



CAPP France

Some thoughts about inclusion

Fratelli tutti invites us to build a more just society thanks to the capacity for fraternity that is in each person and to the spirit of communion of Christians. However, we note the disintegration of the social bond, the fragmentation of society and its de-Christianization. This leads to a questioning on two levels: how can men of good will work to rebuild links in the places where they live, in their work, in their commitments, in their leisure time, and how can Christians respond to their vocation to be the salt of the earth by being a driving force among men of good will and by being truly in communion with their brothers and sisters from all social conditions?

We approach this questioning as Christians, business leaders or people involved in economic and social life. One word seemed to us to crystallize this vast subject: inclusion. It is both representative of the social and human issues we are addressing, but we are also aware of the reductive use of the term in large international groups where it is simply associated with welcoming diversity. We have tried to go further.

As the main providers of work and the first places of creation, companies are faced with increasing expectations from all their stakeholders:

- their employees, customers, suppliers and shareholders are concerned about the social and environmental impact of their activity and products,
- the territories where they are established are attentive to the local impact of their activity and ensure that their development is shared,
- the younger generation expects meaning from their work and is sensitive to the balance between personal and professional life,
- society is demanding that no one be excluded because they belong to a minority group, and that singularities be valued,
- their employees, but not only them, are asking for more protection in front of crises of all kinds.

To include is to allow each person to fully exercise the vocation to which he or she is called from the ordinary sources of his or her identity; it is to ensure that each person benefits from the pillars of the Social Doctrine of the Church, dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity, to which we must add responsibility.

We must not be satisfied with simply aggregating collaborators. We must listen to them and respect them, and integrate them deeply so that the work community is truly a community. In the current social context, belonging to this community represents a strong identity resource, but it can also be a threat to the employee's other social roles, which are also part of his or her identity, and a limit to the free expression of the other components of his or her culture.

As for company managers, their conscience is engaged to assume both their personal values and the prevailing societal requirements in their economic and social environment, knowing that a company cannot remain neutral.

Like money, technology is a good servant and a bad master. But it is a determining factor in the evolution of the way companies operate and the working environment of their employees. We can wonder about the place of the human being in an ultra technological and ultra performing world. We remember this comment by the philosopher Charles Pépin: "Reason is never so much reason as when it is moved. The moved reason is the one that understands instantly by intuition and evidence. If it were enough to know to decide, there would be no art of decision. It is in the beyond of knowledge that we find the courage to decide".

One of the risks of digital technology is that we no longer allow time to do its work in us. But time creates the conditions for an interior life without which there is no room for oneself, for authentic relationships with others, or for God. And this interior life is necessary to discern and make decisions in truth.

While digitalization creates great opportunities for growth, speed of execution and improved working conditions, it is not without ethical risks. It proved its usefulness during the pandemic by allowing an explosion of remote working and letting the activity go on; but we also saw that too much remote working could be detrimental to social cohesion and professional motivation. It creates a new poverty by excess for some, but by default for others; by excess, it is those who live in virtual illusion; by default, it is digital illiteracy, especially of the oldest; the resulting gaps can be obstacles to integral progress within companies, but these gaps are also a ground for expression of fraternity and solidarity between some and others.

The challenge of inclusion takes many forms. Each situation, especially because of technological change, is ambivalent: it can be a factor of inclusion or exclusion. This is why the commitment of people of good will in favor of inclusion is so important, and especially of business leaders, given their major social role.