

ABOUT THE MISSIONARY ACTIVITY OF POPE FRANCIS¹

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Abstract: The paper proposes to show how Pope Francis presents the missionary activity of the Christian Church in *Evangelii Gaudium* Apostolic Exhortation and *Lumen Fidei* encyclical using the narrative method of studying. It is specified that this two pontifical papers have the *Gaudim et Spes* pontifical document as their reference point. Also, Pope Francis did not forget to mention that the red line of messianism crossed the entire Bible. The framework of study is marked by the consumer society, which although brought prosperity, induces a state of selfishness throughout the world.

Key words: *Evangelii Gaudium*, *Lumen Fidei*, faith, human

Pope Francis I (after laic name Jorge Mario Bergoglio) was born on 17 December 1936 at 9:36 in Buenos Aires in Argentina. He was the 266th Bishop of Rome and the current Pope of the Catholic Church, elected by the Council of Cardinals on 13 March 2013. Worth mentioning is that this is the first pope of the Jesuit Order and only the second Non-European Pope, the first being Gregory III (731-741).

The paper will focus on presenting the missionary activity Francis conceived in the *Evangelii Gaudium* Apostolic Exhortation and *Lumen Fidei* encyclical, and the method of study is the one of narrative analysis.²

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² To be consulted the exposing method in *Interpretarea Bibliei în Biserică*, Arhiepiscopia Romano-Catolică de București Publishing House, Bucharest, 1995, pp. 21-23. For the mode of application the scientific criteria to be seen Adriana Mihaela Macsut, „Criteriul științific în studiile umaniste”, in *Administrație românească arădeană*, vol. X editors Doru Sinaci, Emil Arbonie, scientific referents: Marius Grec, Simona Stiger, Vasile Goldiș University Press Publishing House, 2014, pp. 366 - 368. To be specified that it the not word about a human acceptance that it is opposed to divinity, but about a humanism that has as scope “the reveal of divine in human” (Marius Cucu, „Cuvânt introductiv”, in *Paradigme umaniste. Explorări în tradiție și actualitate*, Universitatea Ștefan cel Mare Publishing House, Suceava, 2013, p. 1. For the realizing of this paper it was appealed to the presented draft by Ștefan Lupu, *Ghid practic pentru elaborarea unei lucrări științifice în o teologie*, Sapiența Publishing House, 2009, Iași, p. 52. To be also seen what is a scientific opinion in Adriana Mihaela Macsut, “Despre problematica doxa in concepția lui Platon”, in *Paradigme umaniste*, loc. cit., p. 191)

Evangelii Gaudium constitutes the first Apostolic Exhortation of the current Pope, and it is an invitation to Christian believers to live life together in the joy of sharing the evangelical word³. The Apostolic Exhortation is divided in five chapters that are preceded by a preface, and the central idea is the addressed proposition to Christian Church to be oriented for living a new evangelical stage with fervor. *Lumen Fidei* is the first Encyclical of this actual pope where the theme is the recovering of faith in a desacralized world⁴. It is divided in four chapters and it is added that were elaborated by Benedict XVI⁵. It is observed here the existed biunivocal correspondence

³ “What is, in fact, joy? Where we can find joy? Yet can be joy? What is the well of joy? In the Saint John’s Gospel, Jesus tells ‘These I told you that my joy to be in you and your joy to be full (John 15.11). So, the good news is sent of Jesus through his word – Gospel comes for us the sap and the well of joy. Pope Francis in his first Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii gaudium* (The Gospel’s Joy), that he wants to address to Christian believers, to urge them to a new evangelical stage, marked by this joy. Published with the occasion of the closure of the year of faith, pope, in this exhortation adds the papers’ wealth of the Synod with the New Evangelization for the Transmission of Faith theme, displayed between 7 and 28 October 2012 (Andrei Stolnicu, “Editura Presa Bună: Traducerea în limba română a primei exortății apostolice a papei Francisc - *Evangelii gaudium*, in *ercis.ro*, 2014).

“The year of faith showed the force and the dynamism of the present faith in Church, told the President of Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization, Mons. Rino Fisichella, at the conference of press of Monday from the Press Chamber of the Holy See. During the cadre of the meeting with the journalists the prelate presented the events that will take place with the occasion of the closure of the Year of Faith. A central moment will take place Sunday, 24 November, when Pope Francis will offer the Apostolic Exhortation. Aproximate 8 millions and a half pilgrims came to Rome to visit the Tomb of Saint Peter in the Year of Faith, a lived year with intensity by the pe People of God from the whole world, as tells Mons. Fisichella: «Often, used to dignify the elements of crisis, we forget to watch also to the many positive and hope signs which are true present in the Church»” (“Anul credinței se încheie cu Exortația Apostolică *Evangelii Gaudium* a Papei Francisc”, in *e-communio.ro*, 12 November 2013”).

⁴ “Vatican: Conferință de presă pentru prezentarea enciclicei papei Francisc *Lumen fidei*”, in *ercis.ro*, 5 iulie 2013.

“This Encyclical talk in reality by conceiving in a us that it is not of *maiestatis*, thus of communion. It talks about faith as an wonderful experience of community, of dilation of self and solidarity on the Church road with Jesus for salvation of the humanity. I will be limited to show this point of view. The Encyclical really presents as a light that comes from the listening of the God’s word in history – a light that shows the love of God in action to conclude an alliance with humanity. This light is yet perceived in the works of Creator, but shines as love in life, in death and risen of Jesus Christos.”

⁵ “Begun of Benedict XVI Pope, now emeritus, and continued and completed by Pope Francis, *Lumen Fidei* (*The Light of Faith*) is a symbol of faith in unity and of the continuity of the transmitted message of the Magisterium of the two Poes, «catechesis at four hands», as described it Card. Marc Ouellet, The Prefect of the Vatican’s Congregation for Bishops, in the cadre of official presentation daily organized at Vatican” (Mircea Marțian, „Prezentarea Enciclicei *Lumen Fidei* (*Lumina Credinței*)”, in *parohiaandreimuresanu.ro*, 28 October 2013).

between evangelization and catechesis that is resumed in a outspoken pontifical discourse in 2015⁶.

To be specified that that these written papers by Francis have as basis the intitled *Gaudim et Spes* Conciliar document which shows the dep relation that is evinced between Churh and human family: Vatican II Council “has in front of his eyes the world of humans, the whole human family, with all the realities in the midle it lives; the world, the history theatre of the human people, marked by the effort, the defeats and the victories of this one”⁷ – it is the word here about the Chritian concept through the world „is created and kept of the Creators’s love, and what felt... in the pity’s slavery, but was rescued by crucified and risen Christos”⁸. Thence the religion cannot be excluded from culture, because it has a root that wells from human necessities⁹. However it is put the question what can say a nee Pope after Vatican II, and the answer is given by Adrian Măgdici is that the New Pope succeded to accentuate the sence of the conciliar document¹⁰.

⁶ Francisc I, *Discurs*, Consiliului Pontifical pentru Promovarea Noii Evanghelizări, 29 May 2015.

“I am glad that I can receive you at the closure of the Plenary Session that engaged you about a theme of great importance for the faith of the Church that is the *rapport between evangelization and catechesis*. I receive with pleasure also the members of the International Council for Catechesis, that is now integrated part of your Dicasteriu. I thank you to Monseniorul Rino Fisichella for the begining greeting and, together, with him, to the whole Council for Promoting the New Evangelization that is now engaged in preparing the The extraordinary Jubilee of Mercy - A holy year that I assign to you to appear in deeper evidence that the mercy gift it the neews that Churh is called to sent in his work of evangelization in this times of great changes. Thus thes changes are a happy chalenge to receive the *sign of times* that God offers to Chuch to be able – as he has known to do during two thousand years – to bring Jesus Chritos in out time. The mission is always identical, but the *language* with the Gospol must be usher ask to be renew, with pastoral wisdow”.

⁷ *Gaudim et spes* 2.

⁸ *Gaudim et spes* 2.

⁹ Maria SINACI, „Alexandru Mocionii – scrieri filosofice”, in *Administrație românească arădeană*, 608.

¹⁰ Adrian MĂGDICI, „Papa: ateii care își ascultă conștiința au șanse în Paradis”, in *bioeticaleadotcom.wordpress.com*, 18 September 2013.

“Însă I ask myself, can Pope Francis tell something new? ... The ordinary peoy, at least the journalist, can give to much trouble to read the documents of learnings (Magisterium) of Catholic Churh, as woul be those emitted by Theb Second Council (...). To everybody understanding if you know that God exist, but you do everything you can in your power to keep him fare of your heart, you cannot be excused, but in the other world you must tell good bye from His Kingdom. But if in your heart you are... convinced that you looked for the truth... but unfotunately, you did not fint it, you cannot be count quily and... so tells also the Pope, you have chances to be received in Paradise. The novelty, is thence, the way how Francis tells this true, accenting the positive implication of this conciliar affirmation”.

Francis I do not forget to invoice the messianic context of the Old Testament¹¹, context of the Old Testimony, and in this sense remembers the Prophets Isaiah, Zechariah and Sophonias in *Evangeli Gaudium*¹² and Patriarch Abraham in *Lumina Fidei*. The Prophet Isaiah is the one that “exultantly salutes the awaited Messiah”¹³, Prophets Zechariah seeing the Day of God, “invites the people to acclaim the king who comes “humble and riding on a donkey. Patriarch Abraham is presented in *Lumen Fidei* Encyclical as *the faith parent*: “A single place belongs to Abraham, our parent in faith”¹⁴. It comes then the joy of living the Gospel from the New Testimony: “The Gospel in what shines in glory the Cross of Jesus, invite us to joy”¹⁵. To be specified that the analysis of the New Testimony predication of Jesus shows a fascinated moral discourse that succeeded to touch the religious sensibilities.¹⁶

¹¹ For explaining the notion of mesianism to be seen Vladimir Petercă, *Mesianismul în Biblie*, preface of Petre Semen, Polirom Publishing House, Iași, 2003, pp. 13, 23. In Chrituan acceptance, Jesus Christos is Mesia – the awaited one in the New Testimony. In Israel acceptance it is waited the gold era when God will come.

În accepție creștină, Isus Cristos este Mesia – cel așteptat în Vechiul Testament. În accepție iudaică se așteaptă încă epoca de aur când va veni Mesia.

¹² *Evanghelii gaudium* 4.

“The books of the Old Testament predicted that the joy of salvation would abound in messianic times. The prophet Isaiah exultantly salutes the awaited Messiah: “You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy” (9:3). He exhorts those who dwell on Zion to go forth to meet him with song: “Shout aloud and sing for joy!” (12:6). The prophet tells those who have already seen him from afar to bring the message to others: “Get you up to a high mountain, O herald of good tidings to Zion; lift up your voice with strength, O herald of good tidings to Jerusalem” (40:9). All creation shares in the joy of salvation: “Sing for joy, O heavens, and exult, O earth! Break forth, O mountains, into singing! For the Lord has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones” (49:13).”

¹³ *Evanghelii gaudium* 4.

¹⁴ *Lumen Fidei* 8.

“Faith opens the way before us and accompanies our steps through time. Hence, if we want to understand what faith is, we need to follow the route it has taken, the path trodden by believers, as witnessed first in the Old Testament. Here a unique place belongs to Abraham, our father in faith. Something disturbing takes place in his life: God speaks to him; he reveals himself as a God who speaks and calls his name. Faith is linked to hearing. Abraham does not see God, but hears his voice. Faith thus takes on a personal aspect. God is not the god of a particular place, or a deity linked to specific sacred time, but the God of a person, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, capable of interacting with man and establishing a covenant with him. Faith is our response to a word which engages us personally, to a “Thou” who calls us by name.

¹⁵ *Evangeli Gaudium* 5.

¹⁶ Mihai Valentin VLADIMIRESCU, *Viața de zi cu zi în vremea lui Isus*, Polirom, Iasi 2013, 261. To be specified that Nichifor Crainic was fascinated since his childhood of evangelical world, and later he wrote an owner conception of God that is “subordinated to Theandris model of Jesus Christos” (Gabriel HASMAȚUCHI, *Structuri filosofice în scrierile lui Nichifor Crainic*, Lucian Blaga University Publishing House, Sibiu 2015, 280.

The consuming society even he has brought to the growing of the level of living has as consequence the gliding of human to selfish: “the technological society multiplies the occasion of pleasure, but hardly can bring joy”¹⁷. So, shows the *Evangelii Gaudium exhortation*, was reached to the human that is beating of a selfish sadness that febrile searches the pleasures of life and does not listen the voice of God: “The great risk of this world, with its multiple and its oppressed consuming offert, is an individualist sadness that comes from the cosy and miser heart,... from izolated concience”¹⁸. This individualist society for not go down need the light of faith, precized *Lumen Fidei Encyclical*: „The light of faith... with this expression, the Church indicated the great gift brought by Jesus, who in Gospel after Saint John, so prsents himself: : ‘Me, the light, I came into the world, because anybody who believes in me not to remain in the dark’ (*John 12,46*)”¹⁹. The word is about a selfish cadre that it is envinced the consuming society, but no human must not reach the conclusion that he is excluded from the communion with God.²⁰ In this selfish context from the consuming society, the christian in called through *Evangelii Gaudium* exortation to search Jesus Christos every day: “I invite every christian.. even today, to renew his pernal meeting with Jesus Christos”²¹. At its way *Lumen Fidei Encyclical*, shows that the actual society reached to identy in a wrong way the faith with dark.²² In these conditions, it is needed that the human to “reclaim his character of owned light of faith, because when the its fire is burnt down, also all the lights reached to lost there power”²³.

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¹⁷ *Deus caritas est* 22.

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¹⁹ *Lumen Fidei* 1.

²⁰ *Gaudete in Domino* (9 mai 1975), 22.

²¹ *Evangelii Gaudium* 3.

²² *Lumen Fidei* 3.

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