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THE QUANTITATIVE OCCURRENCE OF THE COMMON GOOD ELEMENTS IN THE MESSAGES FOR THE CELEBRATION OF THE WORLD DAY OF PEACE

Jana Hovorková*

ABSTRACT

Although linguistic outputs, i.e. texts, speeches etc., are a part of the toolbox the Catholic Church, the Pope included, uses to forward its value paradigm, little academic attention has been paid to them. Hence, the occurrence of the common good was investigated in the Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace as the common good is considered a part of the Catholic value paradigm; it consists of the following elements: first, respect for the person as such; second, social well-being and development; third, peace. The research drew upon these three elements and employed the content analysis of the Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace issued by the Pope on the occasion of the World Day of Peace on January 1 from 1968 onwards. The quantitative occurrence of the common good constitutive elements from 1968 to 2016, i.e. during the pontificates of Paul VI, John Paul II, Benedict XVI, and Francis, revealed an internal development of the common good: the initial decisive orientation of the Messages on peace shifted in favour of the so-called social elements, i.e. of respect for the person and social well-being and development, with the passage of time. One may claim the presence of the common good elements reflects the situation in the international relations.

Key words: Catholicism, Message for the World Day of Peace, Pope, common good, respect for the person, social well-being and development, peace, content analysis

Introduction

Similarly to all salient religions, a value paradigm is characteristic for the Catholicism: the paradigm is to be advanced with the ambition to gain the most followers possible. The value paradigm or more precisely its constitutive values might undergo certain major or minor changes due to both the interior development of the Catholic Church and the outer conditions. There are diverse

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ways how the Church, as an institutional holder of the Catholic faith, spreads its value paradigm. One of them is the personality of the Church head, i.e. of the Pope. Both written and oral linguistic outputs (texts, speeches etc.) are a part of the toolbox the Pope uses to forward the Catholic value paradigm. Following the Second Vatican Council, the Pope has become '*defensor hominis*', i.e. defender of humanity: '*[He] has assumed the vacant role of spokesperson for humanity, for the sacred dignity of the human person, for world peace, and for a more fair division of labo[u]r and power in the world system*' (Casanova, 1996). To fulfil this role, new instruments are required. The Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace is one of them: it has been issued by the Pope regularly on the occasion of the World Day of Peace, i.e. January 1, since 1968. Taking into account the occasion on which the Messages are published, it is plain that they regard (also) the value of peace. Besides other aspects, the Catholic Church considers peace a constitutive element of the so-called common good, which is a part of the Catholic value paradigm.

In general, one may argue that religious linguistic outputs are out of the academic attention, including the Catholic Church and the Pope. Since the Messages for the World Day of Peace are mentioned only in newspaper articles and anthologies (Dupuy, 2004) at best, the literature review is to be summed up with the statement that the Messages have not been a research object to date.

With the aim of contributing to fill in this blind spot, the article presents results of a research carried out in all hitherto issued Messages for the World Day of Peace, i.e. from 1968 to 2016. Having employed the content analysis, the goal of this text lies in developing an overview of the common good elements' quantitative occurrence within the Messages, i.e. changes in common good inner structure consisting of three elements: first, '*respect for the person as such*', second, '*social well-being and development*' and third, '*peace*'. The article further builds upon this overview and – in form of preliminary theses – presents several explanations of the findings of the conducted content analysis.

1 Theoretical and methodological underpinnings

The very point of departure lies in the fact that all salient religions are to be considered ideologies, as they are both a complex of internally more or less interrelated values and a programme of a particular social group for its particular activities. This assumption is undoubtedly valid for the Catholicism formed on the basis of the Christian paradigm (Lupták – Prorok, 2011). One of quite

broadly defined Catholic values is the common good, which is a part of the Catholic value paradigm. By the common good the Catholic Church understands *'the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily'* (Gaudium et Spes, art. 26). The common good is closely connected with the good of every single person and consists of three elements: first, *'respect for the person as such'*, second, *'social well-being and development'* and third, *'peace'* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1905–1909). According to the Catholic Church, it is the task of the state to defend and promote the common good (Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1910). Nevertheless, as for this task the Church tries to help the state by reminding the state, its representatives and individuals of the common good in various manners. The Messages for the World Day of Peace are regarded as one of these ways.

The Message for the World Day of Peace is a document issued by the Pope on the occasion of January 1 since 1968. It is a written message and was initiated by Pope **Paul VI**. In his first Message for January 1, 1968 he addressed all people of good will. Apart from its common accessibility in diverse media, the Messages are issued in a printed version too. There are official translations into a number of languages. The printed version is sent to Apostolic Nuncios in the single states. It is accompanied by a letter signed by the State Secretary: he asks the Apostolic Nuncios to forward the Message to the Head of State, the Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and also to all Bishops and Religious Superiors in the respective country. The local ecclesiastical representatives should assure an appropriate publicity of the Message in the media. As obvious from the first Message and the enclosed letter, the Message is addressed to both individuals and authorities. By this means, the above-mentioned role of the Church, i.e. to remind the state, its representatives and individuals of the common good, is accomplished.

The name of the Message, i.e. for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, tends to lead to a simplification that the Message deals with peace only, i.e. with the third element of the common good. However, the official titles of the Messages make evident that the Messages do not thematise solely the value of peace. Certainly, one may suppose peace to remain the core value, but it is connected with other values related to the other two elements of the common good.

As for the methodology, the Messages for the Word Day of Peace are

underscored on the basis of the content analysis. The frequency of words¹, i.e. categories, was measured. To complete the research results, I mention the absolute word frequency. It is useful for the comparison of word presence within a Message. Nevertheless, relative numbers are crucial for the analysis assessment, i.e. the ration of the particular words to the total number of words. The reason is twofold. First, it is necessary to exclude the impact of the Message length, i.e. the longer the Message, the higher frequency of the particular word is probable. Second, relative numbers enable us to follow the frequency development in the course of time. In terms of the content analysis, the percentage of the particular word in a Message marks its importance. The Messages are analysed in Italian.² The research comprises all hitherto issued Messages, i.e. 49 documents, available from the official web site of the Holy See www.vatican.va. With regard to the method, i.e. the content analysis, 49 Messages do not stand for a high quantity. However, an argument supporting the method used consists in analysing all published Messages, i.e. the examined collection is complete, and in a quite satisfying average word count of the Messages (3224 words). Comparative possibilities result from the fact that the Messages were published during four pontificates³: **Paul's VI** (12 Messages, 1968–1978), **John Paul's II** (25 Messages, 1979–2005), **Benedict's XVI** (8 Messages, 2006–2013) and **Francis'** (3 Messages, 2014–2016).

2 Research Results

The Message for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace was instituted by **Paul VI** in 1967. This Pope's initiative might be seen in relation to the implementation of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965) conclusions.

¹ The frequency of pronouns was not measured. It was checked whether the form of a word corresponds to the particular category. If the form did not suit the category, such a word was not reflected in the frequency of the category (for instance 'capace', i.e. capable, has the same word base as 'pace', i.e. peace; as this word has nothing in common with the category peace, the presence of the word 'capace' was excluded). Due to the positive definition of categories, negative forms were not included as for example the category peace should have been followed also through categories such as war, conflict etc.; accordingly, for instance 'sottosviluppo', i.e. underdevelopment, was excluded from the presence of the category 'sviluppo', i.e. development.

² It is to be mentioned that for instance the Message for January 1, 1979 is provided solely in Italian and French on the official web site of the Holy See.

³ **John Paul I** became **Paul VI's** successor on August 26, 1978, but died in the same year, on September 28. Therefore, **John Paul II** was the next author of the Message following **Paul VI**; **John Paul II** was elected as Pope on October 16, 1978.

Besides other novelties, the Council presupposed that *'an organism of the universal Church be set up. [...] The role of such an organism would be to stimulate the Catholic community to promote progress in needy regions and international social justice'* (Gaudium et Spes, art. 90). In response to this request, **Paul VI** established the Pontifical Commission *Justitia et Pax* in January 1967. After launching the Message for the World Day of Peace, the Commission was entrusted with the preparation of the Message. The Commission, later Council,⁴ undertakes this task to date; it is the Pope, however, who decides on the final version of the text and signs it. The goal of the Message lies in the desire that the New Year's Day be dedicated to reflections on peace and prayers for peace throughout the world, every year, in the hope that peace may dominate the development of events to come (Paul VI, 1968). **Paul VI** desired the initiative did not involve only the Catholics, but *'all the true friends of Peace'*⁵ (Paul VI, 1968). The yearly issued Message deals with a specific topic expressed mainly in its title.

The content analysis drew upon definitions of three elements, which the common good consists of, as stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church⁶. The first element is *'respect for the person as such'*. One may deduce the connection with human rights and freedoms from the obligations the Catechism asks public authorities and the society to meet in the context of *'respect for the person'* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1907). Therefore, categories chosen for this element of the common good are as follows: respect, rights and freedoms. Additionally, concrete aspects of *'respect for the person'* are included in article 1907 of the Catechism. They may be regarded as the most significant examples of the first element: *'right to act according to a sound norm of conscience and to safeguard [...] privacy, and rightful freedom also in matters of religion'* (Gaudium et Spes, art. 26). For that reason, the categories conscience, life,⁷ and religion were added to the above stated ones.

⁴ The Roman Curia was reorganised in 1988. On that occasion the Commission was renamed the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace.

⁵ It is unfortunate that the World Day of Peace celebrated by the Catholic Church on January 1 failed to be unified with the International Day of Peace. The latter was initiated by the UN later, in 1981, and was fixed for September 21. It is additionally confusing that the International Day of Peace is labelled as World Peace Day too.

⁶ The Catechism of the Catholic Church presents *'an organic synthesis of the essential and fundamental contents of Catholic doctrine'* (Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 11).

⁷ The category life was chosen due to the Italian *'vita privata'*, i.e. private life. Moreover, the category life fully fits the first element.

The second element is 'social well-being and development'. It is presented as an obligation of public authorities again: '[...] [They] should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1908). This element was traced in the Messages through the following categories: well-being, development, food, clothing, health, work, education, culture, information and family.

The last element of the common good, i.e. 'peace', is defined as 'the stability and security of a just order. [...] [T]he security of society and its members [...] is the basis of the right to legitimate personal and collective defence' (Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1909). For that reason, categories assigned to the third element of the common good were as follows: peace, stability, security and defence.

The objectivity of the research results from the way in which categories were chosen, i.e. based on the definition for single elements stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and not on the basis of a preliminary analysis of the Messages implying the choice of categories.

2.1 Categories of the First Element

The first constitutive element of the common good lies in 'respect for the person as such'. Its presence was investigated through six categories. The most frequent category is life (831 times in all Messages, i.e. it represents 0.52 % of all words in all Messages), followed by rights (535 times, 0.33 %), freedoms (498 times, 0.29 %), religion (474 times, 0.28 %), respect (293 times, 0.18 %) and conscience (195 times, 0.13%). The category life represents 29 % of the first element presence in the Messages, the categories rights, freedoms and religion amounted to similar percentages (19 %, 18 % and 17 %). As for the category respect, which corresponds to the narrow definition of the first element as such, it represents 10 %. The category conscience constitutes 7 %.

As resulting from the content analysis, life is the core category of 'respect for the person' with its nearly one-third presence. The category life and two following ones, i.e. rights and freedoms, constitute two thirds of the frequency among all six categories. Therefore, one may talk about a broader understanding of the 'respect for the person' in terms of human rights rather than about a narrow religious dimension as awaited in the case of the Catholic Church. Although the category religion does not show a clear domination over

other categories, its share of 17 % is comparable to those of rights and freedoms. This figure evidences that the Popes ascribe similar salience to both rights and freedoms in general and to religion as a particular right or freedom.

Table no. 1: Categories of the First Element

Category	average proportion	share in element	Message with the highest proportion				
			proportion	peace category proportion	title	Jan 1	Pope
Life	0.52 %	29 %	2.29 %	2.89 %	If You Want Peace, Defend Life	1977	Paul VI
Rights	0.33 %	19 %	1.54 %	0.42 %	Respect for Human Rights: the Secret of True Peace	1999	John Paul II
Freedoms	0.29 %	18 %	3.04 %	0.99 %	To Serve Peace, Respect Freedom	1981	John Paul II
Religion	0.28 %	17 %	2.24 %	0.70 %	Religious Freedom, the Path to Peace	2011	Benedict XVI
Respect	0.18 %	10 %	0.53 %	0.70 %	If You Want Peace, Respect the Conscience of Every Person	1991	John Paul II
Conscience	0.13 %	7 %	1.34 %	0.70 %	If You Want Peace, Respect the Conscience of Every Person	1991	John Paul II

Note: Data based on the analysed Messages available from <http://www.vatican.va>.

Table no. 1 confirms the assumption that the Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace thematise not exclusively the value of peace. There are following figures in the table: average proportion of each first element category and its share in the first element presence in the Messages. If a Message deals with a specific topic, which is usually obvious from its title, and if

the theme corresponds to a category measured, the proportion of that category is either the highest or above average. Moreover, one may conclude that the category peace does not ordinarily reach the highest proportion in such a Message, but it is the thematised category, which amounts to the highest percentage, or the proportion of peace and the thematised category are comparable. To illustrate this fact, there is a Message in table no. 1: it is the Message in which the proportion of the particular category is the highest. It is to be added that there are more Messages dealing with a topic that corresponds to the particular category.

2.2 Categories of the Second Element

The Catechism of the Catholic Church regards '*social well-being and development*' as the second element of the common good. Its presence in the Messages for the World Day of Peace was measured based on ten categories resulting from the definition of the second element. The category family reaches the highest frequency (358 times in all Messages, i.e. it represents 0.23 % of all words in all Messages), followed by development (301 times, 0.17 %), culture (283 times, 0.16 %), education (201 times, 0.13 %) and work (109 times, 0.07 %). The following categories show a minimal presence: health (38 times, 0.02 %), information (31 times, 0.02 %), well-being (29 times, 0.02 %), food (19 times, 0.01 %) and clothing (once, 0.001 %). The category family constitutes the highest share in the second element presence, i.e. 26 %, followed by development representing 22 %, culture amounting to 21 %, education showing 15 % and work constituting 8 %. To complete, the share of the remaining categories is as follows: health (3 %), information (2 %), well-being (2 %), food (1 %) and clothing (0.1 %).

As obvious from the content analysis, the most important pillars, i.e. the core values of '*social well-being and development*', are the categories family, development as such, culture, education and work. First, one may claim these categories are of a rather spiritual than material character. Second, these categories are not linked to basic human needs: the basic human needs, in terms of the categories food, clothing and health, seem to be presupposed automatically for '*social well-being and development*' despite the fact that this presumption was and is not still fulfilled in numerous regions worldwide. Third, the most frequent categories (family, development, culture, education and work) are of a rather social or collective than of an individual character (food, clothing,

health). When evaluating the presence of the categories information and well-being as such, i.e. in the economic terms, one may conclude that from the perspective of the Catholic Church they do not represent crucial values for ‘social well-being and development’ (yet). Moreover, the frequencies of information and well-being show no upward trend, i.e. no growing importance in the Messages, at least recently.

Table no. 2: Categories of the Second Element

		Message with the highest proportion					
category	average proportion	share in element	proportion	peace category proportion	title	Jan 1	Pope
family	0.23 %	26 %	2.23 %	2.23 %	The Family Creates the Peace of the Human Family	1994	John Paul II
development	0.17 %	22 %	1.15 %	1.36 %	Development and Solidarity: Two Keys to Peace	1987	John Paul II
culture	0.16 %	21 %	1.90 %	0.49 %	Dialogue Between Cultures for a Civilisation of Love and Peace	2001	John Paul II
education	0.13 %	15 %	1.24 %	1.14 %	Educating Young People in Justice and Peace	2012	Benedict XVI
work	0.07 %	8 %	0.50 %	0.09 %	No Longer Slaves, but Brothers and Sisters	2015	Francis
health	0.02 %	3 %	0.11 %	1.57 %	No to Violence, Yes to Peace	1978	Paul VI
information	0.02 %	2 %	0.16 %	2.47 %	Peace: A Gift of God Entrusted to Us	1982	John Paul II
well-being	0.02 %	2 %	0.09 %	0.55 %	Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All of Creation	1990	John Paul II
food	0.01 %	1 %	0.06 %	2.13 %	Blessed are the Peacemakers	2013	Benedict XVI
clothing	0.001 %	0.1 %	0.03 %	0.75 %	To Build Peace, Respect Minorities	1989	John Paul II

Note: Data based on the analysed Messages available from <http://www.vatican.va>.

Similarly to the categories of the first element, there is table no. 2. The categories of the second element show the same trend as those of the first

element, i.e. if the Message deals with a topic corresponding to a category, the category reaches either the highest or above-average frequency. However, only categories with a significant share in the second element confirm the assumption that when comparing the frequency of the thematised category to that of peace, the former reaches either higher or nearly the same frequency as the latter. As for the second element, it is the case of solely its core categories, i.e. family, development, education and work.

2.3 Categories of the Third Element

Regarding the categories of the third element, i.e. 'peace', the category peace reaches the highest presence (2197 times in all Messages, i.e. it constitutes 1.52 % of all words in all Messages). There is a considerable gap between peace and the following categories: security (135 times, i.e. 0.08 %), stability (98 times, i.e. 0.06 %) and defence (74 times, i.e. 0.05 %). The share of peace in the third element amounts to 88 %, security constitutes 5 %, stability 4 % and defence 3 %.

For the frequency, the category peace dwarfs other categories despite the fact that other categories are connected with the peace question as well, as obvious from the definition of the third element. Therefore, the high frequency of peace should have implied a rather comparable presence of other categories. However, that is not the case. Likewise, one may have awaited a similar frequency of security and stability at least as they are defined in a positive manner like peace, whereas the category defence evokes a rather negative definition, i.e. since peace, security and stability are not provided sufficiently, defence is required. Nevertheless, this assumption does not find its validity.

When paying attention to the trend in the development of peace within the Messages, one comes to the following conclusion. The first thirteen Messages show an above-average proportion of peace. The category peace evidences a declining trend afterwards, reaching even figures below the average, i.e. less than 1.52 %. Moreover, one should take note of last three Messages (for January 1, 2014, 2015 and 2016), all issued by Pope **Francis**: the category peace represents only 0.44 % of all words in the Message for the New Year's Day in 2014, 0.09 % in 2015 (peace is mentioned only three times in the Message counting 3387 words) and 0.4 % in 2016. These are the lowest figures together with 0.42 % in the Message issued for January 1, 1999. It seems that either as a consequence of their increased length starting more or less with the

pontificate of **John Paul II**⁸ or due to another approach to the Messages issued by **Paul's VI** successors, the Messages are dedicated less to peace as such and concentrate (also) on other topics which are still linked to peace.

Alike in the case of previous two elements, there is table no. 3. The same conclusions are valid for its figures and those related to the categories of the second element.

Table no. 3: Categories of the Third Element

category	average proportion	share in element	Message with the highest proportion				
			Proportion	peace category proportion	title	Jan 1	Pope
peace	1.52 %	88 %	3.45 %	3.45 %	To Reach Peace, Teach Peace	1979	John Paul II
security	0.08 %	5 %	0.30 %	0.42 %	Respect for Human Rights: The Secret of True Peace	1999	John Paul II
stability	0.06 %	4 %	0.29 %	2.51 %	If You Want Peace, Work for Justice	1972	Paul VI
defence	0.05 %	3 %	0.28 %	2.89 %	If You Want Peace, Defend Life	1977	Paul VI

Note: Data based on the analysed Messages available from <http://www.vatican.va>.

2.4 Three Elements

When analysing the presence of three elements in the Messages, the author again employs their share in the total word count. This percentage is applicable to the assessment of the development the single elements show.

The first element of the common good, i.e. *'respect for the person'*, evidences the average presence of 1.72 % in the Messages. Not only a slight upward trend, but also far above-average maxims are typical for the development of its presence in the Messages. The peaks are reached in the following Messages: for the World Day of Peace in 1977 (2.93 %) with the title *'If You Want Peace, Defend Life'*; in 1981 (4.69 %) entitled *'To Serve Peace,*

⁸ **Paul's VI** Messages count 2030 word on average. There is an increase of 75 % in the Messages issued by **John Paul II**: they count 3554 word on average. **Benedict's XVI** Messages have nearly the same word count: 3464 words on average. The present Pope **Francis** has issued Messages with 4149 words on average, i.e. they are 17 % longer than the ones issued by **John Paul II**.

Respect Freedom’; in 1988 (4.8 %) holding the title *‘Religious Freedom: Condition for Peace’*; in 1991 (5.5 % which is the highest proportion) with the heading *‘If You Want Peace, Respect the Conscience of Every Person’*; in 1999 (3.13 %) entitled *‘Respect for Human Rights: The Secret of True Peace’*; in 2007 (2.63 %) with the title *‘The Human Person, the Heart of Peace’*; and in 2011 (5.37 %) holding the official title *‘Religious Freedom, the Path to Peace’*. These maxima are immediately followed by average figures. The lowest share of the first element is indicated in the Message issued for January 1, 2009 (0.52 %) and entitled *‘Fighting Poverty to Build Peace’*.

Regarding **Paul’s VI** Messages, the first element shows an above-average presence (1.25 %) and a stable trend. One of the maxima falls under his pontificate (for January 1, 1977). As for **John Paul II**, the frequency of the first element exceeds the average (1.86 %) and tends to rise slightly. **John Paul II** is the author of four above-mentioned Messages with a high presence of the first element. The Messages published by **Benedict XVI** are to be characterised with an above-average frequency of the first element (2.03 %). When comparing this proportion to other Popes, it is the highest figure. **Benedict’s XVI** Messages show no trend. Among them there are two Messages with a high proportion of the first element on the one hand, there is the Message issued for the World Day of Peace 2009 with the lowest percentage of the first element on the other. When it comes to the Messages of the present Pope **Francis**, the frequency of the first element lies below the average (1.32 %). Solely based on three Messages it is difficult to find out a trend, however, the presence of the first element seems to be rather decreasing.

As for the *second element* of the common good, i.e. *‘social well-being and development’*, its average frequency amounts to 0.83 %. Its presence shows slightly upward trend. There are five Messages with an above-average share; nevertheless, these maxima are not so significant as in the case of the first element: the Message issued on the occasion of the World Day of Peace 1987 (2.04 %) with the title *‘Development and Solidarity: Two Keys to Peace’*; 1994 (2.78 %) entitled *‘The Family Creates the Peace of the Human Family’*; and showing the highest proportion of the second element, 2001 (2.49 %) with the heading *‘Dialogue Between Cultures for a Civilization of Love and Peace’*; 2008 (2.3 %) entitled *‘The Human Family, a Community of Peace’* and 2012 (2.18 %) holding the title *‘Educating Young People in Justice and Peace’*. The lowest frequency of the second element (0.17 %) is reached in the Message for the World Day of Peace in 1980 with the title *‘Truth, the Power of Peace’*.

The presence of the second element in the Messages of Pope **Paul VI** (0.42 %) is below the average; it shows a half of the average frequency. The proportion of the second element tends to be stable during **Paul's VI** pontificate. Regarding the presence of the second element in **John Paul's II** Messages, moderately above-average figures (0.87 %) are reached. He is the author of three Messages showing a high frequency of the second element; the Message for the World Day of Peace 1994 evidences the highest proportion of the second element. At the same time, he issued the Message for the New Year's Day 1980 with the lowest frequency. The presence of the second element rises slightly during his pontificate. As for **Benedict XVI**, his Messages show an above-average presence of the second element (1.2 %). One cannot observe a trend in the development of the second element during **Benedict's XVI** pontificate. **Francis** mentions the second element in the Messages with an above-average frequency (0.96 %). Due to the fact that only three Messages have been written by the present Pope, one cannot come to a conclusion related to the trend; nevertheless, it seems that the proportion of the second element tends to rise in contrast to **Francis'** first Message issued on the occasion of January 1, 2014.

The presence of the *third element* of the common good, i.e. 'peace', reaches the same average figure as the first element, i.e. 1.72 %. As for its presence in the Messages, it is to be said that its trend is downward. In other words, the Messages for the celebration of the World Day of Peace thematise the third element less as time goes by. The third element reaches the highest presence in the Message for January 1, 1969 (3.73 %) entitled '*The Promotion of Human Rights, the Way to Peace*'. A bit lower proportion is obvious from the Messages in 1973 (3.07 %) with the heading '*Peace Is Possible*', in 1974 (3.52 %) with the title '*Peace Depends on You Too*'; in 1977 (3.46 %) entitled '*If You Want Peace, Defend Life*'; and in 1979 (3.68 %) holding the heading '*To Reach Peace, Teach Peace*'. The third element does not reach 3 % in other Messages. It is **Francis'** Message issued on the occasion of the World Day of Peace in 2015, which shows the lowest presence of the third element, i.e. solely 0.15 %, and has the title '*No Longer Slaves, but Brothers and Sisters*'.

As one may deduce from the above stated facts, the Messages of **Paul VI** evidence an above-average frequency of the third element, i.e. 2.77 %. The trend is rather stable. The percentage of the third element lies below the average in none of his Messages. This fact is influenced undoubtedly by four Messages with a high proportion. The frequency of the third element is slightly

below the average (1.54 %) in **John Paul's II** Messages. Even though the frequency of the third element is the highest (3.68 %) in his first Message for the World Day of Peace, i.e. on the occasion of January 1, 1979, the proportion tends to decrease clearly in the following years despite certain exceptions with the share of the third element over 2 % in 1980, 1982, 1994, 2003 and 2004. When it comes to **Benedict XVI**, the presence of the third element lies below the average (1.35 %). His pontificate is delimited with two Messages showing the frequency of the third element above 2 %: the presence of the third element reaches 2.12 % in 2006, decreases in the following Messages until 2010 and rises then to 2.33 % in **Benedict's** last Message published on the occasion of the World Day of Peace 2013. The frequency of the third element lies profoundly below the average in **Francis'** Messages: it reaches only 0.41 % on average. Of course, this fact is influenced also by the Message for January 1, 2015 showing the lowest share of the third element (0.15 %). The trend seems to be rather downward in spite of the assumption one can deduce a certain trend based only on three Messages with difficulties.

2.5 Comparison of the Single Elements

Before comparing the development of the single elements, it is necessary to resolve the problem consisting in an unequal number of categories related to the particular elements: the first element comprises six categories, the second one ten categories and the third one four categories. For that reason, the share of single elements was divided by the number of the respective categories, i.e. we compare the proportion of the single elements per category. Evaluating the figures, the third element is the most frequent in the Messages (0.43 %), followed by the first element (0.29 %) and the second element (0.08 %). The share of the third element constitutes 54 %, of the first one 36 % and of the second one 10 %. Nevertheless, it is more significant how the presence of the elements develops in the course of time.

The third element, i.e. *'peace'*, dominates in the first thirteen Messages issued by **Paul VI** and in the first two Messages of **John Paul II**. The first element, i.e. *'respect for the person'*, is close to the presence of the third element (0.49 %) only in the Message for the World Day of Peace 1977 and reaches one of the highest frequencies (0.86 %) at the same time. The second element, i.e. *'social well-being and development'*, does not attain the level of the first element although their distance is far smaller than the gap between the

third and the first element.

A breakthrough in this model occurs in the Message for January 1, 1981 with the title *'Serve Peace, Respect Freedom'*. It is the first Message in which *'peace'* does not dominate; on the contrary, it lags considerably behind *'respect for the person'*: *'respect for the person'* constitutes 0.78 %, *'peace'* represents 0.27 %. It seems as if both elements have been suddenly interchanged. Even though the original model turns back already in the following Message, i.e. *'peace'* dominates considerably, an inevitable decline in the presence of *'peace'* starts at the same time. Beginning with the Message for the World Day of Peace in 1981, *'peace'* never reaches the frequency shown in the previous Messages. The gap between *'peace'* and *'respect for the person'* is far smaller in the Messages following this extraordinary one. The trend of the second element, i.e. *'social well-being and development'*, does not change: its frequency remains low.

As for the further development, the Message for the New Year's Day 1987 entitled *'Development and Solidarity: Two Keys to Peace'* is worth attention as the frequency of the second element is higher than that of the first one. Although the element *'social well-being and development'* experiences a setback afterwards and turns to its low level, this Message seems to mark another turning point.

It happens in the Message for January 1, 1988 with the title *'Religious Freedom: Condition for Peace'* and regards again the elements *'peace'* and *'respect for the person'*. The frequency of *'respect for the person'* (0.8 %) outweighs fundamentally the presence of *'peace'* (0.31 %). The novelty consists in the fact that this dominance of the first element is present not only in this Message, but persists in the following three ones, including the Message for the World Day of Peace in 1990. In that Message the proportion of *'respect for the person'* falls to 0.22 %, but it is still a higher percentage than in the case of *'peace'* (0.17 %).

The comeback of the original model, i.e. dominance of *'peace'* over *'respect for the person'*, emerges in the Message for the World Day of Peace in 1992: the first element (0.45 %) keeps still pace with the third element (0.49 %). *'Peace'* is dominant in the following six Messages, i.e. until 1998 inclusive. However, the gap between *'peace'* and *'respect for the person'* is tinier, i.e. *'peace'* shows a decreasing trend, *'respect for the person'* rises. During this period, the second element enters the scene: the percentage of *'social well-being and development'* (0.28 %) is higher than that of *'respect for the person'*

(0.26 %) in the Message for January 1, 1994 entitled *'The Family Creates the Peace of the Human Family'*. Although the second element shows the lowest figures in comparison to the other two elements in the following Messages, its presence evidences a certain upward trend.

The dominance of the elements changes again in the Message for January 1, 1999, in which *'respect for the person'* with its proportion of 0.52 % prevails clearly over *'peace'* showing a share of 0.19 %. In the next Message *'peace'* dominates, but another hitherto unexperienced breakthrough occurs in the Message for the World Day of Peace 2001 having the heading *'Dialogue Between Cultures for a Civilization of Love and Peace'*. Two salient characteristics are evident in this Message: first, it is the only one showing the highest percentage of *'social well-being and development'* (0.25 %), followed by *'respect for the person'* (0.22 %) and *'peace'* with the lowest proportion (0.15 %); second, the single elements evidence a similar frequency, therefore, one may talk about a high level of balance in the presence of the common good elements.

In the Message for January 1, 2002 the original model turns, i.e. *'peace'* prevails over *'respect for the person'* and the percentage of *'social well-being and development'* is tiny. This situation persists until the end of **John Paul's II** pontificate and is evident in the first Message issued by his successor, i.e. in the Message for the World Day of Peace 2006.

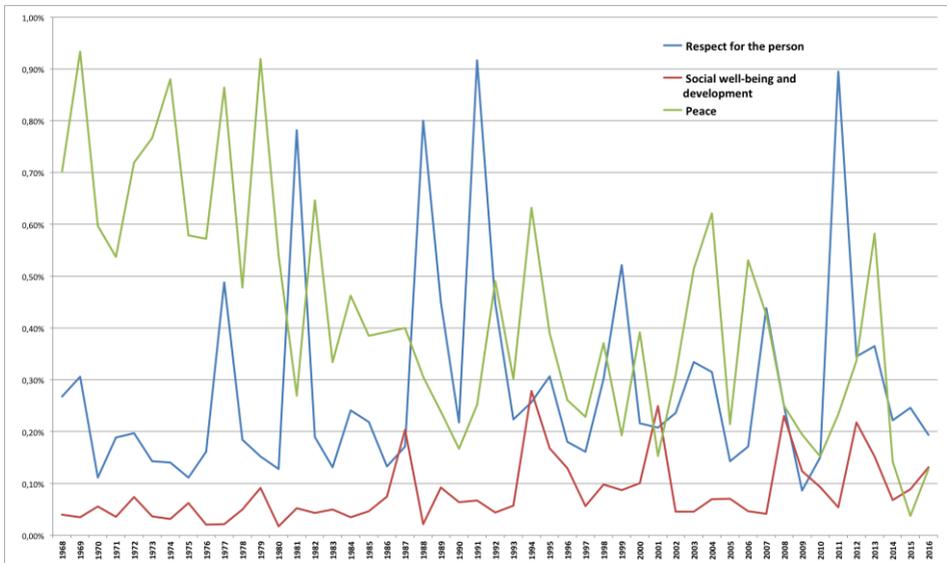
A typical feature of **Benedict's XVI** Messages is the highest level of balance three elements of the common good show. *'Respect for the person'* (0.44 %) and *'peace'* (0.43 %) reach nearly an identical proportion in the Message for January 1, 2007. The same conclusion is valid for the Message for the New Year's Day 2008: *'respect for the person'* and *'peace'* evidence the same percentage (0.25 %), *'social well-being and development'* amounts to 0.23 %. Even though *'peace'* (0.19 %) prevails in the following Message, its dominance is not so much significant this time as *'social well-being and development'* represents 0.12 % and *'respect for the person'* 0.09 %. The balance based on the first and third elements, both showing the proportion of 0.15 %, is restored in the Message for January 1, 2010. The next Message evidences a clear dominance of one element: *'respect for the person'* reaches 0.89 %. Nevertheless, the following Message is balanced again as *'respect for the person'* constitutes 0.35 %, *'peace'* 0.34 % and *'social well-being and development'* 0.22 %. In the last **Benedict's XVI** Message, i.e. for the celebration of the World Day of Peace 2013, *'peace'* dominates with its

frequency of 0.58 %.

There is a notable decline in the presence of *'peace'* in **Francis'** Messages. *'Respect for the person'* reaches the highest frequency in all his Messages. However, its dominance is not so extreme in comparison to at least one of the remaining elements. In the Message for the January 1, 2016, there is the same share of *'peace'* and *'social well-being and development'*: 0.13 %.

Graph no. 1 shows how the proportion of the single elements per category changes in the Messages.

Graph no. 1: Development of the proportion shown by the single elements of the common good per category in the Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace from 1968 to 2016



Note: Data based on the analysed Messages available from <http://www.vatican.va>.

Conclusion

The text presents conclusions resulting from the content analysis of all hitherto issued Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace, i.e. from 1968 to 2016. As the Message was initiated by **Paul VI**, the research included a part of his pontificate and the pontificate of **John Paul II**, **Benedict XVI** and the present Pope **Francis**. The analysis drew upon the fact that the

Catholic Church regards *'peace'* as an element of the common good. Other two constitutive elements of the common good are *'respect for the person'* and *'social well-being and development'*. The research aimed at assessing the development of the common good in the Messages published by four Popes through the development of its single elements. For operational reasons the single elements were followed based on categories derived from the definition of the elements in the Catechism of the Catholic Church. As for the first element, i.e. *'respect for the person'*, there were six categories: respect, rights, freedoms, conscience, life and religion. Regarding the second element, i.e. *'social well-being and development'*, ten categories were defined: well-being, development, food, clothing, health, work, education, culture, information and family. *'Peace'* as the third element was evaluated based on four categories: peace, stability, security and defence.

The category peace, which is a part of the element *'peace'*, shows the highest absolute and relative frequency in the Messages: 2197 times, 1.52 % of all words. The number-two ranking category is life (831 times, 0.52 %); there is a significant gap between the category peace and life amounting to 264 %. These categories are followed by rights, freedoms, and religion. Life, rights, freedom and religion are a part of the element *'respect for the person'*. Family is the sixth most frequent category. It is followed by development, respect, culture, education, conscience, security, work, stability, defence, health, information, well-being, food and clothing.

The analysis shows if a Message thematises a specific topic corresponding to a category, that category reaches either its peak or a considerable above-average frequency. If a Message deals with a special question corresponding to a category, whereas the share of that category in the element is salient, i.e. at least 5–10 %, it is not the category peace but that thematised category which shows the highest proportion, or the frequency of peace and the thematised category are close.

When it comes to the categories that represent the pillars of the single elements, the results are as follows. The first element, i.e. *'respect for the person'*, is based on the categories life (29 %), rights (19 %), freedoms (18 %) and religion (17 %). The second element, i.e. *'social well-being and development'*, refers to the categories family (26 %), development (22 %), culture (21 %) and education (15 %). The third element, i.e. *'peace'*, is based on the category peace (88 %) only. According to the share of the single categories in the element, the first element is the most balanced. On the contrary, the third

element is the most imbalanced.

The average presence of *'respect for the person as such'* in the Messages reaches 1.72 %. A slightly upward trend and a few considerably above-average maxima are typical for its development. The average frequency of *'social well-being and development'* amounts to 0.83 %. This element shows a moderate increase in the course of time. There are Messages with an above-average presence; however, its maxima are not as evident as in the case of the first element. The average frequency of the third element, i.e. *'peace'*, is the same as that of the first element, i.e. 1.72 %. As for its development in the Messages, one may conclude that the trend is downward.

When comparing the development of the single elements, a clear dominance of *'peace'* over the remaining two elements is typical for **Paul's VI** Messages whereas *'social well-being and development'* shows very low figures. The Messages issued by **John Paul II** show a decreasing percentage of *'peace'*, a significant dominance of the first or third element in some cases and a slightly upward presence of the second element. Towards the end of his pontificate the elements are close to one another, i.e. a clear dominance of an element occurs less. At least two elements, if not even all three, show a comparable proportion in the Messages of **Benedict XVI**: his Messages are balanced. In **Francis'** Messages the presence of *'peace'* declines in favour of the first element, i.e. *'respect for the person as such'*.

Although the definition of the common good, which is a part of the Catholic value paradigm and is based on the elements *'respect for the person'*, *'social well-being and development'* and *'peace'*, remains unchanged and the instrument employed for the diffusion of seemingly only the third element, i.e. *'peace'*, is still the same (Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace), the inner structure of the common good, i.e. the presence of its three elements, experiences a certain development – as obvious from the results of the research.

An evident continuity consists in the fact that the Messages for the Celebration of the World Day of Peace remain faithful to their title, as *'peace'* is the most frequent element on average (0.43 %), i.e. represents the strongest pillar of the common good. Nevertheless, the Messages are not exclusively about *'peace'*; on the contrary, one may argue they reflect the changing atmosphere in the international relations and in the world in general. The very point of departure of this assumption lies in the definition of the common good and its elements: they are far from being conceived solely in religious terms, but

rather in a broader social and human rights understanding. To support this argument with a result from the content analysis of the Messages, one may refer to the share of the category religion (17 %) in the element *'respect for the person'*, i.e. only the fourth highest percentage, outweighed by the categories life, rights and freedoms. Therefore, one may relate the internal development of the common good, i.e. its elements, to the international relations.

As resulting from the comparison of the single elements, the presence of *'peace'* declines with the passage of time, more precisely since the late eighties. The fact, that the Messages were initiated in 1968 and that *'peace'* unequivocally dominates in the Messages published by **Paul VI**, proves the tough experience of the sixties and certain caution to the course of events in the seventies. Both a prudent attitude and worry about peace persist in the first Messages of **John Paul II**. The downward tendency in the frequency of *'peace'* beginning with the late eighties seems to reflect the changing atmosphere of the Cold War and the subsequent end of the bipolar world. The absence of imminent world conflict danger has provided space for accenting also the other two elements of the common good, i.e. *'respect for the person'* and *'social well-being and development'*. The Messages have been allowed to present and elaborate the very idea of peace in the sense of the common good: peace cannot be reduced to the simple absence of armed conflict (Benedict XVI, 2006), but it is accompanied by other aspects. This assumption fully corresponds to the fact that the Catholic Church regards *'peace'* as only one of the constitutive elements of a higher-ranking value, i.e. of the common good.

With the changed conditions and under the relative peaceful circumstances, not imminently endangering the existence of the human being, at least in the Western part of the world, it seems attention has been paid to other forms of danger. One may label them as social ones. At first glance they present themselves as less dangerous, however, they may jeopardise peace substantially in consequence. In terms of the common good, they find their expression in the first and second elements: *'respect for the person'* and *'social well-being and development'*. This trend is reflected in the closer frequency of three elements. One may argue Pope **Benedict XVI** is aware all three elements of the common good are equally salient: peace itself and social peace, which is to be advanced through *'respect for the person'* and *'social well-being and development'*. Therefore, his Messages show the highest compactness: a similar frequency of two or even of all three elements. Due to social unrest in numerous countries and the spread of terrorism rooted also in social

dissatisfaction, it is not surprising the present Pope **Francis** shifts the common good understanding further to its social dimension: he highlights rather the social elements as preconditions for peace itself. Therefore, his hitherto published Messages accent *'respect for the person'* and *'social well-being and development'*, and definitely not *'peace'* itself.

To sum up, the occurrence of the common good elements reflects the situation in the international relations: with the course of time, its initial decisive orientation on *'peace'* has shifted in favour of social elements, i.e. of *'respect for the person'* and *'social well-being and development'*; or, in other words, the social dimension of the common good is stressed.

The above stated conclusions are based on the content analysis of the Messages for the World Day of Peace. For that reason, they cannot be considered generally valid assumptions related to the development of the common good: it is necessary to take into account both the sources, i.e. the Messages, and the method, i.e. the content analysis. It means that this text presents an internal development of the common good viewed from a certain perspective in the period from 1968 to 2016.

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