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Program

Friday, May 29, 2026
Vatican City, New Synod Hall

A Fragmented World in Search of Spirituality: Freedom and Pluralism from
Within the Social Doctrine of the Church

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'The following presentation proposes practical ways to implement Pope Leo XIV's new encyclical, Magnifica Humanitas. It was presented during the international conference discussions, focusing on the Korean case of Sungsimdang, where the Rule of Law was transformed into the Rule of Love, inspired by the remarks of Alexandre Widmer of the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs.'

The Fifth Industrial Revolution Opened by Human-Centered K- Entrepreneurship

The Miracle of UIT: Understanding People, Investing
in People, and Trusting People

If There Are 100 Companies Like Sungsimdang, Capitalism Can Change

Distinguished leaders of FCAPP,
Your Eminences, Your Excellencies, Reverend Fathers, distinguished
professors, entrepreneurs, and dear friends,

It is a great honor to join this precious gathering of the Fondazione Centesimus Annus Pro Pontifice here in the Vatican.

As a professor of management, I have long studied **Humane Entrepreneurship**, or human-centered entrepreneurship. Since the 2016 ICSB United Nations Conference, I have emphasized on many international stages the coming age of human-centered capitalism.

The question I have always asked is simple:

**Is capitalism saving people?
Or are people being used for capitalism?**

The new encyclical of Pope Leo XIV, *Magnifica Humanitas* — “Dignified Humanity” — gives us a very important message.

In the age of artificial intelligence, the human person must never be reduced to a mere tool. Technology does not exist to replace human beings. Rather, technology must exist to serve the dignity of the human person.

Technology must serve human dignity.
It must not replace it.

This is the heart of what I call the **Human-Centered Entrepreneurship Revolution**. It is a revolution that makes technology, business, and innovation serve the human person.

This message stands upon the great tradition of Catholic Social Doctrine.

In 1891, Pope Leo XIII published *Rerum Novarum*, “Of New Things.” In the age of the Industrial Revolution, this encyclical addressed the newly emerging questions of workers, capital, labor, and human dignity. Pope Leo XIII sought to

defend the dignity of workers at a time when industrial capitalism was rapidly transforming society.

One hundred years later, in 1991, Pope John Paul II published *Centesimus Annus*, “The Hundredth Year.” This encyclical reflected again on the relationship among capitalism, freedom, enterprise, and human dignity. It continued the mission of Catholic Social Doctrine by asking how economic systems can serve the human person and the common good.

And a few days ago, on May 25, 2026, in the age of AI, Pope Leo XIV’s *Magnifica Humanitas* continued this great tradition. It reminds us that human beings must not be reduced to data, functions, machines, or tools.

From *Rerum Novarum* to *Centesimus Annus*, and now to *Magnifica Humanitas*, Catholic Social Doctrine has consistently defended the dignity of the human person.

In the age of the Industrial Revolution, the central question was the dignity of workers.

In the age of capitalism, the central question was the relationship between the market and human dignity.

In the age of artificial intelligence, the central question is this:

Will technology replace human beings, or will it serve human beings?

At this historic moment, here in the Vatican, I propose the **Human-Centered Entrepreneurship Revolution**.

It is a revolution in which technology, business, and innovation serve the human person.

I come from Korea.

When you hear the word “Korea,” what first comes to your mind?

Today, many people may think of semiconductors, K-pop, K-drama, K-food, or BTS.

But Korea was once one of the poorest countries in the world.

After the Korean War, Korea had almost nothing.

Almost no natural resources.

Almost no money.

Almost no technology.

Korea had almost nothing but people.

But Korea educated its people.

Korea helped people dream.

Korea enabled people to innovate.

Through their blood, tears, and sweat, Korea was transformed.

Blood, tears, and sweat.

This is another meaning of BTS.

We call this the **Miracle on the Han River**.

Behind this miracle, there were people.

Behind this miracle, there was human-centered K-entrepreneurship.

The Miracle on the Han River was not created by money or natural resources.

It was created by people.

And when people are transformed, the world can create miracles.

This Korean spirit continues today.

Just yesterday, Samsung Electronics announced that it would create a fund of five trillion Korean won — about 3.3 billion US dollars — over the next five years to support shared growth, partner companies, marginalized groups, and future talent.

This is not merely corporate social responsibility.

It is an expression of human-centered K-entrepreneurship for society and community.

A company is one of the greatest inventions in human history.

But companies are not born by themselves.

They are born through the vision, courage, and responsibility of great entrepreneurs.

The purpose of a company is not simply to make money.

A company exists to solve the problems of the world.

And the way we solve problems is what we call innovation.

Great companies do not keep success only for themselves.

They share that success with the world.

In human-centered K-entrepreneurship, people are not costs.
People are the source of innovation.
People are the source of growth.
People are the source of hope.

This spirit has deep moral roots in Korea.

In the sixteenth century, the Korean thinker Nammyung Cho Shik taught **Gyeong** and **Ui**.

Gyeong means reverence.
It is deep respect for the human person.
It is the root of empathy.

Ui means righteousness.
It is moral courage and responsible action.
It becomes the foundation of enablement and empowerment.

Together, Gyeong and Ui became a source of human-centered K-entrepreneurship.

They developed into the **3E principle** of K-enterprise, providing a moral foundation for people, society, and community.

And this human-centered K-entrepreneurship continues today.

Today's self-centered capitalism must be transformed into human-centered capitalism with spirituality.

Spirituality means sharing together.
Spirituality is the power that brings people to life.

I explain human-centered K-entrepreneurship through **UIT** and **3E**.

First, **U** means **Understand people**.
This is **Empathy**.

Empathy means deeply understanding people before trying to serve them.

Second, **I** means **Invest in people's growth**.
This is **Enablement**.

Enablement means investing in people so that they can grow.

Third, T means **Trust people with real authority**.
This is **Empowerment**.

Empowerment means trusting people with real authority so that they can realize their dreams.

The more we understand, the more we invest, and the more we trust, the more spirituality we create.

This UIT and 3E are the core of human-centered K-entrepreneurship.

As a professor of management, I have consulted many struggling companies.

Through this experience, I learned one thing:

When UIT and 3E are applied, even dying organizations can come back to life.

That is why I believe that if only 100 human-centered companies were created around the world, capitalism itself could change.

Today, I would like to introduce one such company.

It is not a large corporation.
It is not a global technology company.
It is not a famous platform company.

It is a local small and medium-sized bakery in Korea.

Its name is **Sungsimdang**.

Sungsimdang means “the Bakery of the Sacred Heart.”

Sungsimdang is a Korean bakery that received congratulations from Pope Leo XIV.

It is also a company that grows more as it shares more.

Through this case, I would like to share three UIT messages:

First, understand people.
Second, invest in people.
Third, trust people.

When this happens, a UIT company can become a spiritual company that brings people to life.

First, Sungsimdang practiced **“Understand people.”**

Sungsimdang began in 1956 near Daejeon Station.

After the Korean War, Korea was still deeply wounded.

There were injured soldiers, war orphans, beggars, and homeless people.

In 1956, the founder of Sungsimdang, Im Gil-soon, opened a bakery in order to give bread to people who had nothing.

His model was simple:

Sell 200 loaves of bread,
and give away 100 loaves for free.

This was not charity after success.
It was sharing from the very beginning.

The founder, Im Gil-soon, was a devout Catholic.

After surviving the tragedy of war, he made a vow before God:

“If I survive, I will live the rest of my life for others.”

He opened the bakery in honor of the Sacred Heart of Jesus and sought to practice the words of Romans 12:17:

“Do what is good in the eyes of everyone.”

For seventy years, this spirit has continued.

In 2026, Pope Leo XIV sent a letter of congratulations for Sungsimdang’s seventieth anniversary.

The Holy Father praised Sungsimdang for practicing an “Economy for All.”

This is why Sungsimdang is not simply a bakery.

Sungsimdang is a living example of Catholic Social Doctrine in business practice.

It is not Catholic Social Doctrine only in books.

It is Catholic Social Doctrine alive in flour, fire, labor, bread, and love.

The deepest foundation of this company is understanding people.

Sungsimdang understood the hungry.

It understood the poor.

It understood the local community.

This is empathy.

Before we serve people, we must first understand people.

Second, Sungsimdang practiced **“Invest in people.”**

Sungsimdang is not only a good company.

It is also a high-performing company.

In 2025, Sungsimdang once again achieved remarkable business performance.

Over the past five years, Sungsimdang recorded an average annual growth rate of about 43 percent.

Sungsimdang shares its profits with employees and society.

It sells two and gives one away.

And yet, even after sharing with employees and society, Sungsimdang recorded an operating profit margin of about 25 percent.

Considering that the average operating profit margin of most small and medium-sized enterprises is below 5 percent, 25 percent is an astonishing figure.

This shows one of the most important paradoxes in management:

The more you share, the more you grow.

Sharing did not stop growth.

Sharing created growth.

Sharing became not a cost, but a driver of innovation.

Sharing led to innovation.

Innovation led to growth.

Growth led to greater sharing.

This is the virtuous cycle.

The founder wanted to give away more bread.
To do that, he had to sell more bread.
To sell more bread, he had to make better products.
To make better products, he had to innovate.

That is why Sungsimdang developed strong R&D capabilities.

Each store offers around 200 different products.
Every season, new products are introduced.
Customers return because they experience something new.

Innovation made sharing sustainable.

Many companies think sharing is a cost.
Many companies think social responsibility begins only after profit is made.

But Sungsimdang shows a different model.

Sharing became the reason for innovation.
Innovation created growth.
Growth made greater sharing possible.

This shows that human-centered K-entrepreneurship can be proven not only as a value, but also as performance.

The lesson is clear:

If you want to grow a company, grow people.
If you want to make sharing sustainable, invest in people.
If you want to create innovation, enable people.

A company grows when people grow.

Third, Sungsimdang practiced **“Trust people.”**

Trusting people is empowerment.

Empowerment means understanding people, investing in them, and then entrusting them with real authority.

When this happens, a company becomes a spiritual company that brings people to life.

Empowerment gives people strength.
Empowerment gives people life.

Ultimately, this is spirituality.

Spirituality is the power that raises up exhausted people.

Spirituality is the power that brings isolated people back into community.

Spirituality is the power that restores people from means to ends.

The deepest secret of Sungsimdang's success is the **Rule of Love**.

Sungsimdang has a magical employee-evaluation question that helps people practice love.

Many companies ask:

How much did you sell?

How much did you achieve?

How much did you bring to the company?

How much did you win?

But Sungsimdang asks a different question:

"How did you practice love?"

"How did you help others succeed?"

"What did you do for the success of your colleagues?"

These questions change everything.

They change competition into cooperation.

They change employees from competitors into companions.

They change labor into vocation.

They change the company from a machine into a community.

I call this the **Communion Rule**.

Dear friends,

This is where the power of human-centered entrepreneurship comes from.

This is the magic of Sungsimdang's success.

A baker is not merely a worker who makes bread.

A baker is a thinking person.

A baker is a creator of ideas.

They begin to think and create like Michelangelo or Leonardo da Vinci.

This is the restoration of humanity.
This is where the Neo-Renaissance Revolution begins.

Human beings are not merely laboring beings.
Human beings are thinking beings.

Here, I am reminded of Peter Drucker.

Drucker said that the purpose of an organization is to enable ordinary people to do extraordinary things.

Thanks to Sungsimdang's UIT, ordinary people are producing extraordinary results.

The employees of Sungsimdang are not simply costs.
They are sources of creativity.

A company is not merely a machine that produces profit.
A company can become a place where people are reborn.

This is human-centered capitalism alive in the smell of bread.

Dear friends,

This small Korean bakery asks us a very big question:

Can a company grow while sharing?
Can a company become stronger while saving people?
Can capitalism become more human?

The answer is clear.

Yes.

A company does not become strong when people defeat one another.
A company becomes strong when people help one another succeed.

A society does not become strong when the powerful dominate the weak.
A society becomes strong when the powerful lift up the weak.

The challenge of the world, especially the challenge of Asia, is often the gap between the rich and the poor, and the gap between those with power and those without power.

These gaps create polarization.

Asia is a continent where many religions live together.

There is Christianity.

There is Islam.

There is Buddhism.

There is Hinduism.

There is the Confucian tradition.

The challenge of Asia is not to allow these differences to create conflict.

The challenge of Asia is to build a spiritual society where people can live together with smiles.

For this reason, Asia needs religious pluralism and good governance.

Let me ask you a simple science question.

What happens if you divide an ant into three parts?

The answer is: head, chest, and abdomen.

This is the intellectual approach.

But what happens if you divide a living ant?

The ant dies.

The way to keep the ant alive is to let it live as one.

This is the spiritual approach.

People, too, can be divided into men and women, rich and poor, first and second, East and West.

When we divide people, people fight.

A spiritual society is a society where different people can live together with smiles.

The intellectual approach divides.

But the spiritual approach gives life and embraces diversity.

Let us not divide people.

Spirituality is the energy that brings people to life.

The capital that enables people to live well together is social capital.

Good governance based on spirituality asks:

Does this economy lift up the vulnerable?

Without spirituality, power becomes domination.

With spirituality, power becomes responsibility.

This is the spiritual foundation of governance in religiously plural Asia.

The case of Sungsimdang gives us a great lesson:

The more we share,
the more we grow,
and the more we can smile together.

Now, I would like to summarize our future task in three points.

First, we must prepare for the **Fifth Industrial Revolution**.

The Fourth Industrial Revolution is a great technological revolution.

But technology alone cannot give life to human beings.
Smarter machines alone cannot restore community.

The Fifth Industrial Revolution is a revolution of sharing.
And it is a revolution of spirituality.

The greatest products of the Fifth Industrial Revolution are love and spirituality.

Second, we must prepare for the **Neo-Renaissance Revolution** in the age of AI.

AI does not replace people.
AI makes us think more deeply about what makes human beings truly human.

In the age of AI, human beings are no longer mere workers.

Labor can be performed by robots such as Atlas or Optimus.

Instead, human beings must become thinking people.

The more intelligent machines become,
the more spiritual human beings must become.

The more powerful technology becomes,
the more human-centered leadership must become.

For this reason, leaders need human-centered leadership that practices UIT.

Third, we need innovation that goes beyond comfort and vested interests.

Innovation means overcoming present comfort in order to give hope and life to others.

This is painful and challenging, but it becomes the hope of the future.

In management, we call the challenge and pain for the future **innovation**.

In medicine, we call the pain for the future **labor pain**.

Because of labor pain, new life is born.
Because of innovation, a new future is born.

If there is an organization around you that is struggling, try applying human-centered K-entrepreneurship through UIT.

A miracle can happen.

U: Understand people.

I: Invest in people.

T: Trust people.

This is the magic of human-centered K-entrepreneurship.

Finally, I have a dream.

Dear friends,

May the Neo-Renaissance Revolution, led by spirituality, begin here today in the Vatican.

If every country can create just one company like Sungsimdang, we can change the future of capitalism.

Dream big.
Start small.
Move fast.

Thank you.

