Reimagining Solidarity: The Parable of Lost Coin

Dr Anna Abram

Introduction

It is an honour to be part of this esteemed programme. I am grateful to Michael Sean Winters for inviting me (again) and for all he is doing - year after year, for so many years - in bringing Catholic leaders in this part of the world to learn together and find ways of making Catholic Social Thought (CST) relevant.

The topic of this session is solidarity. Let me acknowledge an important anniversary which Poland celebrated on 31 August, just under 2 weeks ago, on the annual Feast of Solidarity and Freedom. It is 45 years since the workers' action in Gdansk, which began the Solidarity movement, bringing about a new life for this part of the world. We have still so much to learn from these brave people whom we owe so much.

Our exploration of solidarity today will be aided by insights from the parable of lost coin. My presentation is divided into 4 parts:

1) Solidarity in CST; 2) Thinking critically about Solidarity; 3) Solidarity through the Lens of the Parable of Lost coin; 4) Reimagining Solidarity and Challenging the Mindset

The session will end with a set of questions for discussion

1. Solidarity in CST

*'The word 'solidarity' is **a little worn** and at times poorly understood, but it refers to something more than a few sporadic acts of generosity. It presumes the creation of a new mindset which thinks in terms of community and the priority of the life of all over the appropriation of goods by a few'*. (Pope Francis, *Evangelli Gaudium [The Joy of the Gospel]* (EG), 188)

'A little worn' word, so often used, so familiar, yet not all that clear[1].

[1] The Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* refers to 'active solidarity' as connected to human rights. Paul VI writes about 'mutual solidarity' and 'world solidarity' in *Populorum Progressio* (The Development of Peoples). These terms also appear in the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et Spes* from the Second Vatican Council. Interestingly, Pope Leo XIII in his encyclical *Rerum Novarum* uses the term 'friendly concord'

Solidarity is tricky.

Still, this 'little worn' word is relatively new. It entered the vocabulary of CST in 1961. It appeared for the first time in the encyclical *Mater et Magistra* by John XXIII (this fact is claimed by Simon Cuff in his excellent introductory book to CST: *Love in Action: Catholic Social Teaching for Every Church*[2]).

Cardinal Ratzinger in his lecture 'Eucharist, Communion and Solidarity' presented to the Italian Bishops Conference on 2 June 2002[3] is somewhat hesitant to use the word 'solidarity' as he notes its association with the post-revolutionary socialist movement in France.[4]. Nevertheless, later, as Pope Benedict, he endorses the term 'solidarity' in his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate (CV)*. He observes that many people don't practice solidarity and 'would claim that they owe nothing to anyone, expect to themselves. They are concerned only with their rights, and they often have great difficulty in taking responsibility for their own and other people's integral development' (CV, 43). Solidarity, for Pope Benedict involves '**first and foremost a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone**' (CV, 38). He recognises that a '**new trajectory** is needed in order to arrive at a better understanding of the implications of our being one family' (CV, 53).

This aspiration to be one family is deeply biblical and Christological. It is built on the understanding of humanity as one Body of Christ. God becomes human for the benefit of everyone. St Paul reminds us that 'We, who are many, are one body of Christ, and individually we are members one of another' (Rom 12,5). This notion of oneness or communion is often emphasized in the writing of John Paul II. Incidentally, note the same Latin root 'com', meaning 'together' or 'with' in the core terms of CST: communion (com-

---

rather than 'solidarity' when he discussed the idea of more harmonious relationships between rich and poor (see RN 24 and 58). Similarly, Pope Pius XI doesn't use 'solidarity' in his *Quadragesimo Anno* (On Reconstruction of the Social Order) even when he uses 'social charity' to describe what other popes will understand by solidarity.

[2] Simon Cuff, *Love in Action: Catholic Social Teaching for Every Church*. London: CSM Press, 2019

[3] See Lecture by H.E. Cardinal Ratzinger at the Bishops' Conference of the Region of Campania in Benevento (Italy) on the topic: "Eucharist, Communion and Solidarity". *Sunday 2 June 2002*

https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20020602_ratzinger-eucharistic-congress_en.html

[4] The French solidarité – referring to a particular form of unity, bond or brotherhood in the struggle of the working class for social inclusion – is associated with the work of Pierre Henri Leroux, *De l'humanité*, published in Paris in 1840 and with the political movement, Republican Solidarity (Solidarité' républicaine) in France in 1848. See Pilbeam, P. (2000), *French Socialists before Marx: Workers, Women and the Social Question in France*, Teddington: Acumen 2000, pp. 39-53.

union [Polish: wspol-zwiazek]), community (comm-unity [Polish: wspol-nota]) and compassion (com-passion [Polish: wspol-czucie]).

For John Paul II, biblically and Christologically rooted solidarity is a multi-category: a virtue; an ethical principal; an obligation; and a social and political attitude and commitment ('structural solidarity' which has a particular meaning in his *Laborem Exercens* in the context of work and workers' unions as vehicles of solidarity). In *Evangelium Vitae* (1995) he offers a somewhat radical perspective on solidarity. He compares crimes of those who fail to practice solidarity with the crime of Cain: as 'Cain does not wish to think about his brother and refuses to accept the responsibility which every person has towards others', people today 'refuse to accept responsibility for their brothers and sisters' (EV, 8). This is a much stronger message than the one we find in the *Compendium of Social Doctrine* which focuses on a more formal explanation of the bond of human interdependence: 'solidarity highlights in a particular way the intrinsic social nature of the human person, the equality of all in dignity and rights and the common path of individuals and peoples towards an ever more committed unity. Never before has there been such a widespread awareness of the bond of interdependence between individuals and peoples, which is found at every level' (CSD, 92[5]).

For John Paul II, solidarity is 'not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all' (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38)

So, to sum up, even if the term solidarity is both 'a little worn' yet still new, its core meaning is unambiguous:

- 'we are all really responsible for all' (John Paul II, SRS, 38)
- 'responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone' (Benedict VI, CV, 38)
- 'creation of a new mindset which thinks in terms of community and the priority of the life of all over the appropriation of the goods by a few' (Francis, EG 188).

[5] https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html CSD, 92

- ‘universal fraternity’ and ‘social friendship’ (Leo XIV, Address to the Centisimus Annus Foundation, 17 May 2025)[6]

⇒ What does this responsibility of all for all (with no exception) really mean?

⇒ How do we achieve it? (In the world of inequalities in which the number of trillionaires is growing and the vast majority of people have very little and in which not everyone subscribes to the idea of universal responsibility)

⇒ How do we embody this more radical type of solidarity in our structures - ecclesial, social, political, global and (perhaps most importantly) in our own character and behaviour?

There are no easy answers to these questions, and it is beyond the scope of this session to answer them. But, we can try to understand better some of the points made by the Popes mentioned here: we need ***a new mindset*** (Pope Francis), **a new trajectory** (Pope Benedict) and **critical thinking/judgment** (Pope Leo).

At his address on the theme ‘Overcoming Polarizations and Rebuilding Global Governance: The Ethical Foundations’ to the Centesimus Annus Foundation in May 2025, Pope Leo emphasises the importance of ‘*critical thinking*'. He discusses it when juxtaposing doctrine and indoctrination. For him,

‘doctrine is synonymous with “science,” “discipline” and “knowledge.” Understood in this way, doctrine appears as the product of research, and hence of hypotheses, discussions, progress and setbacks, all aimed at conveying a reliable, organized and systematic body of knowledge about a given issue. Consequently, a doctrine is not the same as an opinion, but is rather a common, collective and even multidisciplinary pursuit of truth’.

Doctrine involves critical thinking or critical judgment while indoctrination is the opposite. Leo says:

‘“*Indoctrination” is immoral. It stifles* ***critical judgement*** *and undermines the sacred freedom of respect for conscience, even if erroneous. It resists new notions and rejects movement, change or the evolution of ideas in the face of new problems. “Doctrine,” on the other hand, as a serious, serene and rigorous discourse, aims to teach us primarily how to approach problems and, even more importantly, how to approach people. It also helps us to*

[6] https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/264179/full-text-pope-leo-xiv-addresses-centesimus-annus-foundation-on-catholic-social-teaching

make prudential judgements when confronted with challenges. Seriousness, rigour and serenity are what we must learn from every doctrine, including the Church's social doctrine. In the context of the ongoing digital revolution, we must rediscover, emphasize and cultivate our duty to train others in ***critical thinking****, countering temptations to the contrary, which can also be found in ecclesial circles'*[7].

We are invited to embark on a '**new trajectory'** (Pope Benedict) which involves **thinking critically** (Pope Leo) and **changing our mindset** (Pope Francis). What is mindset? Mindset is the way we think about things. We are invited to change the way we think about things (in this case about solidarity). We are invited to shift our perception, being particularly aware of the danger of indoctrination. Wow! These are big and hard tasks! As human beings we are never immune to indoctrination or ideology.

At this point I want to admit that although I am inspired by and subscribe to the theological foundations of solidarity and find the above teaching and invitations compelling, I am mindful that these things are easier said or written than done. I find that a greater understanding of human psychology and a shift from abstract to more contextual thinking are needed in order to grasp better the changes that are required so that we can genuinely live up to the notion of responsibility of all for all that solidarity demands.

In line with Pope Leo's urge to pursue truth in a multidisciplinary way, I would like to turn briefly to philosophy to shed more light on the notion of solidarity. I have written about the topic of solidarity, drawing from philosophy and art in a chapter 'Moral Imagination and the Art of Solidarity' where I base my analysis on the poem 'Campo dei Fiori' by Czeslaw Milosz and in a paper 'Solidarity and Moral Imagination' in David Greig's 'The Events: Ethics in Conversation with Performance'[8]. I am going to highlight a few points from these papers to aid our critical thinking about solidarity.

[7] https://www.catholicnewsagency.com/news/264179/full-text-pope-leo-xiv-addresses-centesimus-annus-foundation-on-catholic-social-teaching

[8] See 'Moral Imagination and the Art of Solidarity' in Janusz Salamon (ed.), in *Solidarity Beyond Borders: Ethics in a Globalising World* (Bloomsbury Studies in Global Ethics), London: Bloomsbury 2015, pp 47-66 and 'Solidarity and Moral Imagination' in David Greig's *The Events: Ethics in Conversation with Performance*. *Contemporary Theatre Review* 26(2016) [Issue on David Greig: Dramaturgies of Encounter and Engagement] https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/10486801.2015.1121144

2. Thinking critically about solidarity

a) Thinking critically can start by looking at the **root of the word**. 'Solid' is the root of the word 'solidarity'. It suggests that solidarity has something to do with strength and reliability. In Latin *solidum* connotes *wholeness* or entirety. The origin of the word can be traced to the Roman and feudal law, denoting a joint obligation of a group for a debt incurred by its members. In other words, if you cannot pay your portion of the debt, I and everyone else in the group is obliged to cover it. If I can't pay the debt, you and others will be required to pay it on my behalf.

b) Thinking critically about solidarity can involve looking at and questioning associated terms. The words **'solidarity', 'brotherhood' and 'fraternity'** are often used interchangeably. 'Brotherhood' and 'fraternity' suggest **the existence of personal bonds** which are needed for realisation of common goals or ideals within groups. Unlike other concepts – such as justice, which tend to focus on rules and principles without specific references to personal bonds – brotherhood and fraternity require an acknowledgement of subjective bonds; a degree of feeling **- a fellow-feeling -** which is shared by subjects within or between groups. Solidarity requires a fellow-feeling for all.

c) Thinking critically about solidarity involves deepening our perspectives and questioning our assumptions. Following a British philosopher David Wiggins and his influential paper '**Solidarity and The Root of the Ethical'**, I want to propose that solidarity is bigger than fraternity or brotherhood. Wiggins observes that these three concepts (solidarity, fraternity and brotherhood) involve a degree of benevolence. But, people can be benevolent and at the same time prepared to impose misery on others who are not part of their brotherhood (Wiggins substantiates this point by providing some historical examples though we can find our own, especially in the contemporary political climate). He is searching for a way of thinking about **human interconnectedness** that applies to all at all times. His account of solidarity human *qua* human is informed by thinkers such as Philippa Foot, David Hume and Simone

Weil[9]. For Wiggins, it is important that we preserve space in which our humanness becomes conscious and creates something like a benchmark for all our moral activities. In other words, it is important that we don't miss the opportunity of **human recognition** whereby I think of the other as being human and that the other thinks of me (or at least is capable of thinking) in the same way. My humanness and their humanness are non-negotiable. This kind of thinking employs moral imagination. I want to suggest that moral imagination is essential for solidarity. We cannot grasp solidarity until we are prepared to see the same the human form in everyone (this might sound obvious, but it is not). Wiggins helps us to 'see' what the mindset change involves. It involves shifting our perception about others and it takes place in moral imagination[10]. I would like to suggest that moral change starts in imagination: in how we see people, our relationships with them. It requires a great deal of self-knowledge and an effort to get to know others. And, it involves readiness to change how we think, see and act.

We shall now attempt to apply some of the above points to our reading of the parable of lost coin.

3. Solidarity through the lens of The Parable of Lost Coin

"Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it? 9 When she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, 'Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.' 10 Just so, I tell you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents."

[9] Wiggins, D. (2009), 'Solidarity and The Root of the Ethical', *Tijdschrift voor Filosofie*, 71(2009), pp. 239-269 He rejects a morality, permitted by utilitarians, that allows one to sanction the automatic sacrifice of the one for the good of the many (Foot's influence). He views human nature as both good and bad (or capable of benevolence and self-centred, partly a dove and partly a snake – Hume's influence). And, he stresses the importance of **human presence** (influenced by Weil). Weil explains poignantly the power of human presence: 'anybody who is in our vicinity exercises a certain power over us by his very presence, and a power of halting, repressing, modifying each movement that our body sketches out. If we step aside for a passer-by on the road, it is not the same thing as stepping aside to avoid a bill-board. Alone in our rooms we get up, walk about, sit down again quite differently from the way we do when we have a visitor'

[10] I follow Mark Johnson's approach to **moral imagination**. He describes it as 'self-knowledge about the imaginative structure of our moral understanding, including its values, limitations, and blind spots', 'similar knowledge of other people', 'the ability to imagine how various actions open to us might alter our self-identity, modify our commitments, change our relationships, and affect the lives of others', 'the ability to imagine and to enact transformations in our moral understanding, our character, and our behavior' Johnson, M. *Moral Imagination,* Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1993, p. 187.

(Lk 15:8-10)

a) About the Parable

The parable of lost coin (Lk 15:8-10) is one half of a pair of parables – paired with the parable of the lost sheep (Lk 15:1-7) and which then both flow into the parable of the prodigal son (Lk 15:11-32) (the son who was "lost but now is found", cf. Lk 15:24)[11].

We shall start our analysis with three general points which are common to the three parables about the lost:

First, let us note the audience and setting of the three parables about the lost:

1Now all the tax collectors and sinners were coming near to listen to him.
2 And the Pharisees and the scribes were grumbling* and saying,
"This fellow welcomes sinners and eats with them."
3 So he told them this parable:
Lk 15:1-3 (NRSV)

So, the purpose of the Parable of Lost Coin (and the other two parables) is **a justification for Jesus' table-fellowship with tax collectors and sinners**, in the face of displeasure by the Pharisees (and scribes). Who were pharisees? They were members of a lay renewal movement in Judaism emphasizing the need for all Jews to uphold high moral and purity standards.

[11] Note the male-female pairing (Parable 1 = "you" (male Pharisee or scribe); Parable 2 = "other" (a woman)] The parable of the lost sheep (Lk 15:1-7) has a parallel in Mt 18:12-14 (= double tradition material, or "Q"), whereas both Lk 15:8-10 (lost coin) and Lk 15:11-32 (lost son) are unique to Luke's Gospel ("L").

The verb for losing 'ἀπόλλυμι'— 'apollyon' means to destroy, ruin, kill or be lost, perish, die, or be ruined
The coin 'δραχμή - 'drachma' is a Greek silver coin

Barbara E.Reid OP studies female in the Gospel of Luke, especially in the three parables: in 'one, a woman hides yeast in bread dough (13:20-21); in another, a woman searches diligently for a lost coin (15:8-10); and in a third, a widow confronts an unjust judge until she gains justice (18:1-8)'. She points out that while 'the last two are unique to Luke, the first has a parallel in the gospels of Matthew (13:33) and Thomas (96). In a gospel that gives a mixed message about women, each of these parables offers a bold portrait of the female face of God'. (Reid B.E., *Choosing the Better Part? Women in the Gospel of Luke*. Collegeville, Minn.: Liturgical Press, 1996, p. 284)

It is clear that Jesus sees solidarity as solidarity with everyone (human *qua* human), independent of their social status or moral merit. He recognises the human form in everyone. He feels OK in the presence of those who are considered as morally problematic. By possessing this attitude, he models inclusion and shows what human interconnectedness involves. He challenges the mindset of narrowly understood brotherhood or sisterhood and is not afraid of breaking the purity standards of the Pharisees.

There are two other general points that are worth noting: all three parables emphasise **joy and rejoicing** (at the return of the lost / repentant sinner by God and the angels and the prodigal's father etc.) and there is **a deep care for the lost**. God (whether presented as a shepherd or a woman or a father) is not just searching in order to get the balance right. It matters deeply to God that the lost are found, hence the joy and rejoicing when they actually get found.

The parables of the lost (or the found) are crucial for our theological understanding of solidarity. They reveal something about the character of God (who God is). By telling us these parables, Jesus invites us to form the same attitude of recognition and inclusion.

In the parable of lost coin, a figure for God is a woman. There is a mindset shift in how God is perceived. The woman displays the same characteristics as the good shepherd or the loving father from the other two parables about the lost. The woman searches until she finds what she lost. She creates conditions that make her search successful. The brush and the lamp are her tools. Her house is a stage for divine performance. The woman might be poor (losing one drachma might mean a huge deal to her) or she might be wealthy. Some biblical scholars suggest that the valuable coin is part of her dowry or precious jewellery (a necklace) which will be less valuable if one silver coin is missing. We have no way of knowing of who the woman is[12]. Biblical scholars offer many interpretations.

For us, attempting to reimagine solidarity, one aspect, perhaps somewhat overlooked, is with whom the woman's shares her joy in finding the lost coin. Andrew Doole in his paper 'Observational Comedy in Luke 15'[13] spots some absurdity in the storyline: 'a woman invites

[12] For different interpretation of the symbolism of the coin in the parable of lost coin, see, for example, S Praeder, *The Word in Women's Worlds Four Parables*. Wilmington, Del Glazier, 1988.
[13] J.Andrew Doole, 'Observational Comedy in Luke 15'. *Neotestamentica* 50.1 (2016) 181-209

her friends and neighbours to celebrate with her that she has found a coin which she had lost, somewhere, in her own house(!). […] By no means is the value of a coin (or a sheep) to be underestimated, but the reaction, including expecting others to share in one's joy (not "relief'!) proves ridiculous[14]. I don't think Doole is mocking the searching woman. (Anyway, we can be playful so that we can be creative aiming to reach a serious goal.) Doole raises similar points about the searching shepherd and his lost sheep (it is a bit crazy to leave 99 and go after one). Why is the woman so happy about finding her one coin? After all, she has nine coins left. Why is she not simply relieved? Why does she need to tell her friends and neighbours that she found the coin and ask them celebrate with her? Isn't this a bit over the top? Perhaps one or two close friends would be enough. Why are neighbours to join the party? Wouldn't the party cost more than the value of the coin?

The parable suggests that neighbours are important. Hannah Arendt in her *The Origins of Totalitarianism* warns that if the relationship with the neighbour is destroyed, we face totalitarianism. Neighbours test our moral standing. They test our ability to recognise the human form (Wiggins). Their nearness can be challenging. They can be someone like me or someone totally different or even destabilising. Neighbours can be friendly or a nuisance. Marianne Bjelland Kartzow in her 'The Ambiguous Neighbour: Female Neighbourhood Networks and the Parable of the Lost Coin' emphasises the seriousness of involving the neighbour'[15]. 'The person next door materialises the uncertain division between friend/family/self and the enemy/stranger/other, symbolising not only complexity, but also danger: "The vicious gossip and penetrating gaze of the neighbour become the site of overwhelming affect—love, hate, and fear commingled in fragments of the social relationship"'[16]. Kartzow comments that 'the neighbour may be a former stranger, a traveller or a recently arrived immigrant, but at the moment he or she is part of the neighbourhood. Homeless persons or constant travellers may exist without the privilege of being neighbours with all his or her ambiguity and difference, is nevertheless there, next door, as an adjoined-person, sharing embodied space and time, real or symbolic'[17].

[14] Doole, 194 Doole admits: 'There is of course always the risk of finding humour where it was not intended. Laughter depends on reception and not necessarily on delivery, though the two are linked'. (p.186)
[15] Marianne Bjelland Kartzow in her 'The Ambiguous Neighbour: Female Neighbourhood Networks and the Parable of the Lost Coin'. *Neotestamentica* 53.2 (2019) 271-289
[16] Reinhard (2013, 38-39) quoted in Kartzow, 'The Ambiguous Neighbour'.
[17] Kartzow, 'The Ambiguous Neighbour'.

In the Hebrew Bible, neighbourhoods are filled with tension. The moral space is not always pleasant, the recognition of the human form in everyone is not always easy. How does our woman with the coin feel about her neighbours? What is her moral space like? A different parable in the New Testament (Luke 14:12-14) speaks of the (male) host who is told to invite the poor and underprivileged to the feast rather than family and friends, since the poor cannot pay him back. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the neighbour is anyone who is in need (and the one who should behave like your neighbour lets you down). Kartzow suggests that in the parable of the lost coin, 'ideal female neighbours play a similar role to the Samaritan. They do not turn their neighbour down. They don't say what a trivial reason for celebration. They share in the woman's joyfulness, like God's angels. She needs help to celebrate, and they come. No one is left behind, and no one complains[18].

Thinking critically about these different scenarios and dimensions of the neighbour can stretch our understanding of solidarity. This simple (and the shortest in the Bible) parable activates our moral imagination. The object of our laughter who sweeps the floor to find her coin and throws a party is now a community builder. She uses a seemingly banal reason to interact with her neighbours. The woman, her friends and neighbours become a model of solidarity: the woman initiates the interaction. Friends and neighbours respond to it. To be a good neighbour is not only to help a suffering stranger. It is also to be able to celebrate the neighbour's joys and successes. Patrick Riordan SJ explores the notion of solidarity in the time of success and prosperity in his 'Human solidarity in need and fulfilment: A vision of political friendship'[19]. He claims that solidarity is needed in hard times but is equally needed in good times. Perhaps it is the latter that prepares us for handling tests our solidarity. It seems that sometimes a good party is needed to activate our ability to recognise the human form in others. Solidarity human *qua* human demands that we constantly look for ways of living together and being able to deal with each other in all our diversity. My neighbour's humanness is non-negotiable in the same way my humanness, I hope, is non-negotiable for them[20].

[18] Kartzow, 'The Ambiguous Neighbour'.

[19] In Salamon, J (ed) *Solidarity Beyond Borders:Ethics in a Globalising World* (Bloomsbury Studies in Global Ethics), London: Bloomsbury 2015

[20] The parable has a special lesson for leaders: to search actively for persons who are missing from the community to bring them back to the table. There is one other thing that might be helpful for us from this and other parables about the lost (son, sheep), namely the process of losing and finding. It seems to have five stages: the losing (letting go of the familiar), the search (wanting to find what was got lost knowing that when it's found, the reality will be different), the finding (the act of

4. Reimagining 'solidarity' and challenging the mindset

On the basis of what we have considered here, the reimagined solidarity seems to be:

- a solidarity based on the recognition of the human form in everyone whom we encounter. It is 'human solidarity'

  We have not considered other than human types of solidarity such as eco-solidarity or solidarity with non-human species and the whole natural world or cosmic solidarity. There are also questions that need to be asked about solidarity with a certain type of AI creations (especially if granting citizenship status to certain types of AI is already discussed and in 2017 the first chatbot got citizenship in Saudi Arabia)

- greater than brotherhood or fraternity
- based on a deep recognition of human interconnectedness and interdependence, starting with the 'diverse local' (neighbourhood, community, church, workplace etc)
- is beyond borders
- a fellow feeling for everyone
- a radical solidarity; failure to recognise solidarity is a sin of Cain, according to John Paul II. Failure to recognize the human form in everyone is a moral failure.
- a solidarity that requires us to go to the core of the structures of division and exploitation in order to find out whether any person, any group within society, is made the means of another's end or used for the greater happiness of the other.

Building human solidarity requires **training the imagination and good education** - for the purpose of shifting our mindset and developing critical thinking and judgement (without being judgemental). Amartya Sen often talks about 'intellectual fairness' and the importance of learning 'global' history (something that the Catholic Church being a global body is in a unique position to foster). For Sen, this is primarily about a fuller

---

recognising something that was not visible before), the calling of friends and neighbours (not holding on to the discovery to oneself but making an effort to share it) and the invitation to rejoice (initiating something that will benefit and build everyone, starting with those around).

understanding of humanity's past and for the purpose of overcoming the false sense of comprehensive superiority of the West.

Building or practicing solidarity is an art which requires free improvisations, dealing creatively with the ad-hoc realities, and accepting ambiguity. The parable of the lost coin is a story of restoration and re-solidifying the wholeness. We need to continue expanding our thinking and artistic engagements for the sake of solidarity, especially if we are to address our social conflicts, pains, phobias, extremism, indoctrination and polarisation. Solidarity is an antidote to polarisation.