

## Abstracts of Speakers

### 1. Dr. Antonio SPADARO SJ (Editor-in-chief, La Civiltà Cattolica)

#### **Topic: The Significance of the Encyclical “*Fratelli Tutti*” in the Covid-19 Pandemic Era**

**Abstract:** Pope Francis launched a social encyclical “*Fratelli Tutti*” in Oct 2020 while the world is under the threat of the pandemic. Fraternity and social friendship are the central message of his Encyclical. The world we are living today is prevailed with apocalyptic mentality which disseminates hatred and division. Pope Francis asserts in the Encyclical that the only real alternative that defies and curbs the apocalyptic solution is fraternity. Are fraternity and social friendship romantic solution which neglects the ideological and political conflicts in reality? Facing the challenges of the individualistic consumerism, the division of the East and West, poor and rich, the exclusion of refugees, what is the significance of the Encyclical? Is social friendship a path to peace in the light of the Gospel in the Covid-19 Pandemic era?

### 2. Dr. TENG Wen Ching (Director, Millennium Education Associates Ltd)

#### **Topic: Aristotle’s Justice in Friendship: Cliché or Antidote?**

**Abstract:** It is sometimes held that the modern conceptions of social justice are lacking one essential respect, solidarity or civic friendship. Liberal scholars ignore the importance of civic friendship in justice. It is also held that Aristotle’s thought of justice in friendship can be elucidated to fill the gap. This thought is resonated in the Encyclical “*Fratelli Tutti*” by Pope Francis. He recognizes the inadequacy of the universal human rights as the universal moral norm for global justice in the pandemic era. Following the path of St Francis of Assisi, Pope Francis upholds the fraternal love with the image of good Samaritan to be the way to just society. How does Aristotle articulate the relationship of justice and civic friendship? Is Aristotle’s thought of justice in friendship a good account of the civic friendship today? Can universal fraternal love urged by Pope Francis be revived in the modern era?

**3. Dr. Victor CHAN Chi Ming (Assistant Professor, Department of Social Science, Hang Seng University of Hong Kong)**

**Topic: Social Friendship in Vaccine Diplomacy: Challenges and Opportunities**

**Abstract:** In the Third Encyclical – “*Fratelli Tutti*” issued on 3 October 2020, Pope Francis urges to develop a better form of politics such as reforming the existing international organizations and ensuring the global observance of various important norms. In order to get rid of the rising extreme nationalism and populist politics, he emphasizes the importance of social friendship - a love capable of transcending borders in managing global crises such as COVID-19. He calls for an equitable distribution of the vaccines to those in need based not solely on economic consideration. His appeal provides an alternative perspective for current practices of vaccine diplomacy beside the conventional International Relations approaches. This presentation aims to examine the challenges of global vaccine production and distribution. Power and interest remain the dominant calculations among nations throughout the process of COVID-19 containment. But, to what extent, can Pope Francis's advocacy offer new opportunities for reshaping vaccine diplomacy against the pandemic? Apart from nations, how would other stakeholders adopt the principle of social friendship and play a role in enhancing an efficient production, an affordable purchase and a fair distribution of vaccines.

**4. Prof. KUNG Lap Yan (Associate Professor, Department of Cultural and Religious Studies, The Chinese University of Hong Kong)**

**Title: God as *Shouzu*: A Hongkonger's Perspective on Social Friendship**

**Abstract:** Pope Francis in his third encyclical “*Fratelli Tutti*” (Oct 3, 2020) writes that through Christ, we participate in that loving Trinitarian friendship, then Christians are called to friendship with all through Christ, we participate in that loving Trinitarian friendship, then Christians are called to friendship with all. One does not need to accept Pope Francis' theological foundation of social friendship but the idea of social friendship makes sense to people in the West due to the legacy of Aristotelian ethics. But the idea of social friendship becomes problematic in China. In the use of the People's Republic of China (PRC), friendship is a word with highly political connotations. Friendship has the meaning of a strategic relationship; it does not have the meaning of good or intimate personal relations. It is a term confined to foreigners and international relations. For instance, the government's officially “non-official” diplomacy is conducted by organizations such as the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries and the Chinese People's Association for Friendly Contact. In the past China has constructed Friendship Bridges for its poorer neighbors, and some border points are still known as Friendship Passes. How people under Chinese government's ideology can appreciate and practise the virtue of friendship, with reference to *Fratelli Tutti*, is the focus of this short article. Protestors in Hong Kong's anti-extradition bill movement in 2019 widely use the term, *shouzu* (literally means arms and legs, 手足), in which I find it provides Christians a language to be engaged in a theology of social friendship. Besides, God as *shouzu* makes sense to HongKongers and people in China striving for justice.