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## Causes of Poverty

Britain is facing a deep-seated 'livelihood crisis', with a significant and rising proportion of the population denied decent work, pay or pensions and facing growing economic uncertainty. What is needed is a 'post-market model' with a re-cast role for the state, business and labour and with an emphasis on wealth and job creation as well as a fairer distribution of the national cake

The idea of a Triune God acts as a challenge to individualism, discrimination and exclusivity; it is a doctrine that calls us into a life of equality in community and requires an active response that affects the whole of humanity.

We are called to find a new and just international financial architecture oriented towards satisfying the needs of people and the realisation of all economic, social and cultural rights and human dignity. Such architecture must be focused on reducing the intolerable chasm between the rich and the poor and on preventing ecological destruction. This requires a system which does not serve greed but which embraces alternative economies that foster a spirituality of enough and a lifestyle of simplicity, solidarity, social inclusion and justice.

São Paulo Statement: International Financial Transformation for the Economy of Life, Global Ecumenical Conference on a New International Financial and Economic Architecture (convened by World Council of Churches, World Communion of Reformed Churches and Council for World Mission), 2012-14

Just as the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' sets a clear limit in order to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say 'thou shalt not' to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of exclusion. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of inequality. Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless.

One cause of this situation is found in our relationship with money, since we calmly accept its dominion over ourselves and our societies. The current financial crisis can make us overlook the fact that it originated in a profound human crisis: the denial of the primacy of the human person! We have created new idols. The worship of the ancient golden calf (cf. Ex 32:1-35) has returned in a new and ruthless guise in the idolatry of money and the dictatorship of an impersonal economy lacking a truly human purpose.

Some websites with news and features on economic exclusion:

- <http://www.theguardian.com/society/social-exclusion> [1]
- <http://www.theguardian.com/society/benefits> [2]
- <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/search/node/poverty> [3]
- <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/search/node/welfare> [4]
- <http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/austerity%20britain> [5]
- <http://www.mirror.co.uk/authors/ros-wynne-jones/> [6]

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**Links**

[1] <http://www.theguardian.com/society/social-exclusion>

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[3] <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/search/node/poverty>

[4] <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/search/node/welfare>

[5] <http://www.mirror.co.uk/all-about/austerity%20in-britain>

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