

Ne hagyjátok a templomot, A templomot s az iskolát! EN: "Do not abandon the church The church and the school!"

The words of Hungarian poet Sándor Reményik have always held deep meaning for me, but through the Create TX program, they have taken on a new and enriched significance. Faith, belonging to a religious community, and the value of education — especially lifelong learning — are fundamental pillars in every person's life, and they hold a particularly important place in mine as well.

Until now, in my own life, I had not yet succeeded in harmonizing professional academic pursuits with Christian values and religious life; these two paths had run parallel without intersecting. At the Angelicum, however, this changed. I was able to bring together economics and the teachings of the Catholic Church into a unified perspective where the two disciplines cross and inform one another.

If I had to summarize in one word what I received from this six-month program, that word would be "perspective."

As a future economics teacher, I will bear the responsibility of educating the next generation of economists, decision-makers, and entrepreneurs. It is not only the professional content that I aim — and am obliged — to pass on, but also the understanding of how to act ethically, how to do things the *right* way.

At the Angelicum, my research topic was: "The *Human-Centered Economy* and Its Implementation in Economic Education." Economic issues hold a significant place in the Church's social teaching.

From a classical economic viewpoint, the term human-centered economy may appear paradoxical, since in our studies we have defined the goal of economic activity as profit realization and the satisfaction of needs. Adam Smith, the father of economics, assumed self-interest as the driving force behind economic actors — meaning economic actions are initiated for their own sake. Yet he also explained that such actions do not result in chaos, and ultimately serve the common good. (Farkas, 2021)

But what do we mean by the *common good*? According to the Catholic Church

(as defined in the Hungarian Catholic Lexicon):

"Bonum commune" refers to the totality of material and spiritual goods and opportunities necessary for members of a community to work freely and effectively toward their flourishing — goods which individuals alone cannot produce.

Among the factors of production, human beings play a vital role — both as labor and as entrepreneurs. In the human-centered economic perspective, the human person is not merely viewed as "capital" or a resource, but as the central actor of economic activity.

The current pace of technological advancement is radically transforming both societal and economic structures, which makes it even more urgent to prioritize the central role of the human person. Human dignity must not be overshadowed by technological efficiency.

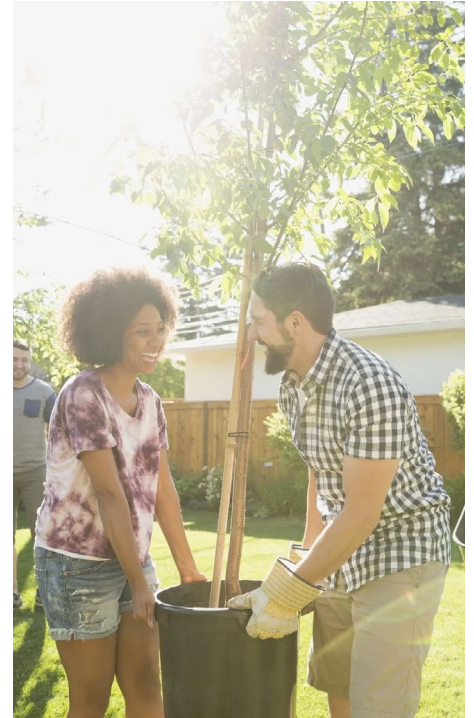
Tomorrow's society, political leadership, and economists will face different challenges than those of today — and addressing these challenges will increasingly require the integration of ethical economic perspectives. To ensure that the "economists of tomorrow" and future leaders are equipped with this mindset, the implementation of a human-centered economy into economic education becomes a key factor.

During my time in Rome, I was able to gain deeper insight into the Church's social teaching. Within the framework of Catholic Social Teaching, popes have been addressing social issues since the late 19th century. Several papal encyclicals repeatedly reflect on topics related to the economy, such as: the work, the (just) wage, the private property, the family (household) needs, labor unions, and a very important one: solidarity with the poor.

As Pope John XXIII describes in his papal encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, the Church's teaching on social and economic issues traces its origins to *Rerum Novarum* (1891), which he recognizes as Leo XIII's *Magna Charta* of social

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Alexandra Rác



doctrine. *Rerum Novarum* offered "for the first time ... a complete synthesis of social principles" (MM, 15). *Leo XIII's originality lay in extending the realm of human rights into the economic field, Leo XIII made a lasting contribution to the development of the "law of labor".* (MM, 21). The fundamental principles of *Rerum Novarum* were those of human solidarity and Christian fraternity. On both of these grounds *Rerum Novarum* is critical of unrestricted competition in the liberal sense as well as of the Marxist creed of class warfare.

Every papal encyclical and church teaching speaks to us and encourages us to take action. For me, the most outstanding sentence is in St. Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967): „We cannot allow economics to be separated from human realities, nor development from the civilization in which it takes place. What counts for us is man—each individual man, each human group, and humanity as a whole” (PP, n. 14) Paul VI, so to say, calls us to defend humanity against economic forces and powers.