

Family and Business—Reciprocal Educators Towards the Common Good

Prof. Maximilian B. Torres, Ph.d.

Abstract

Family “is the principal place of interpersonal relationships, *the first and vital cell of society*” (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 211). It is “[t]he first and fundamental structure for ‘human ecology’” where the person discovers, through love, “what it actually means to be a person” (*ibid.* 212).

As such, family is the seed bed of the common good, “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily” (*ibid.* 164). Thus, family would appear to be that institution most necessary to foment and sustain the common good.

“By exercising its mission to **educate**, the family contributes to the common good and constitutes the first school of social virtue, which all societies need. In the family, persons are helped to grow in freedom and responsibility, indispensable prerequisites for any function in society” (*ibid.* 238).

“**Businesses** should be characterized by their capacity to serve the common good of society through the production of useful goods and services... In a business undertaking, [however], the economic dimension is the condition for attaining not only economic goals, but also social and moral goals, which are all pursued together. (*ibid.* 338). Specifically, “[t]he Church’s social doctrine insists on the need for business owners and management to strive to structure work in such a way so as to promote the family” (*ibid.* 345).

The question of the conference is how the purpose and practice of business in an inclusive economy might build institutions for the common good. Answer: by building the family. This raises the further question of how a reciprocal, virtuous **dynamic** might be fomented whereby family education promotes business, which in turn promotes the family. This paper proposes an answer that question.