

WORK AND HUMAN FULFILMENT edited by Edmund Malinvaud and Margaret S.Archer, Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences, *Sapientia Press of Ave Maria College, Ypsilanti, Michigan, 2003, Pp. 336, £47.95 pbk.*

The Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences was founded on the 1st January by Pope John Paul II. The Pope had announced to the Cardinals and other officials in the Curia on the 23rd of December 1993 his intention to continue pursuing the Church's reflections on the social scene as set out for example in *Centesimus Annus*. So he issued the Motu Proprio *Socialium Scientiarum* by which the new Academy was established. In due course Statutes of the Academy were approved. Its purpose is 'the aim of promoting the study and progress of the social sciences, primarily economics, sociology, law and political science. The Academy, through an appropriate dialogue, thus offers the Church the elements which she can use in the development of her social doctrine, and reflects on the application of that doctrine in contemporary society.' The Academy, which is autonomous, maintains a close relationship with the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

The Academy is in its tenth year of work. It has held ten plenary sessions, the last being from the 29th April to 3rd of May 2004. During its meeting it met with the Pope who congratulated the new President, Mary Ann Glendon, and the members on their work. The proceedings of the Academy are published at intervals after the plenary sessions and workshops. This book however is chiefly a collection of more than thirty essays or extracts from papers presented at three plenary sessions by more than thirty members of the Academy. These papers are introduced by a thematic introduction by Professor Margaret Archer and concluded by a personal synthesis by the then President of the Academy Professor Edmond Mallinvaud, writing as a member of the Academy.

This is a very large book of over 300 pages in near-to-A4 format. It is the work of over thirty very expert and dedicated authors. The essays are set out in six parts: I. Work across the World: the present situation and current trends; II. The Globalized Economy; III. Contemporary Institutions and their responses to unemployment; IV. Capital and Labour; V. Analysis of policy options; VI. The Culture of Work.

The essays are very densely composed and written, which is not surprising since they are desumed from more substantial papers presented at meetings of the Academy. They are presented in English although this is not the first language of a number of contributors. Some of the papers are very focused upon some particular experience or evidence arising from the specific competence of the individual author. Many attempt to be wide-ranging since this is appropriate for academicians who are in the service of the universal Church and will want to aid the supreme Pastor in his role, although there is no indication of any author writing 'to order'. What is to be noted is that the contributors and the range of their studies are in my view excessively based in the continents of Europe and North America.

Because of the nature of these rather short essays dealing with extremely complex and extensive subjects it would be inappropriate to embark upon any detailed criticism or even comment upon the opinions or conclusions advanced. As a whole the book illustrates the type of work done by the Pontifical Academy but does not provide a sufficiently detailed presentation to allow comment on the validity of the opinions and arguments on offer. Because of this it is not possible to comment on the quality of service provided to the Holy See in the social sciences by the Academy just from this publication. What is clear and positive is that many issues that bear relation to the social teaching of the Church are under review by a body of very dedicated, expert and learned people. No doubt the more developed and detailed papers prepared by the Academy are of considerable help to the Pope as he pursues his vocation to announce the Good News as it applies to human society to the Nations.

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