

Faith and Liberty 2015

Some of you who have heard me before in this yearly celebration know that this is a topic dear to my heart. Faith and Liberty is the title of my book about the Christian foundations of the economy of a free society. I usually mention that I first fell in love with Liberty, then with God, and then I realized they were the same thing.

Faith and Liberty are also tied to the Magna Carta, it was a Catholic Archbishop who likely drafted the document.

Today the liberty to practice the Christian faith is under attack in many corners of the world. So much so that in the United States, during the 14 days prior to the 4th of July, the Bishops ask us to pray each day for freedom of religion. To defend Faith and Liberty the role of solidarity is essential, and Father Lino Maia is a great leader in this field.

What is the foundation of solidarity? That we are God's creation and so is our "common house." The new encyclical has a chapter devoted to the common destiny of creation. Instead of quoting Pope Francis, I will quote John Locke who, on his Second Treatise on Civil Government, writes "It is very clear that God, as King David says, 'has given the earth to the children of men,' given it to mankind in common." Proper stewardship is also required "Nothing was made by God for man to spoil or destroy." Property of our own persons, and by extension, to other goods of creation, is also consistent with God's plan. Goods held in private property are taken care better than goods held in common.

That is the true social function of property.

In his book about "The Acting Person" Karol Wojtyla, known today as St. John Paul the Great, spoke about the importance of solidarity. And he gave a surprising example: he wrote that solidarity does not mean saying "yes" to government, political parties or labor unions. For him, parents opposing state educational schemes and demanding freedom to educate their children is an example of solidarity. The free economy, as described by John Paul II in *Centesimus Annus* (42) is completely consistent with solidarity.

It is out of solidarity that a businessman with good connections in government should say no to privileges, no to cronyism, and should say no to use the state to block competition. It is for solidarity that we should complement the market with so many charitable works as those that Father Lino Maia's association defends and represent. Thank you Professor Espada and team for creating this wonderful environment and occasion to honor Father Maia's work.

Alejandro Chafuen