These words point clearly that the purpose of Bimbo is not focused exclusively or simply in the production of benefits but that the existence itself of the enterprise is understood as a community of men and women that, in different ways, look for the satisfaction of their fundamental needs and they constitute a particular group to the service of the whole society. In this way, it is verified the words that are stated in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine: “the enterprise must be characterized for its capacity to serve to the common welfare of the society through the production of goods and useful services. (...) Besides this function that is typically economic, the enterprise also makes a social function, creating opportunities of meetings, of collaboration, of valuation of the capacities of the persons that are involved. So, in the enterprise, the economic dimension is a condition to obtain not only the economic objectives but also the social and moral ones, which must be followed altogether.”<sup>13</sup> From this that was mentioned before, it arises that the social responsibility of the enterprise implies the necessity to look further more of what it is strictly productive or economic to consider the social system altogether.

#### **IV. Application of the principles of the Social Doctrine**

<sup>12</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 107.

<sup>13</sup> *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 338.

In that way, it is going to consolidate a common effort which was present from those two words that have accompanied the company from the very beginning: To believe and to create. First of all, to believe in people, in the persons as purpose and not as a means to reach a corporative and a total human growth. in which only through the collaboration and through the compromise of everybody that form an enterprise, the planned goals can be obtained, because, as Carlos Llano affirms: “the join in the willing of the same objective, it is the hinge over which all the activity of the persons in the enterprise goes around.”<sup>14</sup> In Bimbo, this present reality is stated up to the point that it is spoken about “the unity of the purpose” as one of the characteristics of the team works.

To believe in the integrity is understood, in Bimbo Group, not only as a practice of business that gives great profits but also as a social responsibility that must be totally assumed to improve so complex challenges as the corruption and in that way, to contribute to the economic, social and cultural improvement of any country. And with this, it is involved to believe in the fundamental importance of the leadership to generate a sense of mission, to make people believe in a real attitude of service and to fulfil the compromised assumed with the society.

The influence of the business philosophy of Bimbo goes far away from its business. In fact, a research carried out in 1995 by the IPADE reveals that the 84% if the Mexican surveyed businessmen consider that the philosophy, the values and the principles clearly defined and widely known of Bimbo, constitute the essential base of the competitive advantage of this enterprise.”<sup>15</sup>

This appreciation coincides, totally, with Roberto Servitje Sendra’s conviction: “The competitive advantage of Bimbo, its spin, is not either in its organization or in its systems or in its technology. The base and the support of the enterprise, the first thing that must be considered in it, is its business philosophy. In front of the problematic that we are going to face, in front of the opportunities that are coming, above all, due to the internalisation of the economy, the opening of the markets and the socio-economic changes, it is necessary to have a business philosophy; a mystic rich deep one that involves not only the principal values, but also the great social principles. It is needed a philosophy that inspires the quantitative and qualitative growth, that supports the reinvestment, the research, the innovation, the creativity, the dynamics and the long-term vision. To talk about looking for the great social principles is to speak about pretending a social transformation of the enterprise, it is to believe in the dignity of the person and in the transcendent value of the work.”<sup>16</sup>

### **a) The dignity of the person**

The respect for the dignity of the person is one of the basic principles of the Social Doctrine in which any other principle or content finds fundament. In fact, through the years, in the teachings of the Church, the person is going to the reference point of all of them. En Bimbo, this principle is stated in the way how its founders were transmitting in a very natural way, through the daily coexisting and with their example, clear patterns of

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<sup>14</sup> Llano, C., 1997. *Ethical problems of the contemporaneous enterprise*. Fund of Economic Culture, Mexico, p. 188.

<sup>15</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 104.

<sup>16</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 104.

human relationships and integrity, giving each one of its collaborators the treatment that the person deserves. With the words said by John Paul II, “due to his dignity, the human being is always a value in him and by himself and as such he requires being considered and dealt. And by the contrary, he can never be dealt and considered as an usable object, a tool, a thing. The personal dignity is an indestructible property that belongs to every human being. In consequence, the individual can never be reduced to all of this that has wanted to crush and to cancel in the anonymity of his collectivity, of the institutions, of the structures, of the system.”<sup>17</sup>

This conception demonstrates clearly that behind a business philosophy there is an idea of enterprise as a motor of the personal and social development. Mr. Lorenzo Servitje Sendra explains it in the following way: “In Bimbo, we worry about giving the one who works that distinguished place that we recognize deeply: the personality of the human being as an eminent dignity. This brings as consequence inside the enterprises all a philosophy of personal dealing, of human relationships, of considerations to whom supply their work. To all of them, it is given a deal not of resources as commonly it is said, but a deal of persons that are associated to carry out a common project. (...) We are convinced that people do not work “for “the leaders or for the shareholders but they work “with” them.”<sup>18</sup> These words are echo of what it was written by John Paul II in the *Centesimus annus*: “Today, principally, to work is to work with others and work with others: it is to do something to somebody.”<sup>19</sup>

The deep respect for the human being has been stated in the manual of the company; “The central idea is to consider the work as a partner more than as a simple resource. This means that the worker will take part in the planning, the operation, the results and in the future of the company, in such a way that he/she is going to feel part of the company, instead of seeing his/her position only as a means to make his/her living. (...) It is necessary that the objectives of the workers and of the managers are congruent. The workers have to see the company as something that they have, as a mission, as his/her adventure. This property and sense of pertinence are necessary if the company is going to have any meaning for the worker. This is the only way to assure that the worker assumes a complete responsibility and so he makes his best effort.”<sup>20</sup>

The respect for the dignity of the people goes through the frontiers of the own enterprise and Bimbo Group proposes to promote it among its suppliers, clients and friends. This has been fulfilled from the advertising campaigns that they have always carried out a social purpose, reinforcing values as family, the harmony, the optimism and the policies of taking care of the environment. Definitely, in the case of the suppliers, the enterprise proposes to collaborate with them encouraging the communications, the trust and a strong sense of justice in such a way that nobody can profit at the expense of the suppliers but instead to look for obtaining a common and legitimate retribution.

It is interesting to see how the internal economic purposes that are proposed in Bimbo, are fundamental: “We are interested to be a different enterprise, in where the link that joins the collaborator with the enterprise is not only the work and the salary but something else. We are interested in each person feels the enterprise as his, that he is going to be informed about

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<sup>17</sup> John Paul II: *Christifideles laici*, n. 37.

<sup>18</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 13.

<sup>19</sup> John Paul II: *Centesimus annus*, n. 31.

<sup>20</sup> It is stated in the *Technical Note of the IPADE*, p. 9.

the situation of the enterprise, that he participates in the taking decisions of his work, that he finds, in it, not only the means to make his living with dignity but a place in which each one of them can improve and he can also fulfil as a person”.<sup>21</sup> All these aspects state a frequent requirement forgotten in the world of the enterprises that is necessary to be valued in a better way: “it must be managed to get that every person, basing on his own work, has all the right to be considered, at the same time, co-owner of this kind of great workshop in which it is committed with everybody.”<sup>22</sup>

Through this way what is stated in the Second Vatican Council in the middle of the 60’ can be lived. “In the economic enterprises people join themselves, that is to say, free and autonomous men, all of them created according to the image and to the resemblance to God. For that reason, taking into account the task that must be done by each of them and the necessity of a unitary management, owners, leaders and workers, all of them have to participate in the life of the enterprise actively.”<sup>23</sup>

## b) The participation

A community of people is only possible where there is participation. To participate implies not only to take part in something but specially and above all, to collaborate with other people and, insofar as it is done, this cooperation supposes a development and a personal improvement. “We start with the statement that the ethical quality of a social institution depends on its capacity of permitting that its members live as persons. To live as a person in the social life requires participating in an active way in the consecution of the purpose of the institutions in which each one develops his life, because to participate is to take part in something, but more specially and from the point of view of the good of the person, the participation is that situation that permits that the person collaborates together with other persons, and in that collaboration, not only does that person collaborate but also he improves himself. The participation is a possibility of the person, necessary for whom acts together with others, continues existing as a person.”<sup>24</sup>

Precisely just a little more the principle of the participation – understood as an obligation that everybody has to fulfil consciously, in a responsible way and considering the common welfare-,<sup>25</sup> we have to say that this can be obtained when in the enterprise, everybody support according to their specific responsibilities and with a disciplinary work in solidarity collaboration. In such sense, and it is well affirmed by Pilar Gómez Acebo, “talent and courage do not exclude nay member of the enterprise: we have to believe and to make each member feel that he can become imprescindibile thanks to what he can support or is already supporting.”<sup>26</sup>

In Bimbo Group, besides the participation that is fomented inside the enterprise so that each one participates in the solution of the problems of his work, the distribution of

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<sup>21</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, n. 121.

<sup>22</sup> *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 281.

<sup>23</sup> The Second Vatican Council: *Gaudium et spes*, n. 68.

<sup>24</sup> Fitte, H, 2004: *The enterprise as community of persons*, Conference IX-22-04.

<sup>25</sup> Cfr. *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, n. 1913-1917

<sup>26</sup> Gómez Acevedo, P: *Ethical supporting of woman to the business management*, in Fernandez Aguado, J., 2001; *The ethics in business*, Ariel, Barcelona, p. 75.

utilities is promoted as well as the selling of shares among all the collaborators, that is to say, the participation of the staff in the benefit and in the capital is looked for. In that way, it is stated that “the relationship between work and capital is also done through the participation of the workers in the property, in the management and in its profits.”<sup>27</sup>

In that way it is also understood by one of the founders of bimbo when he affirms: “We look for becoming the enterprise in a new human family in which all its integrants not only make their livings with dignity but they also fulfil themselves as men.”<sup>28</sup> In that way, the collaborators take part in an active way inside the enterprise and instead of being mere silent fulfillers, they become in partners, in active persons, knowing perfectly way the objectives and the necessities of the enterprise, with capacity to think, to support, to decide, and to compromise himself with him and with the enterprise. Mr. Lorenzo Servitje Sendra has said: “that the work has not to be only a task, but also a mission, a passion, an adventure. For that, the goals of workers have to be the same ones that the managers’ ones. Only in that way, they will assume their total responsibility and they will give the best of themselves.”<sup>29</sup>

In one of his traditional trimester messages that is given by Daniel Servitje, General Director of the Group and son of one of the founders, to all the managers, via satellite to all the operations, he has stated the necessity of the participation of all the staff: “The enterprise, *this enterprise*, is something that is not finished. The enterprise is built by all the collaborators of the Group. You are not an immobile piece, but *a group of persons* that belong to *an enterprise that is going to be built*. The enterprise has begun with an illusion, with the hope to have success, but it was never imagined to reach to the size that it has got now. It was born with a decision to challenge, *with passion, with compromise, as an adventure*. This is the adventure that we do not have to lose on growing as enterprise. *This is the spirit that as bosses have to inculcate.*”<sup>30</sup>

### c) The Subsidiarity

This principle states that a group or a person with bigger size and weight has not to fulfil functions that can be carried out very efficiently by other not so important group or person. In other words, “the societies that belong to superior order have to be in an attitude of assistance (subsidium), so, to support, to promote, to develop the respect of the persons.”<sup>31</sup> Considering the enterprise field, on organizing as a social group, it make people be responsible to support according to their possibilities. This supposes the respect and to foment the freedom as well as the diversity and the contribution of each one to the common welfare of everybody. “The Subsidiarity permits to recognize the colleague or the collaborator as other person, with his virtues and limits; as other subject that is similar to the others but that he contributes to the common effort from his position and from his capacities. The “other one” is a real member of the community and he is appreciated for what he does. In his contribution and in his active work, he is conscious of being developing himself thanks to hi collaboration with the group, not only from the technical

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<sup>27</sup> *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 281.

<sup>28</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 121.

<sup>29</sup> It is stated in Servitje Sendra, R. 2003: *Strategy in the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 105.

<sup>30</sup> Servitje, D., 2002: *General Direction Message*, X-1-02.

<sup>31</sup> *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, n. 186.

or material point of view, but also on knowing of being part of a community of people that work to obtain a common welfare.”<sup>32</sup>

The subsidiarity constitutes an ethical frame for the autonomy, it foments the initiative and the enterprising spirit and it promotes the personal responsibility. It can be said that the purpose of the Subsidiarity is to create the structures in which the persons can fulfil themselves as human beings. As to delegate consists of giving power to the collaborators, the Subsidiarity considers the dignity, the freedom and the diversity of employees and above all, their capacity to contribute to the common welfare not only of the enterprise but of the society too.

These ideas- that can sound as a little theoretical- have their correlate in day –to-day of Bimbo Group. Since from its beginning, one of its founders has supported that “a healthy application of this principle becomes in the principal motor for the development of the persons. It gives trust on themselves; they discover that they can be creative ones; their initiatives come true; they use their latent capacities and they are more productive in benefit of themselves, of their enterprise and of their community. Without the application of this principle, the persons are maintained as younger, without responsibility, enthusiasm nor trust on themselves.”<sup>33</sup>

Numerous testimonies of different managers of Bimbo coincide in pointing different aspects in which the Subsidiarity is one of the keys of the Group. So, for example, it is remarkable the environment of work where the peoples nor only are respected but they are also invited to assume the different responsibilities of each position; the effort to recognize the aptitudes of each employee to place him according to his functions, offering him the necessary training for each position; to give the real power to the workers and at the same time the necessary support to develop their skills and capacities; to assume their mistakes as a possibility of learning and enrich and not only as a guilt that deceives punishment; to stimulate the initiative and the business spirit, awarding the innovations; to maintain the unity of the organization and the sense of compromise to the business philosophy above other interests. In this way, the enterprise offers an environment of work in which everybody seeing themselves as associated with a common welfare that is to service to all the community.

#### **d) The solidarity**

The solidarity, understood as “the firm and perseverant determination to be involved with the common welfare, that is to say, for the welfare of everybody and of each of them, so that all of us are really responsible by everybody.”<sup>34</sup> Bimbo’s compromise with the solidarity also leads to worry about the development in its workers, through the education, the conscious of basic social aspect as the saving of capital for their future and for their children’s. For that reason, many managers of the company offered financing advising to their collaborators as a way to help them in the decisions that they have to take in relation to their incomes and investments. It is not strange that Mr. Servitje Sendra, addressing to his mangers, has said: “As directors of the company, we have to build in an active way in the economic recovery of Mexico, so that every citizen of the country can enjoy of the quality of life that they deceive.

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<sup>32</sup> Fitte, H., 2004: *The enterprise as community of persons*, Conference, IX-22-04.

<sup>33</sup> Servitje Sendra, R., 2003: *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 129.

<sup>34</sup> John Paul II: *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, n. 38.

We have to supply them the best of us, to modernize systems and processes, to obtain quality and productivity with the purpose of to be forefront of this change.”<sup>35</sup>

Precisely, Pio XI has pointed as a requirement for the solidarity, the obligation of whom have more availability of money and of talents, to invest them in creating new sources of licit employments and at the same time to foment other ones as a way to contribute to the common welfare, collaborating, in this way, in the promotion of people and making the workers be possible the new initiatives.<sup>36</sup>

In that way, it is manifested that the solidarity does not only consist of helping and giving the own things but also it is to do a social use of the goods and received talents. Taking this idea to the field of the enterprise, it is understood that the solidarity assumes, today a decisive role in the human relationships and it leads to provide and to support the integral development of who collaborate with it to make it prosper. Saying in other words, it is about not only to work together with others but at the same time to do its respecting their condition of persons. In that way, it is shown that every enterprise and specially Bimbo Group, “is mainly a collective effort and collaboration among persons. Its ethical value does not reduce to its capacity of producing goods and services but it is also in its capacity to organize the individuals in a collective effort whose final result goes far away of all the individual supports.”<sup>37</sup>

#### e) The common welfare

Everything that has been mentioned above manifestates the cooperation binds the people and it links them in the research of the common welfare. In fact, with words said by Marcelo Paladino, “it is needed the cooperation of each individual to obtain the purpose of the life of the society: that everybody has the possibility of fulfilling themselves as persons. This is what contributes to the common welfare. For that reason, the common welfare and the construction of the trust focus principally on the efforts of the individuals, stimulated by their necessities, wishes or interests. For that reason that the common welfare can only be done and carry to its maximum expression provided that each person contributes with his personal effort in the social cooperation.”<sup>38</sup>

In that way, the common welfare, understood as “the set of social conditions that permits the citizens the convenient and total development of their own perfection”,<sup>39</sup> constitutes in a unity factor that “it permits that the persons are integrated in a common business project that is not the one of “the”enterprise, but it is the one of “his” enterprise, because it has arisen from themselves, from the interior of its persons, they have found the way to do it in an attractive way and they have got good results being efficient. For that, the coordinated common action from whom are integrating the organization is not a goal but the consequence of the join of people that, among other things, it is manifestates in that coordinated and cooperative action since the workers feel themselves integrated in that project and besides they like what they are doing, with whom they are doing it and for whom they are doing it, aspects in which the unit is expressed and shown.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>35</sup> It is stated in Bimbo Group, 1997: *Response to changing times*, Case DP-162; IPADE, p. 6.

<sup>36</sup> Cfr. Pio X: *Quadragesimo anno*, n. 51.

<sup>37</sup> Fitte, H., 2004: *The enterprise as community of persons*, Conference, IX-22-04.

<sup>38</sup> Paladino, M. 2004: *The responsibility of the enterprise in the society*, Ariel, Buenos Aires, p. 49.

<sup>39</sup> Juan XXIII: *Pocem in terris*, n. 58.

In that point it can be taken the similarity of the orchestra. Each one of its musicians has his own particular goal, to play the music with his own instrument, although he realizes that what he is carrying out is a part of a symphony, common purpose of the group. Each one, playing his score, gives to his behaviour a sense that, by itself, would not have. For that reason, who looks for the common purpose, is also looking for his own purpose; the particular welfare can not live without the common welfare of the society. And if this one does not exist, the individual action of each person is not necessary. At last, in order to finish with an example, the fact to play any musician his part as element of the whole, in no way his personality is taken away or annulled and at the same the composition belongs to him though, on being played by several ones simultaneously, it is common.

In this way, the personal fulfilment is not against the common welfare of everybody; what is more, that one is only obtained in and through it. In consequence, there can not be any alternative or competence among the individual purposes and the ones of the enterprises. In every community of persons, these ones are the first ones, in a way that the societies have to contribute to the development of the individuals and they, at the same time, have to collaborate, according to their capacities, to the common welfare of everybody. Without this last one, the personal development would not be possible either. This last one must be appeared in the enterprise. "The common welfare is not against the personal welfare, but it is interlaced with it, it powers it, it makes it be possible, it develops it and, in all the cases it is subordinated to it. For that reason, those who participate in the activity of the enterprise have to collaborate positively towards the common welfare of itself as his ethical obligation: some of them supporting initiatives and work; others, capital or physical or financing resources, etc. In the same way, all the citizens have to collaborate in the common welfare of the enterprise in general."<sup>41</sup>

The global activity of an enterprise is "inserted in the frame of the common welfare"<sup>42</sup>, and for that reason its first social responsibility is to provide sources of employment. In this sense, Bimbo is a great support in the creation of employment. It offers the society first quality products; it contributes to the economy of the country with all the cycle of production and sales, that it includes from the development of suppliers up to its policy of reinvestment and of rigorous payment of its taxes. It generates and produces richness and economic growth, contributing in that way to the social development. As the relationship of the enterprise with the common welfare of the society is not out of what the enterprise is and makes, Bimbo also looks for supporting to all the communities in which it works and it tries to make its clients and competitors be known about its business philosophy in order to make them discover that there is a right, integrated and correct way of doing business.

## **f) The authority**

Far away of the good intentions, it is evident that each person tries to obtain his particular goal, each man proposes himself legitimately to reach his own perfection, his

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<sup>40</sup> Gómez, J.M. 1990: *Human Resources*, Encuentro Ediciones, Madrid, p. 150.

<sup>41</sup> Argandoña, A., 1994: *The ethics in the enterprise*, Technical Note of the Division of Research of IESE, Barcelona, p. 12.

<sup>42</sup> John Paul II, 1987: *Speech to the Argentine businessmen*, IV-11-87, n. 4.

own goal. Once this is said, how is it possible to harmonize the multiple individual hopes with the research of the common welfare? There is not doubt that in each human group, each integrant tried to reach his own welfare, it would produce a situation of chaos and untidiness that would neutralize the common actions. So, there must be somebody that is in the condition to impose his point of view about the social purpose to which all the members of a group will have to tend, overcoming in that way the individual and particular conceptions of each one. “Wherever there are many people to obtain a determined purpose, everything is available for the one to whom the eminent grade of that purpose belongs to, as it happens in the army.”<sup>43</sup>

In other words, the person that leads knows better than the others what is convenient for the group and it is within his responsibilities to know deeply the common welfare and to transmit it to the rest of the people. What a leader has to do is to turn the more or less indifferent group of individuals into a set of people involved with a common purpose. From here, the principle of authority derives. This principle was clearly described by Juan XXIII: “the authority consist of the authority of ordering according to the right reason.”<sup>44</sup>

Now well, how was this principle transmitted? In Bimbo Group, there is a premise that accompanies all its life: “An enterprise will whatever it is its staff and this one whatever it their boss”. This conviction, born and transmitted by its founders, is present in every culture of the enterprise. In order to obtain it, its founders have gone ahead. “My task has been of leadership with the wonderful opportunity to serve to many people. My role of boss has not only permitted me to teach but it has also permitted me to learn. Not only to transmit values but to be the first one that has to live them.”<sup>45</sup> In fact, in the enterprise, there is a deep respect and thankful to the founders who, with their example, inspire the others to keep these ideals. So it is understood by an employee of the enterprise: “In Bimbo, there have always been teachers. The first ones have been the founders, from there all the teaching-learning process has begun.”

The impression that its founders have left, it goes far away any model of leadership and more than ones testimony has shown it: “to be able to participate in the Group and to belong to it, has been a continuous school of learning of business philosophy and from that point of view, the business leadership which has been shown by its founders, is something that gives any person that has passed through the group, an indelible track”<sup>46</sup>

In Bimbo, it can be said that the bosses are the ones who keep the spirit of the company. If they propose it or not, they not only shape the attitudes and the way of being of the enterprise altogether but they will also, in a long-term, form a particular style of enterprise. The most important is that the values become life and for that it is insustituible the role of the leaders: “The bosses, the persons that play any role of leadership, in any level, have to know, fell, want and live together with the values.” If the bosses do not understand, do not want or they only act “a as not what they say”, that things are not going good. In Bimbo, when any boss does not feel,, does not want, we ask him that he has to look for other thing to do: “here you are not going to fulfilled”, we say to him. The boss of any level has to be a person that adopts

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<sup>43</sup> Tomás de Aquino: *Summa contra gentiles*, III, 64.

<sup>44</sup> Juan XXIII: *Pacem in terris*, n. 47.

<sup>45</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 93.

<sup>46</sup> Bimbo, 1995: *An effort through the years*, Bimbo Group, Mexico, p. 111.

the philosophy, that in any way he forms part of it, of the way of thinking that is prominent in the enterprise, that he adopts its values. This is the secret of the success.”<sup>47</sup>

This conviction is so deep that one of its founders affirms:” Without leaders we could not obtain our goal.”<sup>48</sup> For that reason a special care is taken at the moment to select bosses, In any way, they try to see if his way of thinking and his personal values are compatible with the ones that face the business philosophy and if they are not the same, they make him now about it. There have been cases in which the persons finish abandoning the enterprise because they do not coincide with the corporative values. The Following basic requirement, among others, is considered: integrity; intelligence; leadership; conscious of rentability; approach to the results and opening to the change.

The best of a business philosophy is that it has been shared by everybody and lived in day-today. Mr. Rorberto Servitje Sendra says up to what point it is transmitted and contaminated in his company. There is no doubt that the persons well informed and involved, participate, think and support. They are the company. The quality of everyday, the service of everyday, the attention to the public of everyday; all of them are details that are adding. And I believe that without a clear philosophy and really lived- because written is one thing and lived is other thing- it is very difficult to share. Our enterprises get ahead in front of the competence, and this is due to the enormous force of their people.”<sup>49</sup>

## V. Conclusions

The success of Bimbo Group could also be measured through the volumes of sales, quality of its products or internationalisation of its business. However, the impact in its people, in its environment and in the countries where it works, is impossible to quantify. Just for being a whole human enterprise that bets for the ethical values, its goals are supported in each person that makes them be possible and for that reason it is impossible to do any calculation.

Through all these pages, it has been tried to demonstrate the Bimbo Group joins persons that are very involved with their work and with the philosophy of the enterprise, that they act with motivations far away of what it merely economic, that they bet for the team work, the innovation and the long-term results. It can be proved as the social responsibility does not derive from a social contract but it is based on the respect to the human person and on the solidarity of the enterprise in the harmonious promotion and it activated the common welfare. Behind of each of these aspects, it is the impression that has been left by the founders who have really been right businessmen; such as it was expressed by John Paul II: “An enterprise that respects its social finalities, requires, evidently, a model of deep human businessman, conscious of his duties, honest and involved of a deep social sense which makes him be able to reject the inclination towards the egoism in order to prefer more the richness of the love than the love to the richness:”<sup>50</sup>

The lath that has been left by the founders of Bimbo is high. Perhaps there, the

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<sup>47</sup> Servitje Sendra, R., 2003. *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 152.

<sup>48</sup> Servitje Sendra, R., 2003. *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 196.

<sup>49</sup> Servitja Sendra, R., 2003. *Strategy of the business success*, Prentice Hall, Mexico, p. 154.

<sup>50</sup> John Paul II. *Speech to the Argentine businessmen*, IV-10-87

greatest challenge of every enterprise is: to keep faithful to this philosophy that has received as a legacy if its beginners that- with their lives and with their examples of integrity will always be the right authors of that success.

To those who come behind, will have the challenge no to go apart from the successful marked way that has been marked by them, without forgetting that it is about a permanent conquer and to pass along it day –to- day, it is proved that here is a long way to reach the goal. For that, it was worked on what is called Vision 2010 that has as its objective to lead the actions of all the staff towards what the Group requires in the future and to define the strategic objectives that lead Bimbo to be an “extraordinary place to work” The Vision 2010 is expressed in the following way:

- A great informed team that work in networks and that it foments decisions where they are necessary to be takes.
- An organization aimed to results, focusing on getting shared goals, learning from them.
- A winner appasionated team, with pride of belonging, that it celebrates its victories in a shared way.
- With leaders that are involved with the values of the enterprise, that inspire to the collaborators and they promote the change.
- A place where the person is valorated and his diversity is respected.

Daniel Servitje comments: “We want the personal to feel enthusiastic, with illusion for what they do. We want them to feel proud of belonging to a Group in which he can support, collaborate, and work in teams. We want to continue building an enterprise that exists for many generations, that it is going to be the leader in each country to where we reach, taking advantage of the synergy that the Group can give, but at the same time, taking in advance what the personal can give and the culture that each country can support”. In order to illustrate this challenge, Daniel Servitje is willing to compare the challenge that the enterprise is facing with the climbing to the mountain or with the exercise of a sport. This requires training, preparation and that each one supports the best of oneself in his try. Definitely, it is about learning in a continuous way to go ahead to the ground everyday, with the renovated illusion top reach the proposed objectives.

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