

Parochiecursus digitaal: *Sociale Leer: Kernwapens*

Themagebied 11. Vrede en veiligheid

(auteur: Huub Flohr)

Overzicht programma videopresentaties

Sociale leer 8: <i>Kernwapens</i>	Sociale leer 4: <i>Doodstraf</i>	Sociale leer 25: <i>Omgang met geweld</i>
<i>Vredesethiek en onconventionele vormen van oorlogsvoering*</i>	<i>Ontwikkeling, de nieuwe naam voor vrede*</i>	<i>Vrede en verzoening*</i>

*= in de planning

Sociale leer video 8: *Verbod op kernwapens volgens paus Franciscus*

Bij gelegenheid van het VN-verdrag over verbod op kernwapens dat op 22 januari 2021 van kracht werd spreekt pastor Flohr over het standpunt van de kerk bij monde van Paus Franciscus.

De paus heeft op 24 november 2019 in Nagasaki samengevat wat hij bij eerdere gelegenheden hierover heeft gezegd vanaf 2014. Het belangrijkste document daarvan is **de toespraak** die hij op **10 november 2017** hield tijdens een conferentie over dit onderwerp georganiseerd in Vaticaanstad door het Vaticaan. Deze tekst, die hier integraal wordt weergegeven, luidt in het Engels:

Dear Friends,

I offer a cordial welcome to each of you and I express my deep gratitude for your presence here and your work in the service of the common good. I thank Cardinal Turkson for his greeting and introduction.

In this Symposium, you have met to discuss issues that are critical both in themselves and in the light of the complex political challenges of the current international scene, marked as it is by a climate of instability and conflict. A certain pessimism might make us think that “prospects for a world free from nuclear arms and for integral disarmament”, the theme of your meeting, appear increasingly remote. Indeed, the escalation of the arms race continues unabated and the price of modernizing and developing weaponry, not only nuclear weapons, represents a considerable expense for nations. As a result, the real priorities facing our human family, such as the fight against poverty, the promotion of peace, the undertaking of educational, ecological and healthcare projects, and the development of human rights, are relegated to second place (cf. Message to the Conference on the Humanitarian Impact of Nuclear Weapons, 7 December 2014).

Nor can we fail to be genuinely concerned by the catastrophic humanitarian and environmental effects of any employment of nuclear devices. If we also take into account the risk of an accidental detonation as a result of error of any kind, the threat of their use, as well as their very possession, is to be firmly condemned. For they exist in the service of a mentality of fear that affects not only the parties in conflict but the entire human race. International relations cannot be held captive to

military force, mutual intimidation, and the parading of stockpiles of arms. Weapons of mass destruction, particularly nuclear weapons, create nothing but a false sense of security. They cannot constitute the basis for peaceful coexistence between members of the human family, which must rather be inspired by an ethics of solidarity (cf. Message to the United Nations Conference to Negotiate a Legally Binding Instrument to Prohibit Nuclear Weapons, 27 March 2017). Essential in this regard is the witness given by the Hibakusha, the survivors of the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, together with other victims of nuclear arms testing. May their prophetic voice serve as a warning, above all for coming generations!

Furthermore, weapons that result in the destruction of the human race are senseless even from a tactical standpoint. For that matter, while true science is always at the service of humanity, in our time we are increasingly troubled by the misuse of certain projects originally conceived for a good cause. Suffice it to note that nuclear technologies are now spreading, also through digital communications, and that the instruments of international law have not prevented new states from joining those already in possession of nuclear weapons. The resulting scenarios are deeply disturbing if we consider the challenges of contemporary geopolitics, like terrorism or asymmetric warfare.

At the same time, a healthy realism continues to shine a light of hope on our unruly world. Recently, for example, in a historic vote at the United Nations, the majority of the members of the international community determined that nuclear weapons are not only immoral, but must also be considered an illegal means of warfare. This decision filled a significant juridical lacuna, inasmuch as chemical weapons, biological weapons, anti-human mines and cluster bombs are all expressly prohibited by international conventions. Even more important is the fact that it was mainly the result of a “humanitarian initiative” sponsored by a significant alliance between civil society, states, international organizations, churches, academies and groups of experts. The document that you, distinguished recipients of the Nobel Prize, have consigned to me is a part of this, and I express my gratitude and appreciation for it.

*This year marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* of Pope Paul VI. That Encyclical, in developing the Christian concept of the person, set forth the notion of integral human development and proposed it as “the new name of peace”. In this memorable and still timely document, the Pope stated succinctly that “development cannot be restricted to economic growth alone. To be authentic, it must be integral; it must foster the development of each man and of the whole man” (No. 14).*

We need, then, to reject the culture of waste and to care for individuals and peoples labouring under painful disparities through patient efforts to favour processes of solidarity over selfish and contingent interests. This also entails integrating the individual and the social dimensions through the application of the principle of subsidiarity, encouraging the contribution of all, as individuals and as groups. Lastly, there is a need to promote human beings in the indissoluble unity of soul and body, of contemplation and action.

*In this way, progress that is both effective and inclusive can achieve the utopia of a world free of deadly instruments of aggression, contrary to the criticism of those who consider idealistic any process of dismantling arsenals. The teaching of John XXIII remains ever valid. In pointing to the goal of an integral disarmament, he stated: “Unless this process of disarmament be thoroughgoing and complete, and reach men’s very souls, it is impossible to stop the arms race, or to reduce armaments, or – and this is the main thing – ultimately to abolish them entirely” (*Pacem in Terris*, 11 April 1963).*

The Church does not tire of offering the world this wisdom and the actions it inspires, conscious that integral development is the beneficial path that the human family is called to travel. I encourage you

to carry forward this activity with patience and constancy, in the trust that the Lord is ever at our side. May he bless each of you and your efforts in the service of justice and peace. Thank you.

Deze tekst wordt door pastor Flohr geanalyseerd op de belangrijkste elementen die het verbod van kernwapens moreel en nu ook wettelijk dragen en wel met betrekking tot het gebruik, het bezit en het produceren van kernwapens.

Vervolgens staat hij stil bij de rol van de kerk in dit gehele proces en stelt vast dat vanaf paus Johannes XXIII de kerk zich heeft ingezet voor het afschaffen van kernwapens, zowel met initiatieven zoals het beëindigen van de Cubacrisis in de zestiger jaren en het promoten van het VN-verdrag met het organiseren van conferenties hierover als in geschriften zoals de eerste vredesencycliek **Pacem in terris**, van Johannes XXIII en de encycliek over ontwikkeling als de basis voor duurzame vrede van Paulus VI, **Populorum progressio**, en de stellingnames van het Vaticaan en bisschoppengconferenties over o.a. kernwapens in de 70er jaren. Destijds heeft alleen de Amerikaanse bisschoppengconferentie het bezit van kernwapens als moreel ontoelaatbaar gediskwalificeerd. Nu, onder paus Franciscus, is dat standpunt ook door het Vaticaan ingenomen.

Tenslotte pleit pastor Flohr ervoor dat het VN-verdrag ook door Nederland of misschien zelfs Amerika als eerste van de NAVOlanden en van de negen landen die over kernwapens beschikken, zal worden ondertekend, wat ertoe helpt om proactief te werken aan het afschaffen van kernwapens. Dat zal ook consequenties hebben voor het niet langer financieren van de productie ervan door o.a. pensioenfondsen en andere beheerders van collectief geld.

Vragen tot verdieping van ter onderlinge uitwisseling:

- *Zijn protestmarsen zoals in de 70er jaren met als motto ‘kernwapens de wereld uit te beginnen bij Nederland’ nog steeds een adequaat middel om het ideaal van een kernwapenvrije wereld dichterbij te brengen, zo ja, waarom, zo nee, waarom niet?*
- *Waarom zou de kerk zich druk moeten maken over deze kwestie en daar zo’n prominente rol bij moeten spelen?*
- *Hoe zouden wij als parochie de vredesweek weer meer inhoud kunnen geven?*