

# SIAEC Conference 2021

*„Ethical Action: COVID Affecting Human Rights and Democracy“*

**Friday, April 30, 2021**

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## **Markus Gabriel**

Internationales Zentrum für Philosophie NRW, Institut für Philosophie, Lehrstuhl für Erkenntnistheorie, Philosophie der Neuzeit und Gegenwart, Center for Science and Thought (CST), University of Bonn, Bonn, Germany

### **„Transdisciplinary cooperation as a way out of the crisis“**

The omission of an interdisciplinary, even transdisciplinary approach to solving a complex and dynamic phenomenon such as the current global pandemic situation is unscientific in its essence. The one-sidedness of the expertise, which has been used for political consultation for a year now, therefore results in scientific and social imbalances, which can only be overcome if a global, cooperative and transdisciplinary attempt is made to research the pandemic events, in which not only viruses and human bodies, but also social systems and living environments are involved, and to develop new control mechanisms, which are at eye level with the global problem situations of the 21st century.



## **Stefano Biancu**

Libera Università degli Studi Maria Ss. Assunta di Roma (Lumsa), Rome, Italy

### **“Fundamental freedoms and the problem of freedom”**

The current limitations of fundamental freedoms linked to the pandemic are a good opportunity to rethink the concept of freedom in itself: what does it mean to be free? The ideal of freedom, which has become the unifying ideal of the so-called Western Civilisation, is clear – we all crave freedom and value it as essential for the human life and flourishing. But what about its concept? This is an important question even on a political level. At the same time, democracy protects fundamental freedoms and requires truly free citizens. Freedom is not only an outcome of democracy, but also one of its presuppositions.



## Grégoire Catta

Maître de conférence, théologie morale sociale, Chaire Jean Rodhain, Centre Sèvres – Facultés Jésuites de Paris;  
Director of the Service National Famille et Société – French Conference of Bishops, Paris, France

### “Freedom, fraternity, solidarity in pandemic time”

Like any crisis, the time of pandemic we are living calls Christians to discernment. How does the Kingdom of God progress or is resisted? Pope Francis’ promotion of fraternity leads me to revisit the French Republic motto, “Liberty, equality, fraternity”. The pandemic challenges our democratic aspirations to live as free and equal citizens. This makes it all the more necessary to foster fraternity as the path to “enhance freedom and equality” (*Fratelli tutti* 103).



## Kevin Ahern

Manhattan College,  
New York, USA

### “The Pandemic and the Crisis of Participation: A Challenge to Lay Mobilizing”

The COVID Pandemic has revealed and exacerbated divisions within society and the church. As Pope Francis points out in *Fratelli Tutti*, we are seeing in the world “signs of a certain regression. Ancient conflicts thought long buried are breaking out anew, while instances of a myopic, extremist, resentful and aggressive nationalism are on the rise” (*Fratelli tutti* 11). Bridges once built are crumbling and far too many remain excluded from even the most basic health care services. Nevertheless, there is hope. Even as democracy is deteriorating in many places, people and communities are calling for change. From pro-democratic movements in the Milk-Tea Alliance and the Black Lives Matter movement in the United States to efforts to include more women in the church’s decision making, people world over are calling for more participatory models of living. Drawing from the experiences of Pax Romana and insights from Pope Francis, this paper will reflect on the meaning of participation and the role of movements like Pax Romana in bringing forth both a participatory democracy and a participatory ecclesiology.



## **Javier María Iguíñiz Echeverría**

Pontifical Catholic University of Peru, PUCP, Department of Economics,  
Lima, Peru

### **“Justice in the pandemic in Latin America”**

Ethical reasoning in the context of Latin American experience of Covid-19 will be approached taking into consideration two axes. On the one hand, my substantive point will be based on a central element of the Fratelli Tutti: “...the Samaritan became a neighbour to the wounded Judean” (*Fratelli tutti* 81). My main question will be: how difficult is it to become neighbour to the poor in our pandemic world and in our countries? On the other hand, in my analysis I will distinguish three meanings of “health” from the viewpoint of justice following the proposal of Sridhar Venkatapuram in Health Justice.

## Saturday, May 1, 2021

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### **Jerald Joseph**

Human Rights Commission of Malaysia (SUHAKAM) & Pax Romana movement,  
Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

#### **“Covid19 pandemic: Human rights at risk”**

The world shocked into a new norm by the virus for health and survival reasons, is also being tested to the limits on the human rights front during this pandemic. While the right to health demand is foremost concern for all, other human rights have fallen further down of importance in many countries. Some Governments are resorting to exploiting the pandemic for centralizing more power to the detriment of individual human rights. This has impacted freedom of expression, freedom of information, freedom of association, and non-discrimination amongst others.



### **Fredrick Wamalwa**

Senior Economist/Education Specialist, African Development Bank,  
Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire

#### **„Impact of COVID-19 on Education Delivery in Africa“**

COVID-19 pandemic has led to steep recessions in many countries, and the education sector has been badly hit. Even before the pandemic, the Sub-Sahara Africa (SSA) region was facing a number of setbacks in quality and relevant issues. SSA's average primary school NER is estimated at 60.5 %. In a number of fragile and conflict countries in SSA, more than 80% of children who start grade 1 do not finish secondary education. Some complete primary school without mastering basic literacy and numeracy skills. Another effect of COVID-19 on education is the reduction in spending on education by households, governments and development partners. My presentation will focus on these issues.



## **Adam Bodnar**

Professor, SWPS University of Social Sciences and Humanities;  
Ombudsman of the Republic of Poland  
Warsaw, Poland

### **“COVID Affecting Human Rights and Democracy”**

The aim of the speech is to analyse the implications of the pandemic on the protection of human rights at the national and global level. Human rights' norms may help in resolving some of the challenges but the unprecedented, gigantic scale of the pandemic undermines their typical applicability. For some governments it created a dangerous opportunity to consolidate authoritarian power. Certainly response to the pandemic needs a new definition and scope of applicability of certain rights (e.g. do we need general global protection of right to health?). However, it is uncertain whether due to nationalistic interests of some states, as well as multilateralism crisis, there will be a chance for a real paradigm shift.

## Panel Speakers

### *“Consequences and Outlook”*



#### **María Patricia Arbeláez-Montoya**

Vicepresident of Research, Universidad de Antioquia,  
Medellin, Colombia

#### **“Covid-19 Pandemic: Global Public Health Implications”**

As catholic intellectual community, we must contribute with specific analysis to the global community in accordance to Christian values and ecclesial directions such Pope Francisco encyclicals. I am proposing four categories to approach Covid-19 global public health implications, they are: (1) Global Health Governance: Social justice, health equity. One health, environmental public health. Social determinants in health. International health code. (2) Overlapping of public health problems: Mercy. Concurrency of health problem profiles, infectious diseases combined with non-communicable diseases, and mental health affectations. (3) Health system performance: Solidarity, dignity. Role of states and insurers. Universal health coverage. Human health talent. (4) Open Science: Truth. Knowledge as Common Good. Population Knowledge Appropriateness.



#### **Olena Bidovanets**

Public Health Center of the Ministry of Health of Ukraine, Chief Specialist of the Viral  
Hepatitis Department,  
Ternopil, Ukraine

#### **"Mental health during COVID-19 pandemic"**

The WHO declared the coronavirus pandemic outbreak in 2020. It causes damage to the physical and mental sphere. Numerous investigations among medical staff, frontliners in overcoming the disease, showed suffering from insomnia, depression, anxiety. They feared the new disease - healthcare workers did not know how to act due to the lack of clear guidelines - and becoming physically infected, being a carrier of the disease for relatives. Subsequent studies have shown the so-called long covid (symptom complex), which also damages the cognitive sphere - short-term memory impairment, lack of concentration, fatigue, depressive symptoms. We need to establish ways to mitigate mental health risks.



## **Anna Rosario**

Mayor's Office of Immigrant Affairs (MOIA),  
New York City, USA

***“Impact of COVID on migrants in New York City”***



## **Kaputo Chenga**

Governance Adviser, Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office  
(formerly Department for International Development (DFID)),  
Zambia

***“C19 stresses the democracy: a selection of tales across the world”***