

FINDING FAITH IN BUSINESS

**An Economy of
Communion Vision**

Edited by
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and
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*This, our first book, is dedicated
to our first child
Amos Gustafson
(born October 8, 2022)*

Contents

Acknowledgments 9

I. Introduction to the Economy of Communion

1. Introduction
Andrew Gustafson and Celeste Harvey 13

2. Address of His Holiness Pope Francis to
Participants in the Meeting “Economy of Communion”,
Sponsored by the Focolare Movement
Pope Francis 33

3. For an Economy Based on Communion
Chiara Lubich 40

II. Practice

4. Ownership and Business Succession:
Considerations from Catholic Social Teaching
and the Economy of Communion
Greg Beabout 49

5. Simplicity of Lifestyle as a Goal of Business:
Practicing the Economy of Communion as a
Challenge to Consumer Society
David Cloutier 74

6. Economy of Communion:
A Different Attitude to Work
Angus Sibley 98

7. The Economy of Communion: Catholic Social Thought Put to Work	
Andy Gustafson	117

III. Theory

8. Economy of Communion, Poverty, and a Humanized Economy	
Luca Crivelli	143
9. Pope Francis and The Economy of Communion	
Jesús Morán and Amy Uelmen.....	154
10. A Person-Centered Theory of the Firm: Learning from the Economy of Communion	
Celeste Harvey.....	189
11. The Business of Business: Recapturing a Personalist Perspective	
John McNerney.....	221
12. Exploring Subsidiarity: The Case of the Economy of Communion	
Jeanne Buckeye.....	245
13. The Economy of Communion as an Exercise of Prophetic Imagination	
John Gallagher.....	273
Notes on Contributors	293
Index.....	296

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Introduction to the Economy of Communion

Chapter 1

Introduction

Andrew Gustafson and Celeste Harvey

The Economy of Communion (EoC) is an entrepreneur-driven group with a very practical vision and purpose: to practice business in a way that promotes human dignity, especially by helping the poor. The words *economy* and *communion* are not usually found together. Upon first encounter, their conjunction may even be perplexing: What can this phrase possibly intend? The first word, *economy*, is clear enough: Economy concerns the way we provide for our material needs. Our modern market economy relies on private property, specialization and division of labor, and an advanced monetary system to facilitate exchange of goods and services. *Communion* is used here in the sense of “sharing or holding something in common with others” and thus “being associated or linked” (OED). Communion brings together *union* and *community* to indicate harmonious relationships and cooperation. Its opposite would be an economy of conflict, a way of providing that produces divisiveness and faction, driving people apart rather than pulling them together. The *Economy of Communion* says business need not be “every man for himself” and a “dog-eat-dog” world. Business can bring us together around a common vision. It can overcome divisions between the “haves” and the “have-nots.” It can bring unity between all people, even the rich and the poor.

The EoC is rooted in a deep spirituality and informed by Catholic thought, so there are many different aspects to consider. We initially brought this group of scholars together to use their unique expertise to shed new light on the many aspects of

EoC, in hopes of developing a rich understanding of the power of EoC values and vision. As one of the entrepreneurs said at the symposium which prompted this publication: “Listening to these thinkers explain the Economy of Communion has really helped me realize why I practice business the way I do. It has enriched my vision for my business.” That is our hope for this book—that it will help businesspeople and entrepreneurs, as well as academics, to more fully understand and appreciate the Economy of Communion approach to business.

In bringing these essays to print, our hope is that this collection will enhance the richness of the EoC movement and help inspire others to investigate Economy of Communion principles and business practices. First, we hope it will help spread the EoC way of thinking about business in general, but we also hope it will help the entrepreneurs associated with the EoC, as well as like-minded entrepreneurs outside the EoC, to think about the themes central to Catholic social teaching which are also central to uniting faith and business. In addition, we hope that by being easily accessible to students and faculty, this collection will prove a useful resource for the classroom, helping the students who are future business leaders to catch a new vision for business while suggesting to faculty possible connection points with current academic scholarship and their own research.

We hope that as the reader comes to understand the Economy of Communion approach to business, the double meaning of the title of this book, *Finding Faith in Business: An Economy of Communion Vision*, will become clear. In the first sense, the Economy of Communion helps us to *find faith in business* in the sense of believing in the positive potential of business to help society. Economy of Communion entrepreneurs have faith that with a focus on human relationships and a special attention for the poor, business enterprise can be a powerful positive force and a means of transforming culture and society for the better. In an age of cynicism about the purpose and effects of business, this faith that business can be used to

bring about good is encouraging. Second, doing business in this way is an exercise of *finding faith in business* in the sense that business itself can be a means of spiritual exercise and development. The Economy of Communion offers a way of thinking about how business itself can be a spiritually enriching activity. Frequently when people think about faith and business they primarily consider what faith has to say to business, how faith should inform, direct, and transform business practices. That is, of course, valuable. But the Economy of Communion also sees another aspect of this relationship which is often overlooked: that when we practice business with an aim of promoting communion, business practice itself can become a spiritual exercise. The struggles, aims, hopes, and disappointments which arise through practicing business in this way can become part of the spiritual development of the entrepreneurs and others engaged in the business relationships. In this sense, the Economy of Communion vision of business sees it as a sanctifying practice—business practices can be a means of achieving higher transcendent and also humanizing purposes. When this happens, it is no longer just faith speaking to business, but business practiced in this manner is edifying and nurturing to our faith as well. As Pope Francis says,

By introducing into the economy the good seed of communion, you have begun a profound change in the way of seeing and living business. Business is not only incapable (sic.)¹ of destroying communion among people, but can edify it; it can promote it. With your life you demonstrate that economy and communion become more beautiful when they are beside each other. Cer-

1. Since business is clearly capable of destroying communion among people through injustice and exploitation, it seems clear the sentence should be read as saying: “Business is not only capable of destroying communion among people, but can edify it; it can promote it.”

tainly the economy is more beautiful, but communion is also more beautiful, because the spiritual communion of hearts is even fuller when it becomes the communion of goods, of talents, of profits. (Francis 2017)

When business is conducted with a goal of promoting communion, it becomes a more beautiful activity, and communion and one's spiritual life also become more beautiful. And this is why Economy of Communion entrepreneurs have faith in the power of business to transform the world for the better.

What is the Economy of Communion?

a. Spiritual Origins of EoC in the Focolare

The Economy of Communion was started by the Focolare (pronounced foh-koh-LA-ree), a lay religious movement within the Catholic Church whose goal is to advance the cause of unity amongst the human family. The Focolare takes its name from the Italian word meaning “hearth.” The hearth is the symbolic heart of the home, a place of familial intimacy, love, and security, a place of togetherness and warmth. The Focolare's ideal is a world where all people can join together around a common hearth in peace and unity, and in universal brotherhood, as if a family.

The Focolare trace their origins to the summer of 1943 when Italy was under Nazi occupation and the Northern Italian city of Trent was a target of sustained bombing by the Allied Forces. In the midst of widespread suffering, a young woman began to see God “present everywhere with his love” (Lubich; quoted in Gold 2010, 65). Inspired by her belief in God's abiding love and presence in the midst of this suffering, she and some of her close friends collected whatever they could spare and began sharing with their neighbors and anyone they discovered with dire needs (Gold 2010, 65). The example they set inspired others, and soon they were not only pooling what

they had personally in excess but also taking donations from many others who wanted to do the same. In this way Chiara Lubich found herself the leader of a movement. The Focolare have steadily grown and expanded around the globe with over 2 million members worldwide (<https://www.focolare.org/en/mariapoli/>) and with significant concentrations of Focolare in Italy, Brazil, Argentina, and the Philippines.

There are many initiatives and projects of the Focolare—the Economy of Communion being just one—but all of them “share one principle aim and objective: promoting greater unity within the human family at all levels,” overcoming social divisions based on race or ethnicity, or tribe or politics, or wealth or class, or sex, or age, or religion (Gold 2010, 40). Throughout the life of the movement, an especially important focus has been overcoming the kind of social barriers that arise from material inequality between different groups, where some enjoy material abundance and have more than they need, while others lack basic necessities. Recalling the founding experience of the movement, those involved in the community have a regular practice of making a personal inventory of their needs and their belongings and giving away whatever they now regard as unnecessary, so that others who are in need might make use of them (Gold 2010, 74). In this way, the Focolare practice the “communion of goods” with the goal that, as with the first Christian community written about in the Acts of the Apostles, there will be no one in need among them (Acts 2:45; Lubich quoted in Gold 2010, 70). The Focolare live for exceptional and demanding ideals, but in Lubich’s view this is the only way to find true fulfillment and happiness. Speaking of the “culture of giving” that the Focolare seek to realize, Lubich says: “Human beings, made in the image of God, who is Love, find their fulfillment in loving, in giving. This is a need which is at the center of their being, whether believer or not” (Lubich 2001, 51; cited in Gold 2010, 65).

The adoption of this mentality gives rise to a unique perspective on need:

Within the Focolare, the person in need is accorded a high position. [. . .] Need is not something inherently negative, something of which to be ashamed, but rather a situation that allows sharing to be put into practice among the community. Offering a need to the community is therefore a positive action; people are encouraged to “offer” their need in order to give others the opportunity to help. This in turn empowers the community, creating greater solidarity among the members. The act of receiving is therefore transformed into an act of giving. (Gold 2010, 76)

This desire to create solidarity between people and overcome the divisions that so easily separate different groups—especially divisions based on material inequality, from which a sense of inadequacy on the part of the poor and superiority on the part of rich so easily emerge, causing divisions and resentments between people—forms the backdrop of the creation and development of the Economy of Communion.

b. The Beginning of the Economy of Communion

The beginnings of the Economy of Communion can be traced to Brazil. In 1991, while on a trip to São Paulo to visit the Focolare community there, Lubich was particularly troubled by the stark contrast of symbols of wealth and poverty: the skyscrapers, climbing to the sky and gleaming in the sun and, not far from these, the *favelas*, spread out far and wide with their ramshackle dwellings. There were many Focolare living in the *favelas* without the basic necessities of life. When she asked about this troubling reality, she was told that amongst the Focolare community, they did what they could to help their neighbors in need, but the needs were never-ending, and so many people were so very poor. To Lubich it was becom-

ing clear that sharing was not enough. They needed a way to *generate* funds for sharing, and the poor themselves needed employment and a path out of poverty. In this way, the idea of starting businesses as a way of providing employment and generating profits that could, in turn, be shared with those in need was born (Gallagher and Buckeye 2014, 19–21; Gold 2010, 84). The initial goal was to generate enough money to provide for the basic needs of the poor within the Focolare.

Upon its launch in Brazil in 1991 the EoC had one principal aim: to create businesses that would produce profits to share in common. The documentation relating to the launch of the project comes back to this point—the EoC is about making money to distribute to the poor and for the promotion of a culture of giving. (Gold 2010, 117)

As Lubich put it, the culture of giving needed to become productive. Thus a vision emerged for using the potential inherent in the for-profit business model to provide for basic human needs through the sharing out of profits generated in the business. Many people came forward with ideas for new businesses. Others offered their savings to provide the capital needed to get these initiatives started. After its beginning in Brazil, the initiative spread rather quickly to many countries around the world, and new businesses were founded and a number of established businesses joined (Gold 2010, 87). In developing this model, the EoC recognized three legitimate purposes for profit: (1) direct assistance to the poor, (2) promotion of a culture of giving, and (3) re-investment in the business.

While the goal of producing profits for the purpose of sharing was a principal driver in the creation of the EoC, and the three-part division of profits is certainly distinctive, it has become apparent over time that the spiritual values of fraternity, gratuity, and reciprocity which originally motivated the creation of the Economy of Communion have far-reaching

implications for the daily operations of business and economic activity more generally.

c. The Scope and Mission of the Economy of Communion Today

In 2017 Pope Francis spoke to an invited audience of EoC members at the Vatican. At that time he said of the EoC:

Economy and communion. These are two words that contemporary culture keeps separate and often considers opposites. Two words that you have instead joined, accepting the invitation that Chiara Lubich offered you 25 years ago in Brazil, when, in the face of the scandal of inequality in the city of São Paulo, she asked entrepreneurs to become *agents of communion*. She invited you to be creative, skillful, but not only this. You see the entrepreneur as an agent of communion. (Francis 2017)

As an *agent of communion*, the entrepreneur is someone called to business for a purpose—as a vocation—to help the poor, to benefit the common good, and to use business to bring about improvement in people’s lives and a transformation of society for the better. In the document *Vocation of the Business Leader*, the Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development describes the challenge given to business leaders to *enter into communion with others*: “The Church calls upon business leaders to *receive*—humbly acknowledging what God has done for them—and to *give*—entering into communion with others to make the world a better place” (Dicastery 2018, §5). The act of accepting what we have as a gift (gratuity) is what enables the entrepreneur to then reciprocate by practicing business in light of that grace (reciprocity) (Bruni 2017). In the words of Bruni and Hejj:

In the EoC, entrepreneurs are inspired by principles rooted in a culture different than what prevails in conventional practice and theory of economics. We can define this “culture” as a “culture of giving,” which is the antithesis of a “culture of having.” (2001, 378)

While typically the economics of business lead us to a vision of acquiring and having (profit) through business, the EoC vision is one of intentionally giving to others through business activity (giving grace, communion, dignity, and freedom through empowerment, for example).

Leo Andringa finds the EoC to be a prophetic voice putting forward an alternative to the kind of business mindset which led to the 2008 financial crisis. For example:

Many studies in the economic field confirm that, with the growth of wealth, happiness has diminished greatly—above all in rich countries. We are all experiencing that a financial system based only on profit fell without an enemy. It was an implosion. It is the conviction of many that this type of crisis developed because society and the market lost their ethical reference and the authentic sense of their existence for the common good. . . . The Economy of Communion . . . shows a way that is sustainable for businesses and it can give a contribution to correct the unjust and wrong distribution of goods and give back meaning to economic practice and culture. (Andringa 2010)

In this vision, business itself helps “correct the unjust and wrong distribution of goods” rather than relying solely on government welfare-distribution policies. Additionally, rather than settling for the quite thin purpose of simply “making as much money as possible” and the consequent commodification of culture which typically ensues, EoC aims to “give back meaning to economic practice and culture” by seeing our business ventures as meaning-producing activities which

enhance the state of human beings and improve the common good. When Pope Francis addressed the EoC at the Vatican, he similarly challenged the EoC to be “agents of communion” and to resist the current dominant economic logic. He said:

But you can share more profits in order to combat idolatry, change the structures in order to prevent the creation of victims and discarded people, give more of your leaven so as to leaven the bread of many. May the “no” to an economy that kills become a “yes” to an economy that lets live, because it shares, includes the poor, uses profits to create communion. (Francis 2017)

Stefano Zamagni describes the EoC with three words: generativity, reciprocity, and gratuity. Generativity is “the capacity to generate new forms of doing business, new modes of organizing the productive process, new ways of realizing the specific role of entrepreneurship” (Zamagni 2014, 46). EoC has an alternative view of business which does not see entrepreneurship primarily as a pursuit of profit, but rather, as a pursuit using the practice of business to contribute to the common good, especially by providing employment to the poor. The original vision of EoC was to create profitable businesses which would be able to employ many poor people, which in turn gives them dignity, freedom, and sociality in relationship to others as they take a place in society through productive work and contribution. Entrepreneurship in this EoC mode is not merely a seeking for profit; rather, EoC entrepreneurship has a vision of transforming lives and society for the better by bringing people into community. By reciprocity, Zamagni means not merely an exchange of equivalents, but rather:

According to the EoC perspective, the firm is visualized as a community, not as a commodity that can be bought and sold in the market according to the conveniences of the moment. We know that a community

to function presupposes that its members practice the principle of reciprocity. (Zamagni 2014, 46)

This model of the relationship between company and community is different from what we frequently see today. Frequently a company may be bought or acquired, the local office is shut down in the acquisition, and the local workers are simply laid off or asked to uproot and relocate. The reciprocal model takes more seriously the relational aspect between the company and the community, and the company and the workers and customers. In fact, the relational aspects are the central part of the company. Far from a transactional this-for-that approach, this view of reciprocity sees business as a communal practice where everyone is committed to the good of the whole, and each is willing to sacrifice and give to the other. This is not a guarded relationship, but a free relationship of real trust which risks my well-being in the hands of others without caveat. When reciprocity is the principle of economic behavior, “transfers cannot be dissociated from personal relationships” because “the objects of exchange are not detached from the subjects who create them, with the result that the exchange that takes place within the market ceases to be anonymous and impersonal” (Zamagni 2014, 50). This is why the statement “It’s nothing personal, it’s just a business decision” is antithetical to an EoC way of thinking about business and life.

Finally, “the ultimate challenge that EoC invites us to take up is to strive to bring the principle of gratuitousness back into the *public* sphere” (Zamagni 2014, 46). For Zamagni, gratuitousness is not merely giving or getting something for free, but “the content of gift as gratuitousness is the specific interpersonal relation that goes to be established between the donor and the donee” (46). When one gives receives a gift, a relationship can be formed. Of course in business there are contractual expectations. This is a matter of justice. But in business, at times, a company exceeds the expected contract,

or an employee goes above and beyond their job requirements. This is the sort of gratuity which leads to a sense of loving obligation to the other. “Gratuitous goods on the other hand—such as relational goods—create an *obligation* that is based on the special ties that bind us to one another” (53). Ethics deals in the realm of justice. Gratuitousness is beyond justice: “It has more to do with the supra-ethical sphere of human action; its logic is that of superabundance” rather than mere equivalence (this for that) which is the domain of justice and ethics (*ibid.*).

In a spirit of gratuitousness, EoC was begun as a way to especially help the poor and to bring about communion through business, using private enterprise to develop businesses which could not only provide a living for people but could also provide dignity, community, and even communion with one another and with God. This is a high calling for business—much more than the more simple goal to make money.

Situating EoC in the Political-Economic Landscape

EoC certainly thinks that business should serve the common good. But so do some other forms of free-market capitalism and, alternatively, anti-capitalist socialist proposals. It is useful to consider EoC as a healthier form of economic thinking, an alternative to both unfettered capitalism and anti-capitalistic socialism. EoC sees business and free enterprise as a means for bringing about societal well-being, especially for the poor. Bruni sketches the variety of ways in which business can bring about the common good, and the place of business in doing so, situating EoC between free-market capitalism and socialism (2012, 39). Bruni first describes the “capitalist approach.” In the capitalist view, business actively contributes to the common good, but does so indirectly and unintentionally. Companies must respect the law and pay taxes, but beyond that businesses need only act prudently and responsibly to promote their own self-interest. In doing so, they unintentionally produce

the common good as the invisible hand of the market propels them forward. Similarly, individuals need only contribute to the economy by prudently and responsibly seeking their own self-interest within the bounds of the law. In doing so, they too benefit all of society. Bruni explains:

The common good as considered by economics today, then, is essentially an unintended result of the actions of individuals; as has been indicated, the purpose of a person who makes a contract to effect an exchange is neither the common good nor the good of the other, but that individual's own good or self-interest. (2012, 54)

Under capitalism, then, we achieve the common good not by intentionally considering the good of the whole, but by simply considering our own good, and the market forces help things to work out for the collective good. So this first approach to the common good is somewhat paradoxically rooted in self-interest. Another important characteristic of the "capitalist" approach is that it attempts to prevent the human interaction and concern which would lead to wounding: "Basically, economic personnel theory and agency theory are worthy attempts to foresee, mitigate and minimize the 'wounds' that face-to-face encounters cause" (Bruni 2012, 35). While the motivation is understandable, this has dehumanizing effects on business. Capitalist business also often renders and reduces the relationship between individuals to purely contractual relations and relations within the firm to primarily hierarchical relations.²

In contrast to the individualistic and hierarchical capitalist approach, there are two cooperative traditions: "The French

2. Since Coase's 1937 "The Nature of the Firm," Bruni claims, contracts (which are typically of an exchange between equals) have been strangely mixed with the hierarchical notion of the manager-agent relationship, so that this market system leads to an oxymoronic hierarchical contract situation, which is not a contract between equals, but a contract between a superior and subordinate (Bruni 2012, 32).

tradition was essentially anti-capitalist and anti-market, whereas the Italian tradition, in continuity with the civil economy . . . was more positive toward the market as a place for the exercise of civil virtues” (Bruni 2012, 34–35). Advocates of the French anti-market view, such as Louis Blanc’s anti-market and anti-capitalist thought, “can be summarized in the motto ‘competition is the disease; association is the cure’” (35). In Blanc’s view the market is “simply uncivilized and dehumanizing, because—despite the apparent freedom and apparent equality—it conceals a lack of freedom and relational inequality” (35–36). We can see this negative assessment of business and the free market in the “Occupy Wall Street” movement and other recent movements critical of the effects of capitalism (e.g., Alain Caillé’s Anti-Utilitarian Movement (Caillé 2003)).

The French social economy tradition sees market capitalism as being oriented around the interests of one individual (or a small group of individuals) who then make their money by establishing unfair contracts and relationships with employees, suppliers, and other businesspeople. Business interests in this view are anti-social and self-concerned, not societally concerned. No corporation can be civil because no corporation can be responsible—on this point Louis Blanc agrees with Milton Friedman, who argues that companies have no social responsibility because only humans can be held responsible (Friedman 1970).

The Italian type of cooperative tradition is what Bruni refers to as a civil economy, a third way which depends on private enterprise working within the free-market economy (not socialism) but by which the practice of business itself helps society in intentional and humane ways.³ As Bruni says,

3. Although Antonio Genovesi (1765) is considered a grandfather of the civil economy, later theorists like Fedele Lampertico, Ugo Rabbeno, Luigi Luzzatti, Vito Cusumano, Ghino Valentini, and Leone Wollemborg continued this work into the late nineteenth century. Today theorists like Bruni and Zamagni continue the tradition (Bruni & Zamagni 2016).

“From this point of view, economics and the market are not inconsistent with genuine relationality; rather, economic activity is an expression of civic virtues” (Bruni 2012, 36). This civil economy perspective, which values the market but also rejects radical individualism and embraces a concern for community, fits the EoC model. The anti-market advocates of the French social economy tradition find this civil economy position absurd, since in their minds it involves the paradoxical view that an inherently anti-social entity (the company or corporation) should be responsible to society—not unlike saying that sociopaths should always practice altruism. Yet Bruni claims that the famous Italian economist Antonio Genovesi and even John Stuart Mill are in the civil economy cooperative tradition. Proponents of this civil economy cooperative tradition do not see cooperation and the market to be in contradiction, like the French thinkers. Rather, they see that the market and the company can be reformed through cooperation, synthesizing the capitalists and workers together (such as through worker-owner movements, among other approaches) (Bruni 2012, 37). In this civil economy view, the marketplace is a self-interested arena and the market forces help direct our activities to remain civil, for the sake of future market activity: “If in fact the market is seen as a place in which to practice the civil virtues, then there is no need to socialize it at a later time, because it is so from the outset” (Bruni 2012, 44). Bruni sees the EoC clearly in this third tradition, saying:

Economy of Communion, although socially focused, is open to the market; in this sense it is not heir to the French-inspired radical tradition . . . but precisely to this Millian and Italian cooperative tradition. (2012, 38)

This, we think, is a very useful way to conceive of the Economy of Communion, and to understand the method and values which direct those of us who attempt to practice business in the EoC way. EoC businesses are in many cases designed for the

sake of employing the poor and thus providing them a means to dignified work which is more respectful to their humanity than keeping them in an underprivileged position through our charity which assists with their living but does not substantially improve their condition. There is certainly a concern for cooperative work and *subsidiarity*—the notion that every person should be encouraged to exercise as much of their own autonomy as possible—which pushes decision-making to the proper level of those most affected (Naughton et al. 2015). There is a reason why the movement is often called “The Economy of Communion in Freedom” and that is because this is far from some sort of socialist or communist vision (although that mistaken identity has been given to the group, simply due to the use of the unusual word *communion* in the name).

So the EoC model is this: within the free market, without centralized government planning but rather with a positive view of the power of business to bring about the common good alongside profit in this market system, poor people are helped, community is established, humanity is enhanced and redeemed, and the vision of Christ that we should love one another becomes a central driving force in the very way we think about business activity and practice. This is a vision of business that inspires us and helps us to live integrated lives.

The Essays and Contributors of this Volume

A diverse group of authors has contributed to this collection, some of whom have a longstanding relationship with the Economy of Communion, and others who have become more familiar with it during the course of this project. All of the authors here have given serious thought and consideration and in many cases have written books and essays on issues concerning faith and business and/or Catholic Social Thought and the economy. The essays were presented at Creighton University at the Business, Faith and the Common Good annual

symposium in the fall of 2018, put on by the Business, Faith and the Common Good Institute at Creighton's Heider College of Business. The topics vary, but each author has brought their own expertise and interest to bear on the EoC. The result is that we have expanded the scope of EoC thought and research and hopefully provided some new avenues and opportunities of research for the future.

Greg Beabout, who has written on Catholic Social Thought, business ethics, and economics, provides "Ownership and Business Succession: Considerations from Catholic Social Teaching and the Economy of Communion," which raises significant points about how business owners who have a vision for their company to serve the common good can sustain that vision and purpose even as they retire and transfer ownership of their company.

David Cloutier has written extensively on consumerism and the vice of luxury. Here his essay "Simplicity of Lifestyle as a Goal of Business: Practicing the Economy of Communion as a Challenge to Consumer Society" explores how entrepreneurs and businesspeople might take seriously the challenge to live according to a consistent set of values in both their private life and work life, and, assuming a commitment to simplicity in private life, how we might also implement policies and practices that resist the excesses of consumerism in the operations of the business.

Angus Sibley, who has written extensively on Catholic Social Thought and economics, provides "Economy of Communion: A Different Attitude to Work," pointing out the very positive view toward work which is found in Catholic Social Thought as well as the Economy of Communion.

Andy Gustafson, who has written on the EoC and business and the common good, provides "The Economy of Communion: Catholic Social Thought Put to Work," in which he brings together the theories of Economy of Communion and Catholic Social Thought with his lived experience as an EoC entrepreneur.

Jesús Morán and Amy Uelmen live and breathe the EoC life and have written extensively on the Focolare, Pope Francis, and the EoC. Their contribution, “Pope Francis and the Economy of Communion,” illuminates the ways in which the economic vision and values of Pope Francis parallel those of the Economy of Communion.

Celeste Harvey, who has written on virtue, concerns of women, and business and the common good, here provides “A Person-Centered Theory of the Firm: Learning from the Economy of Communion” in which she contrasts the EoC model with that of the traditional stockholder and stakeholder models of the firm as well as other socially concerned business movements such as B Corps, social entrepreneurship, and corporate social responsibility.

John McNerney, whose work has centered on the human person and the personalist tradition of Pope John Paul II, provides here “The Business of Business: Recapturing a Personalist Perspective,” in which he points to the uniquely person-centered nature of the EoC.

Jeanne Buckeye has written books on both the EoC and subsidiarity. In her essay “Exploring Subsidiarity: The Case of the Economy of Communion,” she explains subsidiarity and how it permeates Economy of Communion practices.

John Gallagher, co-author with Jeanne Buckeye of *Structures of Grace*, one of the definitive books on the Economy of Communion in the U.S., contributes “The Economy of Communion as an Exercise of Prophetic Imagination.” Drawing on the concept of the prophetic imagination as developed by Walter Brueggemann, Gallagher makes the case that the Economy of Communion offers a prophetic vision of business, and he highlights the challenges of this calling to practice business in an alternative way.

In addition to these original scholarly works, we are delighted and grateful to be able to reproduce here Pope Francis’s comments to the Economy of Communion participants at the

Vatican in 2017; Chiara Lubich's short essay "For an Economy Based on Communion"; and renowned EoC scholar Luca Crivelli's previously unpublished essay "Economy of Communion, Poverty, and a Humanized Economy," which is a talk he gave at Geneva, Palais des Nations, in 2004.

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