



Pontificium Consilium  
*Cor Unum*



Pontificium Consilium  
*Cor Unum*

# ACTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

## LOVE NEVER FAILS

Perspectives 10 years after the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*

ACTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS  
LOVE NEVER FAILS



**Vatican City**  
February 25-26, 2016



EN

## INDEX

## Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*

Palazzo San Pio X  
Via della Conciliazione, 5  
V-00120 Vatican City

Tel.: + 39.06.69889411  
Fax: + 39.06.69.88.11.62  
www.corunumjubilaem.va  
email: corunum@corunum.va

Cover Image: *Gift of the Mantle*, Giotto, fresco, (ca. 1295-99).  
Archivio fotografico del Sacro Convento di San Francesco in Assisi

Photo credit:  
Osservatore Romano  
Cristian Gennari

- ▶ **Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* - Introduction** p. 5
- ▶ **Audience with Pope Francis** p. 9  
HOLY FATHER'S ADDRESS  
SECRETARY'S ADDRESS TO THE HOLY FATHER
- ▶ **Programme** p. 15
- ▶ **Welcome address** p. 19  
MSGR. GIAMPIETRO DAL TOSO
- ▶ ***Deus Caritas Est: Love and Truth Create a New World*** p. 25  
H.E. CARD. GERHARD LUDWIG MÜLLER
- ▶ **The Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est: Challenges for Catholic Charitable Organizations*** p. 37  
DR. MICHAEL THIO
- ▶ **The Jewish Perspective on Biblical Love** p. 47  
RABBI DAVID SHLOMO ROSEN
- ▶ **The Muslim Perspective of Mercy** p. 57  
PROF. SAEED AHMED KHAN
- ▶ **The Christian Message of Charity: New Insights for Modern Man** p. 67  
PROF. FABRICE HADJADJ
- ▶ **The Ongoing Relevance of *Deus Caritas Est* for the Church's Service of Charity** p. 81  
H.E. CARD. LUIS ANTONIO G. TAGLE

▶ <b>Guidelines of Christian Anthropology for the Church's Service of Charity in Light of the Encyclical <i>Deus Caritas Est</i></b> PROF. FR. PAOLO ASOLAN	p. 91
▶ <b>The Encyclical <i>Deus Caritas Est</i>: Perspectives for a Theology of Charity</b> PROF. RAINER GEHRIG	p. 105
▶ <b>Testimonies</b> MARINA ALMEIDA COSTA, <i>CARITAS CABO VERDE</i> ROY MOUSSALLI, <i>SYRIAN SOCIETY FOR SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT</i> ALEJANDRO MARIUS, <i>ASOCIACIÓN CIVIL TRABAJO Y PERSONA</i> EDUARDO M. ALMEIDA, <i>INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK</i>	p. 127
▶ <b>Final remarks</b> MSGR. GIAMPIETRO DAL TOSO	p. 157
▶ <b>Eucharistic Concelebrations - Homilies</b> H.E. CARD. PAUL JOSEF CORDES, FEBRUARY 25, 2016 H.E. CARD. ROBERT SARAH, FEBRUARY 26, 2016	p. 165
▶ <b>Meditations</b> REV. FRANCESCO GIOSUÈ VOLTAGGIO	p. 173
▶ <b>List of Participants</b>	p. 185

## INTRODUCTION

Established by Pope Paul VI in 1971, the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, in the words of Benedict XVI, is in charge of directing and coordinating the organizations and charitable initiatives of the Catholic Church.

The Dicastery carries out diverse activities covering three main areas:

- To assist the Pope and be his instrument for carrying out special initiatives in the field of humanitarian ac-

tions when disasters occur, or in the field of integral human promotion;

- To encourage and coordinate the initiatives of Catholic Aid Organizations through the exchange of information and by promoting cooperation;
- To foster the catechesis and theology of charity.

In this context, The Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, published on January 25, 2006, is a magisterial document that



profoundly contributed to achieve many important results, promoting the service of charity as one of the core missions of the Catholic Church.

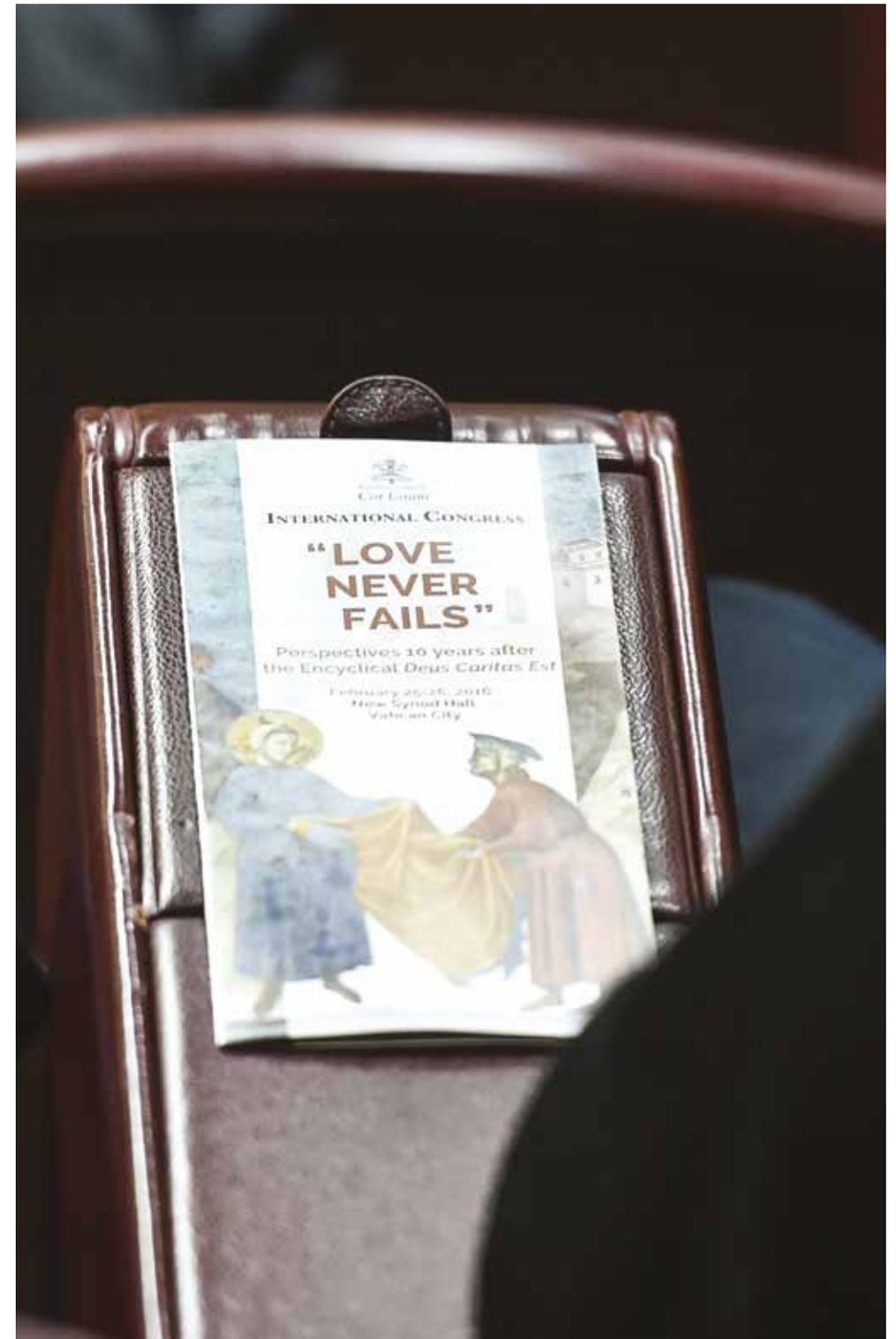
In the year that marks the 10th anniversary of its promulgation, the Pontifical Council *Cor Unum*, with the encouragement of Pope Francis, has therefore organized the International Congress "Love never fails" (1 Cor 13:8). Perspectives 10 years after the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*, which took place at the Vatican City, New Synod Hall on February 25-26, 2016, year of the Jubilee of Mercy.

We are glad to present you the Acts of this International Congress that testified the participation of representatives of the Episcopal Conferences, charitable organizations, the Roman Curia, as well as Ambassadors accredited to the Holy See.

The Congress, besides being a great moment of ecclesial communion- in particular thanks to the words of the Pope- emphasized the relevance of the message of the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est*.

The several contributions highlighted, from different points of view, how this papal document is still a valid benchmark for the Church's ministry of charity, by which millions of people are universally reached, and thanks to which the Church offers a great testimony of God's love for man.

In thanking the participants and all those who contributed to the realization of the Congress, we are glad to offer these Acts so that they may take on a new life in the individual ambits of work in which we carry out our service for the people. ■



# THE ENCYCLICAL *DEUS CARITAS EST*: PERSPECTIVES FOR A THEOLOGY OF CHARITY

Prof. Rainer Gehrig



## Introduction

A little over ten years ago I was here, among the participants in the International Conference on Charity (January 2006), animated by great curiosity, waiting for the first encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI, which, in addition, was precisely on charity. For those who follow this theme, the document constituted recognition and necessary guidance, for the theology of charity had long been unaddressed in terms of a reflection by papal Magisterium (Pompey, 2007, p. 20). Right before the publication of the Encyclical, during the audience the Pope gave us a clear message, proposing an introduction and guidance to the understanding of his document: "in this Encyclical, the themes 'God', 'Christ' and 'Love' are fused together as the central guide of the Christian faith" (Benedict XVI, 2006b). The answers in the theological context were many, whereby the

encyclical was defined as a "catalyst for the subsequent development of the theology of charity" (Baumann, 2014, p.111), "an inspired theological program for a renewed practice of the Church" (Pompey, 2007, p.9). Although the Holy Father's aim was not to identify, in this document, the frame of reference of the theology of charity in terms of a theological science, it does contain some basic perspectives. Along with the subsequent encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, 2009, *charity in truth* became, from that moment on, a central doctrine for the development of a theological foundation of the charitable service of the Church. I will hereby present several reflections, without attempting to provide an exhaustive dissertation, i.e. not to be considered as a regulatory framework for the development of a theology of charity but rather as a proposal for a dialogue among the coordinators of social and

charitable service and its workers. My goal is to prompt a more systematic reflection, engrained and practiced in the realms of theological education and formation, with special emphasis on the charitable action of the Church and her structures.

### 1. How should we conceive a theology of charity today?

In his first Encyclical Benedict XVI identified a key-element to answer this question, raised by Church magisterium. The theological understanding of charity revolves around the theological and anthropological dimensions of love, which the Pope addresses with thorough philosophical, biblical and theological discourse. It is necessary to reaffirm this centrality today, for the theology of charity is being questioned in various environments, some of which I shall hereby refer to.

#### 1.1. Targets of a developing discipline

The traditional compendiums on the theology of charity, such as that by Royo Marín (1963) present the characterising traits of theological virtues from the Thomistic perspective of morality as love of God, love of self and love of neighbour, each presented according to the known criteria of general and specific moral principles, characterised by a systematic classification of the practice of charity in works of mercy, of positive aspects, and of the elements that hinder this love. All

explanations are addressed to a Christian, observant readership expecting systematic theological guidance. Society is presented as the recipient of charity, in terms of its social dimension. Systematic clarity is centered on the individual and on his effort to grow in the virtue of charity, expounding on the What, When and How Much in the practice of charity, but failing to delve into the accompaniment of a needy person, on how to make concrete use of faith in charitable activity, how to organize communities for action, how a charitable structure should be organized, and how to address the causes of structural impoverishment and injustice in our globalised world. Before this traditional moral explanation, still in use to spell out the theological features of Christian diakonia (Oriol Taret, 2000, pp. 208-243) at the end of the 19th century there arose the need for a reflection on organized charitable activity against the backdrop of industrialised societies, of a dawning welfare state, of a more systematic organization of social and economic sectors, of an analysis of the social realm with the adoption of empirical instruments, along with the need to professionalise social service. Given this situation of globalized modernity, there also arose the need for training and reflection, which in Germany, in the early 20th century, led to the establishment of dedicated Centres for Studies on Charity and related academic education,

along with a coordination of charitable activities, first at national level (1897) and then at diocesan level, that took the name of Caritas. In this context the theology of charity is articulated as: "a science of charity that deals with the respective Christian virtues, in so far as it is revealed in Christian community life, understood as freedom of expression based on the conscience and will of the community inspired by the supernatural realm, in the free, urgent support to the community (emergency), which arises from strength and motivation from the supernatural love of God." (Keller, 1925, p.45, unofficial translation)

As a practical science, this theology avails itself of various auxiliary sciences (human sciences), it carries out an historical survey of charitable activity analyzing organized practice in support of various groups of people in state of need, in the framework of cooperation with the welfare state and other social agents. As regards the individual moral approach, it is noteworthy highlighting the "communitarian" aspect and "free intervention" in the given circumstances (welfare state and conciliation based on the principle of subsidiarity). On the basis of the experiences and conditions of the German academic realm, the theology of charity evolved in the direction of a science of charity recognized as a separate discipline, as occurred with the social doctrine of the Church,

in academic departments of Theology, notably after the Second Vatican Council. Comparing various definitions of the theology of charity (Pompey, 1997, 1999, 2001; Haslinger, 2004, 2009; Hilpert, 1997) makes it possible to summarize a set of common points shared by the same authors:

- ▶ All authors agree that the theology of charity/science of charity is a theological discipline with a specific role.
- ▶ It falls in the area of practical sciences, the science of action.
- ▶ The field of study and research is the practice of charity by the Church.
- ▶ It dialogues with other social and human sciences.
- ▶ Research includes the empirical and theoretical analysis of relevant contents of faith and tradition in individual, communitarian practice of charity and related organised forms.

In Latin America and in the Caribbean, the growing awareness of a particular economic, political social and cultural reality, expressed and shared in the final documents of the General Conferences of the Latin-American Episcopate, starting from the one held in Medellín (1968), in Puebla (1979) until the latest held in Aparecida (2007), created a new dynamics in the enunciation of the theology of charity. Cognizant of the *irruption of the poor* as a fundamental factor, such theology was restored within the context of merci-

ful love, and also re-understood on the basis of its peculiar methodology (Scannone, 2000, p.358ff.): *intellectus amoris* (Sobrin, 1992, p.47ff.). I hereby propose that similar analyses and reflections be carried out for Africa and Asia, with the purpose of providing a detailed picture on the evolution of the theology of charity in the context of these two continents.

### 1.2. Present difficulties in addressing the theme of charity

In the contemporary world the theology of charity is faced with various challenges. Pope Benedict XVI mentioned some of them, starting from the difficulties inscribed in the terms *love/charity* in contemporary societies (DCE 2): the impoverishment of the term

makes it necessary to clarify the richness of the concept so as to include human life and the practice of charity. Further difficulties are linked to current criteria pertaining to the various social fields, which influence the typical realm of *diakonia*, that can be described via a systemic model (Starnitzke, 1996), whereby other systems such as: law (just/unjust), the economy (to pay/not to pay), medicine (patient/healthy), science (true/false), politics (to rule /not to rule) etc. through their specific logics and functions could question or marginalize the logics at the service of charity such as: bestowal, gratuitousness and sharing, understood not as mutual exchanges but as expressions of God's merciful love in a community of love. In *Deus Caritas*

*Est*, Pope Benedict focuses primarily on the political realm (DCE 26-29), criticising the "activism and [...] secularism of many Christians" (DCE 37) engaged in charitable activity, underlining widespread contempt for prayer, which, instead, is the propelling force of charitable engagement. In the Encyclical *Caritas in Veritate*, the Holy Father provides a detailed account of the economic, social and cultural rationale highlighting the need to recover that of charity as an antidote and as a project of transformation for the good of society. A specific form of professional ethics and a methodology of work in the area of social sciences, have developed in the area of social service entailing at the same time the creation of an interpretative context, a specific form of hermeneutics distinguished from the moral and religious reference points of others (Luhmann, 1973). This autonomy is not negative in itself, however it has a secularizing effect when presented as having overcome moral and religious models. It is questioned whether the theology of charity is a necessary contribution for the understanding of charitable activity, especially owing to the global dimensions of structural situations of injustice. It should also be noted that social services focus on programmed interventions, problem-resolution, administration of specific cases and disconnection from vital, communitarian environments. Articulating theology in

the framework of professional social service meets the challenge of justifying the added value of theology in the field of social engagement (Doležel, 2012; Krockauer; Bohlen & Lehner, 2006; Scales & Kelly, 2012; Singe, 2006), namely, to propose theology as the *necessary science of reference* that enriches professional social service. The main feature of this theology is its Christian nature, which presupposes its development as a science (integration of reason), its being a frame of reference for social service (practical, focus on theory to be applied in practical action, models of practices, methods, etc.) with a contextualized approach (existential, social situation and experiences in the area of social services), fundamental and charitable in nature (mercy and justice) along with a theology for practical pastoral care (Lechner, 2000, pp.219ff.).

### 1.3. "Cinderella or Sleeping Beauty"- the limited number of areas for reflection, research and for the teaching of the theology of charity

With regard to Germany, France, Italy, and Spain, authors such as Baumgartner (2002), Hermanns (1997), Haslinger (2009) and Gehrig (2015) have conveyed their concerns over the low number of centres for the teaching, research and reflection on the theology of charity in University Departments of Theology. Far from being a compulsory subject in theolo-



gy academic curricula, it is reduced to mere professorships or even absent in study plans. The roles as the "Cinderella" of theology, or even of the "Sleeping Beauty" certainly do not befit a fundamental dimension of the Church. By means of the prospects I shall hereby present I hope to arouse interest in promoting the right to citizenship of the theology of charity, renewed by contributions of papal Magisterium.

#### 1.4. The plurality of the theological foundations of charity or diakonia

The practice of charity, or *diakonia*, currently features a plurality of theological foundations, depending on the confessional traditions and approaches of the authors (cf. Rügger, H. & Sigrist, C., 2014). In the Catholic world, it is important to enter into dialogue with these foundations to understand their points of contact, the differences, and work towards a practical theological proposal of *faith working through love* (Gal 5:6). Reflection on the theological foundation of charitable activity can constitute a challenge to be shared by the theology of charity and the social doctrine of the Church, as evidenced in various meetings held here in Rome over the last years (Dal Toso & Schallenberg, 2014 y 2015; Schallenberg & Dal Toso, 2016), but also in other places (Glatzel, and Pompey, 1991; Marx, 1999). Although it is not relevant here, it should be said that also the social encyclicals of Pope Benedict XVI rep-

resent a challenge to the Church's social doctrine in terms of the concept "*caritas in veritate in re sociali*" (CIV 5), proclamation of the truth of the love of Christ in society (Roos, 2015, p.13), epistemological expression that completes the *duplex ordo cognitionis* (natural law and revelation, Nothelle-Wildfeuer, 1991) with a *triplex ordo*, that recognizes in love a principle for theological knowledge (Rubio de Urquía & Pérez-Soba, 2014; Pérez-Soba, 2014). The encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* thus answers the questions regarding the theological foundations of charity with a set of strategic guidelines:

- a) *to preserve the unity of divine and human love (eros/agape) as a pillar of the service of charity (DCE 3-11)*
- b) *to carry out charitable activity rooted in Christology (DCE 12-18)*
- c) *to propose the distinctiveness of ecclesial charity (DCE 25; 31ff.)*

Ritornello in seguito su queste linee per un ulteriore approfondimento.

#### 2. Theological foundations of love: re-evaluating "Love" for a theological and practical reflection on diakonia

The first perspective for a theology of charity starting from *Deus Caritas Est* entails analyzing, describing and understanding the features of Christian love within its theological, anthropological and practical dimensions. In practice, this perspective has special importance within diaconal charity, in terms of organized Christian love.

#### 2.1 Love: conceptual hermeneutic perspective for the theology of charity (DCE 3-11)

The hermeneutic perspective of the encyclical compels us to reflect, to recover and reassess especially the semantic field of "love" from a theological perspective, in constant dialogue with its meaning according to different cultures, religions and languages today (DCE 2). This hermeneutic based on faith, in search for, according to Benedict XVI, the unity of "love", would enable both a better understanding of the centre of human life as well as the essence of the Trinitarian God. The theology of charity is not possible without this intellectual effort to deeply understand the interrelationship between the different dimensions of human love from a theological perspective, based on the faith inscribed in the patrimony of the Scriptures and its translation in present experiences. The experiences of faith of the first Christians, rooted in Biblical tradition, constitute the starting point, thereby creating a new semantic field of *agape* to express shared love, received from God in the figure of Christ through the Holy Spirit, a love that creates community and which transforms individual and social existence. In this hermeneutic perspective, the theology of charity must enter into dialogue with the reflections and contributions of philosophy (Hildebrand, 1971;

Kuhn, 1975; Lotz, 1979; Pieper, 1972), but also of Protestant theology (eg Jeanrond, 2010; Knauber, 2006; Stock, 2000; Wischmeyer, 2015), psychology (Fromm, 1967; Sternberg, 1989) and sociology (Beck & Beck-Gernsheim, 2001; Kuchler & Beher, 2014; Luhmann, 1982), although it focuses on the theological approach and the connection with the practice of charity. The Encyclical contributes to this task emphasizing the ability to love ingrained in human nature itself, a task that has its own importance particularly in light of tendencies to replace the word "love" with "solidarity" or "justice" in the framework of social engagement and ethics.

#### 2.2 Charitable activity rooted in Christology

In the Encyclical there are many Christological connections between natural and supernatural love and the ecclesial practice of charity. Indeed, the commandment of love of neighbour is inscribed in the very nature of man, created in the image and likeness of God (DCE 31). Such creationist anthropological perspective supports openness towards collaboration with other actors: the presence of Jesus in the poor, His identification with them (*Mt 25:40*) merges in Jesus the love of God and neighbour (DCE 15). In Christ we understand our humility in the service, which culminates in self-giving: "I must be personally

present in my gift" (DCE 34). From the intimate encounter with God I learn to see neighbour from the perspective of Jesus Christ (DCE 18). The Pope is aware that such a radical form of love for neighbour requires a spiritual nourishment, a vital relationship with the other two ecclesial dimensions such as *leiturgia* and *martyria*, and entails the inclusion of spirituality understood as the perspective of the theology of charity. According to experts on the theology of Joseph Ratzinger as Menke, for the Pope it was important to follow the work and the logic of Dominus Jesus, to combine love, eros and charity with Christology:

"Ecclesial charity, along with the charitable activity of every Christian, must be understood primarily as participation in the love of the crucified Saviour, or better, as inclusion in its representation (*representatio Christi*). If we understood assistance as the exercise, consequence or imitation of the love of Christ, then we would be left with a political or ideological agenda to improve the living conditions of a culture or humanity at large" (Menke, 2008, p.57 – unofficial translation).

The creation of a specific Community *ethos*, internal fraternity, entails the extension of the Church's constituent mission *ad extra* as included in *representatio Christi*. This Christological approach enables to better understand, in the second part of the encyclical, the importance of the Church as a

community of love where there should be no poverty (DCE 20), along with the criticism of proselytism. Koch's publications in 2010 and 2012 complete the Christological analysis present in the Encyclical: "In charitable organizations, God and Christ must not be foreign words; in reality, they indicate the original source of ecclesial charity. The strength of *Caritas* depends on the strength of the faith of all the members and collaborators." (Benedict XVI, 2006b).

Such Christological rootedness cannot be fully understood without considering its foundation in the Holy Trinity. The Encyclical mentions this foundation only at the beginning as a theological foundation, and in DCE 19 it is used as reference for the Church's charitable activity. The reasons focus on the pneumatological reality whence arises ecclesial love as a dimension *ad intra* (community unity) and *ad extra* (service to the needy). There remains a broader explanation of the importance of this foundation for the practice of charity and theological reflection on charity.

### 2.3 The distinctiveness of the Church's charitable activity (DCE 31ff.)

In this section the theological objective focuses on specific features of charitable intervention in charity organizations of the Church as *opus proprium* (DCE 29ff.). In the previous section I mentioned the independent

profile of charitable intervention in relation to the State. In this respect the Pope emphasizes the danger of contending to solve all the problems of the world. While it is understandable that, especially in Countries with very weak or very corrupt governments, the Church seems to be the only area for the promotion of social development, with the risk that our structures may turn into development ministries, we should carefully weigh the pros and cons, reflect on the position of the Church in this situation, considering existing alternatives and how to preserve ecclesial identity.

To *Agape* who is God, described in the first part of the encyclical, must correspond the *agape* of the Church, that is part of her nature (DCE 25) expressed

in her three-fold responsibility (*kerygma-martyria*, *leiturgia* and *diakonia*). The Pope goes a step further, pointing out that the whole Church – thus not only charitable activity – must be conceived as a place and a relationship based on *agape* (sacraments, words, evangelization, organization, etc.). The Church herself is its object, from the particular Churches to the universal Church (DCE 32). Indications on the ecclesial structure of the service, under the responsibility of the Bishop in the particular Churches, correspond precisely to the ecclesiality of love, most deeply fulfilled in the *Motu Proprio Intima Ecclesiae natura* (2012). This initial approach can be summarized as the institutional responsibility to live as an authentic community of love, a Church



as the Body of Christ, sacrament of love and mercy. The following characteristics will bring us closer to the understanding of charitable practice.

### 3. How should love be lived?

The theology of charity is not limited to the theoretical description of the fundamental aspects of charity as divine love. In fact, it is challenged by the practical question on how to live this love in today's world, in our Christian life, in our service of charity and in the communities of love.

#### 3.1 The historical perspective of the theology of charity

Paragraphs 20 to 26 of the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* present a brief overview on the historical roots of ecclesial charitable activity, which shows that the theology of charity can and must draw on the historical tradition of the Church, thereby keeping alive the rich tradition of charitable practice. This multifarious tradition signals the creative capacity to reinvent ecclesial love, the permanent force that the Holy Spirit bestows upon us in times of persecution, abandonment, human and world crises. Interestingly, in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the re-establishment of the theology of charity in Germany, marked by dawning industrialization and welfare state, one of the programmatic pillars of the new discipline was research on the historical heritage of Christian charitable tradition, notably

of the Catholic Church. Given this 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> heritage, enriched by its publications, today we have the responsibility to continue to expand that wealth of knowledge with updated achievements and with recent progress in the realm of historical sciences, in order to keep alive this historical conscience, along with its importance for current practice.

#### 3.2 Compassionate perspective of charitable activity starting from the unity of love (*Eros+Agape*)

The unity of *eros/agape* (DCE 5 and 6), strongly promoted by Pope Benedict XVI, must be a feature of the specific profile of ecclesial creative *diakonia* (Pompey, 2006; 2007, pp.56ff.). Indeed, charitable intervention should include *Eros*, in addition to reason and to professional competence. This *eros* was present already in the biblical passages describing a God who loves his people (DCE 11), profoundly moved. "The *eros* of God is not only a primordial cosmic power; it is love that created man and that bows down over him, as the Good Samaritan bent down to the wounded and robbed man, lying on the side of the road that went down from Jerusalem to Jericho." (Benedict XVI, 2006b). In Jesus Christ, this divine love becomes oblation love. This offering is celebrated and is present in the Eucharist, *Sacramentum Caritatis*. The Eucharistic transformation leads to the mission of charitable intervention un-

derstood as interpersonal transformation that gives continuity to the oblation of Christ. *Eros/agape* unity makes the relationships in the Spirit dynamic. In fact, the poor don't only ask for guidelines (content), material support, or technically appropriate attention. They want a personal, emotional and physical (*miseri cor dare*) relationship (DCE 34): do you believe in my possibilities? Ours is a relational charitable faith in Jesus Christ and the contents of faith can be understood only through this relationship of charitable love (Pompey, 2006, p.119).

#### 3.3 The formation of the heart – charity's dimension of witness (DCE 31; 36ff.)

The Pope mentions as the second feature the response to immediate needs, the urgency and need to practice charity with professional competence and training (DCE 31a). At the same time, the document underlines the need for a formation of the heart – I believe it is precisely this second part that the Pope intends to highlight, whereby the theology of charity plays an important role in training programs for workers in terms of personal growth and to grow in the faith, that they may live the encounter with God in Christ, which enables them to witness the love of God in those relationships of service in an authentic way, thus neither imposed nor artificial. The formation of the heart should not be understood as a communica-

tion technique but as a personal presence motivated by faith. Spiritual formation and spiritual life in charitable relations, the practice of faith in the community of love nourished from its source, create a culture of witness of the merciful love of God, its gratuitous and personal nature.

We need research, formation of trainers, accompanying processes, shared spaces, resources and time destined to this task in order to better experience the love of Christ that compels us (2 Cor 5:14). In a society that is distant from the Church but where, at the same time, we maintain a vast network of charitable services, we are lacking a sufficient number of people eager to collaborate in these experiences and to this culture of love. It is thus equally important to create areas for gradual evangelization within our structures, in full respect of individual freedom, yet always proposing who we are and what we share.

In this prologue could not be missing, as an integral part of this living heritage, examples of the saints of charity, and especially Mary, Mother of the Lord (DCE 40-42). However, more than a simple historical memory, the Saints accompany us spiritually, we can share their life, whence flow sources of inspiration, whence lasting organisms are created, renewed charisms, such as the Society of Saint Vincenzo de Paoli, whose charitable family dates back to the seventeenth century.

### 3.4 Ecumenical openness in the theological dialogue on charitable intervention

The Encyclical had a great resonance in the various confessions and it reaffirmed ongoing openness and cooperation in this field, in which we share, in the Christian religion, a common Christological and biblical heritage, even on ecclesiological matters (Pompey, 2006, p.113; Pompey, 2007 pp.143ff.). The Pope invites to this ecumenical openness towards the Protestant *diakonia* and the Orthodox philanthropy, not only at inter-confessional level, but also by creating interfaith bridges on the theme of compassion and love. In this regard, shared research projects, conferences, concrete collaboration at local level, and international cooperation projects, are of great importance.

### 4. The theology of charity as a distinctive theological science

With different gestures, the papacy of Benedict XVI, and the present one of Pope Francis embody the centrality of love in Christian life and in the evangelizing mission of the Church today. This shift towards the heart of the Christian faith involves a practical effort of witness and an integral synthesis of ecclesial identity in the interrelation between *leiturgia*, *martyria* and *diakonia* for our time. The deep reflection of the Encyclical on the relationship between justice and charity (DCE 26-

29) serves not only to understand the interrelationship between justice and charity or to safeguard religious freedom in independent charitable activity. It also helps to carry out discernment between the Church's mission to establish a just order through the guidance of consciences by means of the principles expressed in Church Social Doctrine, and the obligations of State and the political realm.

The lay faithful engaged in society deserve a central role in this field, guided by the principles of CSD (practice of justice), but for the Church there remains above all the service of charity in the community of love as *opus proprium*, with its specific characteristics as seen in the previous chapters. In my view, this expression of the Church's deepest nature, also requires a dedicated environment for reflection, research, training and orientation, so that the Church, in her *Caritas* and other ecclesial organisms for charitable engagement may:

- a) offer an effective response to the need for a formation of the heart of its members (DC 31a), in the context of an organized service in a complex society with various actors.
- b) constantly improve organized service and the witness that it implies.
- c) establish a dialogue on scientific grounds with other human sciences, focused on charitable interven-

tion and its coordination.

- d) foster the development of a specific scientific approach (love understood as epistemological principle).
- e) ensure methodical *feedback* on the theology and on the Church on the basis of practical experience.
- f) achieve greater interdisciplinary cooperation within theological disciplines on charity and love.

I shall hereby detail the distinctive elements of this discipline with the following diagram, based on reflections contained in the Encyclical *Deus Caritas Est* and on the contributions of colleagues from Freiburg and Olomouc.

In this conceptual chart the theology of charity is meant to facilitate the theological foundation of the practice of charity in truth, starting from the revelation of the Trinitarian God as a community of love. The central theological contributions to this ministry (systematic theology) and philosophy further support conceptual understanding in its connection with anthropology. This part will provide the theological foundations for the service of charity in the communities of love.

The diagram continues with a double-linked development: existential

and ethical dimensions with respective sciences and functions, which include various scientific foundations. The different tasks are to maintain: an interdisciplinary, thriving theological dialogue with other human and social sciences on the essence of love / charity; its role as a theological ambit; its scope as a transforming energy, at individual level and in the community alike; its epistemological capacity *ad intra* (for the faith and the ecclesial reality), but also *ad extra*, in social analysis.

The diagram then tackles the plane of the objectives in its two complementary dimensions, that are embodied also in biblical expression and experience, as well as in Christian charitable activity, which, at the same time, respond to an integral anthropological vision.

The diagram mainly reflects the interdisciplinary nature of the theology of charity, which is not limited only to aspects of theological rootedness: starting from this theoretical *corpus*, the point of arrival is the analysis of concrete practice in organisms coupled by critical reflection and a joint elaboration of best practices so that the service of charity may increasingly be authentic witness of the love of God. ■

**Diagram 1: Conceptual table of the Theology of Charity**

REVELATION OF GOD AS A TRINITARIAN COMMUNITY OF LOVE IN JESUS CHRIST THEOLOGY & PHILOSOPHY (REFLECTION AND TEACHINGS ON GOD) INCARNATED ANTHROPOLOGY (TEACHINGS ON MANKIND)			
FUNDAMENTALS OF THE SERVICE OF LOVE IN THE COMMUNITY OF LOVE			
Existential/Ontological Dimensions of Charitable Service		Ethical Dimensions of Charitable Service	
<b>Practical Caritas-Theology</b>  Constitutive function  <i>Spiritual-existental support and healing</i>	<b>Human Sciences</b>  Support function  <i>Physical-medical, psychological, social-material helping and healing</i>	<b>Individual-Ethics</b>  Guidance function  <i>Personal Moral Guidance</i>	<b>Social-Ethics</b>  Accompanying function  <i>Structural Improvement of Living Conditions</i>
Love in Truth - via maestra of the theology for the Service and Community of Love Power of Love			
<b>Fondamenti scientifici</b> Dogmatics, Spirituality, Pastoral, Missiology	<b>Scientific Fundamentals</b> Natural and Social Sciences (Medicine, Psychology, Pedagogy, Social Services, etc.).	<b>Scientific Fundamentals</b> Moral Theology, especially Virtue Ethics	<b>Scientific Fundamentals</b> CST and Social Morals (Social Encyclicals)
<b>Objective</b> Mediation and Renewal of ▶ Strength to live, life energy, courage and motivation ▶ Sense of Life, concepts of life, perspectives on life  Support through ▶ Experienced faith ▶ Practice of Hope and Love in face-to-face relationships or "Communities of love" in parishes through ▶ Sharing Life, ▶ Sharing Suffering and ▶ Sharing Faith.	<b>Objective</b> Restoration and preservation of life essentials in its various dimensions ▶ bodied, ▶ cognitive, ▶ psychical, ▶ social, ▶ material, ▶ political.	<b>Objective</b> Micro-systemic preservation of the ethical limits in the field of charitable services and in the beneficiary's way of life: ▶ Do not lie, ▶ Do not cheat, ▶ Do not exploit, ▶ Do not abuse, ▶ Do not destroy	<b>Objective</b> Macro-systemic social principles for the way of life ▶ Common Good ▶ Solidarity ▶ Subsidiarity ▶ Sustainability ▶ Order of life and preservation of the ▶ physical, ▶ biologic, ▶ social, ▶ economic and ▶ political ▶ Living Conditions.
<b>Biblical orientations</b> Spiritual Works of Mercy and the Gifts of the Holy Spirit, and the "Hymn to Love" (1Cor 13)	<b>Biblical orientations</b> Corporal Works of Mercy, the Speech on the Final Judgement (Mt 25,31-46), the Good Samaritan (Lc 10,25-37)	<b>Biblical orientations</b> Decalogue	<b>Biblical orientations</b> The Beatitudes in the Sermon of the Mount (Mt 5,3-12)
PRACTICE OF THE MINISTRY OF CHARITY IN THE COMMUNITY OF LOVE			

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Baumann K. (2014), Die katholische lehr- amtliche Position zur Sorge um die Armen und Bedrängten aller Art, In C. Sigrist & H. Rügger (Eds.), *Helfendes Handeln im Spannungsfeld theologischer Begründungsansätze*, TVZ, Zürich, 2014, pp.111-122.

Baumgartner I. (2002), Kann man Menschennähe durch ein Studium der Caritaswissenschaft lernen? Herausforderungen der Caritaspraxis heute, In S. Demel, L. Gerosa, P. Krämer & L. Müller (Eds.), *Im Dienst der Gemeinde. Wirklichkeit und Zukunftsgestalt der kirchlichen Ämter*, LIT, Münster, 2002, pp.272-284.

Beck U. & Beck-Gernsheim E. (2001), *El normal caos del amor. Las nuevas formas de la relación amorosa*, Paidós, Barcelona, 2001.

Benedetto XVI (2006a), Enciclica *Deus caritas est* sull'amore cristiano, in *AAS 98,3* (2006), 217-252.

Benedetto XVI (2006b), *Discorso del Santo Padre Benedetto XVI ai partecipanti ad un congresso internazionale organizzato dal Pontificio Consiglio Cor Unum* (23 gennaio 2006), Tratto da [http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/es/speeches/2006/january/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_spe\\_20060123\\_cor-unum.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/es/speeches/2006/january/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20060123_cor-unum.html)

Benedetto XVI (2012), *Lettera Apostolica in forma di Motu Proprio Intima ecclesiae natura sul servizio della carità*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Roma, 2012.

Dal Toso G. P., & Schallenberg P. (Eds.) (2014), *Nächstenliebe oder Gerechtigkeit. Zum Verhältnis von Caritas theologie und Christlicher Sozialethik*, Schöningh, Paderborn, 2014.

Dal Toso G. P., & Schallenberg P. (Eds.) (2015), *Iustitia et caritas. Sozialethik und Diakonie als kirchlicher Dienst an der Welt*, Schöningh, Paderborn, 2015.

Doležel J. (2012), *Cirkevní sociální práce na pozadí encykliky Deus caritas est*, Palacký University Publishing House, Olomuc, 2012.

Fromm E. (1967), *El arte de amar*, Paidós, Buenos Aires, 1967. Traduzione italiana: *L'arte d'amare*, Il Saggiatore, Arnoldo Mondadori Editore, 1963.

Gehrig R. (2015), Training and formation on Caritas-Theology (CT) and Catholic Social Teaching (CST), In G. P. Dal Toso, H. Pompey, R. Gehrig & J. Doležel, *Church Caritas Ministry in the Perspective of Caritas-Theology and Catholic Social Teaching* Palacký University, Olomuc, 2015, pp.91-123.

Glatzel N., & Pompey H., (Eds.), *Barmherzigkeit oder Gerechtigkeit? Zum Spannungsfeld von christlicher Sozialarbeit und christlicher Soziallehre*, Lambertus, Freiburg.

Haslinger H. (2004), Was ist Caritaswissenschaft? *Theologie und Glaube*, 94(2), 2004, 145-164.

Haslinger H. (2009), *Diakonie. Grundlagen für die soziale Arbeit der Kirche*, Schöningh, Paderborn, 2009.

Heim M., & Pech J. C. (Eds.) (2013), *Zur Mitte der Theologie im Werk von Joseph Ratzinger / Benedikt XVI. (Ratzinger Studien Vol. 6)*, Friedrich Pustet, Regensburg, 2013.

Hermanns M. (1997), Die Verknüpfung von Sozialethik und Caritaswissenschaft bei Heinrich Weber. *Jahrbuch für Christliche Sozialwissenschaften*, 38, 1997, 92-114.

Hildebrand D. v. (1971), *Das Wesen der Liebe. Gesammelte Werke Vol. III*, Regensburg, 1971.

Hilpert K., (1997), *Caritas und Sozialethik. Elemente einer theologischen Ethik des Helfens*, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn-München-Wien-Zürich, 1997.

Jeanrond W.G. (2010), *A Theology of Love*, T&T Books, London, New York, 2010.

Keller F. (1925), *Caritaswissenschaft*, Herder, Freiburg, 1925.

Knauber B. (2006), *Liebe und Sein: Die Agape als fundamentalontologische Kategorie*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York, 2006.

Koch K. (2010), *Das Geheimnis des Senfkorns. Grundzüge des theologischen Denkens von Papst Benedikt XVI (Ratzinger Studien Vol.3)*, Friedrich Pustet, Regensburg, 2010.

Koch K. (2012), Die Offenbarung der Liebe Gottes und das Leben der Liebe in der Glaubensgemeinschaft der Kirche, In: M. C. Hastetter & H. Hopping (Eds.), *Ein hörendes Herz: Hinführung zur Theologie und Spiritualität von Joseph Ratzinger / Papst Benedikt XVI* Friedrich Pustet, Regensburg, 2012, pp.21-51.

Krockauer R., Bohlen S. & Lehner, M. (Eds.) (2006), *Theologie und Sozialer Arbeit. Handbuch fürs Studium, Weiterbildung und Beruf*, Kösel, München, 2006.

Kuchler B. & Behr S. (Eds.) (2014), *Soziologie der Liebe: romantische Beziehungen in theoretischer Perspektive*, Suhrkamp, Berlin, 2014.

Kuhn H. (1975), *Liebe. Geschichte eines Begriffs*, Kösel, München, 1975.

Lechner M. (2000), *Theologie in der Sozialen Arbeit. Begründung und Konzeption einer Theologie an Fachhochschulen für Soziale Arbeit*, Don Bosco, München, 2000.

Lotz J. B. (1979), *Die Drei-Einheit der Liebe. Eros – Philia – Agapé*, Knecht, Frankfurt a.M., 1979.

Luhmann N. (1982), *Liebe als Passion. Zur Kodierung von Intimität* Suhrkamp, Frankfurt. Traduzione italiana: *L'amore come passione*, Mondadori, 2008.

Luhmann N. (1973), Formen des Helfens im Wandel gesellschaftlicher Bedingungen, In H. W. Otto & S. Schneider (Eds.), *Gesellschaftliche Perspektiven der Sozialarbeit. Vol.1*, Luchterhand, Neuwied, 1973, pp.21-43.

Marx R. (1999), Social Doctrine of the Church and Charity, In Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* (Ed.), *Acts of the World Congress on Charity*, Vatican City, 1999, pp. 152-176.

Menke K.-H. (2008), "Die Liebe Christi drängt uns". *Der theologische Ort der Enzyklika Deus Caritas est*, In P. Klasvogt & H. Pompey (Eds.), *Liebe bewegt ... und verändert die Welt. Programmansage für eine Kirche, die liebt. Eine Antwort auf die Enzyklika Papst*

*Benedikts XVI. Deus caritas est*, Paderborn, Bonifatius, 2008, pp.47-66.

Nothelle – Wildfeuer U. (1991), *Duplex ordo cognitionis – Zur systematischen Grundlegung einer katholischen Soziallehre im Anspruch von Philosophie und Theologie*, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn, 1991.

Oriol Tataret A. M. (2000), Diaconia cristiana y Estado social del derecho, In *Corintios XIII: Revista de teología y pastoral de la caridad*, 95, 2000, 207-356.

Pérez Soba J. J. (2014), *Crear en el amor. Un modo de conocimiento teológico*, BAC, Madrid, 2014.

Pieper J. (1972), *Über die Liebe*, Kösel, München, 1972.

Pompey H. (1997a), Caritas als lebenssteilende, freie Vergeblichkeit: Caritas-philosophische Grundlagen des Helfens, In H. Pompey (Ed.), *Caritas – Das menschliche Gesicht des Glaubens: Ökumenische und internationale Anstöße einer Diakonietheologie*, Echter, Würzburg, 1997, pp. 72-91.

Pompey H. (1997b), Spiritualität und Praxis der Diakonie des Helfens und Heilens, In H. Pompey (Ed.), *Caritas – Das menschliche Gesicht des Glaubens: Ökumenische und internationale Anstöße einer Diakonietheologie*, Echter, Würzburg, 1997, pp. 358-394.

Pompey H. (1997e), Beziehungstheologie – Das Zueinander theologischer und psychologischer „Wirklichkeiten und die biblisch-theologische Kontextualisierung von Lebens- und Leidenserfahrung, In H. Pompey (Ed.), *Caritas – Das menschliche Gesicht des Glaubens: Ökumenische und internationale Anstöße einer Diakonietheologie*, Echter, Würzburg, 1997, pp. 92-128.

Pompey H. (1999), Biblical and Theological Foundations of Charitable Works, In Pontifical Council *Cor Unum* (Ed.), *Acts of the World Congress on Charity*, Vatican City, 1999, pp.106-132.

Pompey H. (2001), Caritaswissenschaft im Dienst an der caritativen Diakonie der Kirche – Was ist Caritaswissenschaft? *Theologie und Glaube*, 91, 2001, 189-223.

Pompey H. (2006), Die Caritas-Enzyklika Benedikt XVI, »Deus Caritas est« - Ein Plädoyer für die Energetisierung und Humanisierung der helfenden Agape/Caritas, In M. Lahtinen, T. Pohjolainen, T. Toikkanen & K. Kießling (Eds.), *Anno Domini 2006. Diakoniatieteen vuosikirja*, Lahden Diakoniasäätiö, Lahti, 2006, pp.112-140.

Pompey H. (2007), *Deus caritas est. Zur Neuprofilierung der caritativen Diakonie der Kirche. Die Enzyklika "Deus caritas est". Kommentar und Auswertung*, Echter, Würzburg, 2007.

Pompey H. (2008), Wie im Himmel so auf Erden. Wenn Liebe göttlich wird...- Kirche als Ikone der Dreifaltigkeit, In P. Klasvogt & H. Pompey (Eds.), *Liebe bewegt ... und verändert die Welt. Programmansage für eine Kirche, die liebt. Eine Antwort auf die Enzyklika Papst Benedikts XVI. "Deus caritas est"*, Bonifatius Verlag, Paderborn, 2008, pp.387-419.

Roos L. (2015), »Wahrheit der Liebe Christi in der Gesellschaft«. Benedikt XVI. und die Sozialverkündigung der Kirche, In L. Roos, W. Münch & M. Spieker, *Benedikt XVI. und die Weltbeziehung der Kirche*, Ferdinand Schöningh, Paderborn, 2015, pp.13-65.

Royo Marin A. (1963), *Teología de la caridad*, 2ªed., BAC, Madrid, 1963.

Rubio de Urquía R. & Pérez-Soba J. J. (Eds.) (2014), *La Doctrina Social de la Iglesia. Estudios a la luz de la encíclica Caritas in veritate*, Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid, 2014.

Rüegger H. & Sigrist C. (2014), Grundlegende Aspekte einer theologischen Begründung von Diakonie, In *ibid.* (Eds.), *Helfendes*

*Handeln im Spannungsfeld theologischer Begründungsansätze*, TVZ, Zürich, 2014, pp. 271-278.

Scales T. L. & Kelly M. S. (Eds.) (2012), *Christianity and Social Work. Readings on the integration of Christian Faith and Social Work Practice*, 4ª ed. St. Davids, NACSW, 2012.

Scannone J. C. (2000), Aportaciones de la teología de la liberación a la teología de la caridad, In *Corintios XIII: Revista de teología y pastoral de la caridad*, 95,2000, 357-374.

Schallenberg P. & Dal Toso G. P. (Eds.) (2016), *Der Mensch im Mittelpunkt. Die Anthropologische Frage in Caritastheologie und Sozialethik*, Schöningh, Paderborn, 2016.

Singe G. (2006), *Theologische Grundlagen für eine postmoderne soziale Arbeit*, Lit, Berlin, 2006.

Sobrino J. (1992), *El principio misericordia. Bajar del a cruz a los pueblos crucificados*, Sal Terrae, Santander, 1992.

Sternberg R. J. (1989), *El triángulo del amor: intimidación, pasión y compromiso*, Paidós, Barcelona, 1989.

Starnitzke D. (1996), *Diakonie als soziales System. Eine theologische Grundlegung diakonischer Praxis in Auseinandersetzung mit Niklas Luhmann*, Kohlhammer, Stuttgart, 1996.

Stock K. (2000), *Gottes wahre Liebe: Theologische Phänomenologie der Liebe*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2000.

Wischmeyer O. (2015), *Liebe als Agape. Das frühchristliche Konzept und der moderne Diskurs*, Mohr Siebeck, Tübingen, 2015.