

# "Goods that are truly good"

Cardinal Peter Turkson, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, spoke about the moral dimension of business at IESE's Barcelona campus.

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**Cardinal Peter Turkson**, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, visited IESE's Barcelona campus on April 23 to present *The Vocation of the Business Leader: A Reflection*. First drafted in 2012, this

working paper has now been updated to include several quotations from Pope Francis.

The document (available in pdf format [here](#)) is a practical resource for business people that, Cardinal Turkson said, "expands on the concept of business as a 'noble vocation' – as stated by Pope Francis in Davos in 2014 – to **meet the needs of the world with goods that are truly good; and services that truly serve.**"

Cardinal Turkson was speaking at the **4<sup>th</sup> International Colloquium on Christian Humanism in Economics and Business**, which was moderated by **IESE Professor of Business Ethics, Domènec Melé**. Joining him were **José Maria Simone**, president of International Christian Union of Business Executives (UNIAPAC) and **Luis H. de Larramendi**, president of

Acción Social Empresarial (Social Action in Business).

## Time to Think, Reflect and Plan

Rather than present a "minimalist or negative set of guidelines," the goal of *The Vocation of the Business Leader*, is to "help build a model for action," said Larramendi.

"This document is not intended to admonish business people or to stigmatize efficiency. Nor is it a set of formulas to remove each and every doubt. It is a guide to help Christian business people improve themselves and to help make the world a better place."

The financial crisis of recent years has increased the pressure on business leaders to seek profitability, he said. Meanwhile, the increasing speed of information sharing and communication has had a "negative

impact" in reducing the time available to think, reflect and plan.

"There is a need to combine the logic of the market with the logic of the gift. The gifts of talent, education and support that business leaders have been given by God should be seen as gifts to be shared, not as private goods," added Cardinal Turkson.

He went on to talk about the "divided self" – a tendency to compartmentalize and separate attitudes and behaviors from values or personal faith.

**"Faith is not like spreading marmalade on toast – something to be added or removed to suit your taste," said Cardinal Turkson. "It should be an integral part of life."**

"In this way business people overcome cynicism and fear arising from a divided self through faith;

aiming to overcome obstacles and bring hope and light."

## Redefining "Success"

*The Vocation of the Business Leader* also seeks to expand the definition of success beyond monetary terms and encompass concepts such as "human dignity and the common good above those of private gain," said José Maria Simone.

"We business people have excellent methods to measure the monetary value of work, but we do not yet have ways to fully measure all its benefits. Take the example of a worker who is fulfilled by his job – what is that worth?" he asked.

"One of the jobs of a business leader is to create jobs for others and to give those workers the opportunity to grow," Simone said. **"The best way to create added value is to see**

**people not as means but as ends in themselves."**

Responding to the question of how business profits should be shared, Simone added: "Profits are vital, but how should they be used? **All stakeholders in a business should be beneficiaries: owners, workers, shareholders..."**

Cardinal Turkson brought the discussion to a close by urging readers not to view *The Vocation of the Business Leader* as a finished work but as a "work in progress." He welcomed feedback from the business community: "Businessmen and women reading this book should feel free to share their comments with the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace."

[\*View "The Vocation of the Business Leader" in pdf format\*](#)

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