

Catholic Social Teaching

Saturday, February 9/19

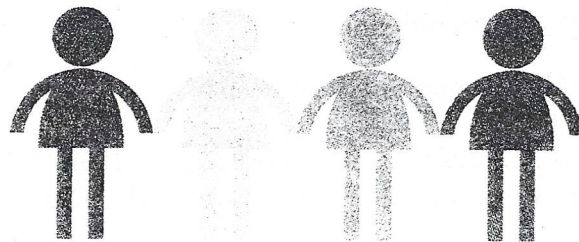
Prayer for Community

Embracing God,

We praise you for the communities of life
which sustain us: creation, family, church,
and the community of all people.

May we learn from your Son Jesus to love
our neighbours more deeply,
so that we may continue your work of creating
a community of justice and peace in our world.

May that same love of neighbor fill us
with creative energy to overcome the obstacles
of intolerance and indifference
and to build inclusive communities
in our neighbourhoods, our nation,
and among all your people. **Amen.**



A Muslim, Jewish and Christian Prayer for Peace

- O God, you are the source of life and peace.
Praised be your name forever.
We know it is you who turns our minds to thoughts of peace.
Hear our prayer in these uncertain times.
- Your power changes hearts.
Muslims, Christians and Jews remember, and proudly affirm,
that they are followers of the one God, children of Abraham,
brothers and sisters;
- Enemies begin to speak to one another;
Those who were estranged join hands in friendship;
Strengthen our resolve to give witness
to these truths by the way we live. Give to us:
- Understanding that puts an end to strife;
Kindness that quenches hatred,
and forgiveness that overcomes vengeance.
Empower all people to live in your law of love. **Amen.**

- May we, with all people of Earth community,
continue to respect and give thanks for the gift of creation.
- May an ongoing conversion continue in our lives
and in our faith communities.
- Come, Spirit of Life, empower your people!

The Challenge and Spirituality of Catholic Social Teaching,
Marvin L. Frier Mich, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, NY, 2011



Principles of Catholic Social Teaching



1. Life and Dignity of the Human Person:

Human life is sacred;

the dignity of the person is the foundation of a moral vision for society.

2. Call to Family, Community and Participation:

The human person is social;

individuals are called to grow in community;

3. Rights and Responsibilities:

We have the right to those things required for human decency;

we have responsibilities to one another, to our families and to the larger society.

4. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable:

The needs of the poor and vulnerable come first;

how are our most vulnerable members faring?

There are deepening divisions between rich and poor. (Matthew 25: 31-46)

5. Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers:

The economy must serve people;

the basic rights of workers must be respected- the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property and to economic initiative.

6. Solidarity:

We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live.

We are one human family.

"Loving our neighbor" has global dimensions, which cannot be ignored.

7. Care for God's Creation:

We are called to protect people and the planet;

the environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions which cannot be ignored.

8. Promotion of Peace:

"Peace is not just the absence of war,

it involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations.

It involves collaboration and binding agreements; peace is the fruit of justice." (JP II)

9. Role of Government:

Government is to promote human dignity, protect human rights, build the common good,

and assist the individual to fulfill his/her responsibilities to society.



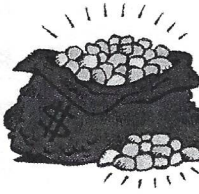
What is Christian Social Doctrine?

It has a long tradition:

1. **All people in the world have equal dignity** and should enjoy equal rights in terms of respect, access to resources and access to opportunity.
2. **God intended Earth for all persons equally.** Thus the riches of this world should flow equally and fairly to all. All other rights, including the right to private property and the accumulation of riches that are fairly earned, must be subordinated to this more primary principle.
3. The right to private property and accumulation of wealth is not an absolute one. It must be subordinated to the **Common Good**, to the fact that the goods of Earth are intended



equally for all. No one has the moral right to keep as much as he or she can earn without concern for the common good (*even if he or she is a celebrity or sports hero!*)



4. No person, group of persons, or nation may have a surplus of goods if others lack the basic necessities.
5. **We are obliged, morally, to come to the aid of those in need.** In giving such aid, we are not doing charity, but **serving justice**. Helping the poor is not an issue of personal virtue and generosity, but something that is demanded by justice itself.

6. The laws of supply and demand, free enterprise, unbridled competition, the profit motive, and private ownership of the means of production may not be seen as morally inviolate and must, when the common good or justice demand, be **balanced** off by other principles.



7. **Physical nature too has inherent rights** - namely, rights that are intrinsic to itself and not simply given to it because of its relationship to humanity. **Earth is not just a stage for human beings** to play on, but is a creature of God with its own rights that humans may not violate.



8. The present situation within the world, where some individuals and nations have excess while others lack the basic necessities, is immoral, goes against the teachings of Christ, and must be redressed.
9. **The condemnation of injustice is part of the church's essential ministry of preaching** and is an essential aspect of the church's **prophetic role**.
10. **Movement toward the poor is a privileged route toward both God and spiritual health.** There can be no spiritual health, individually and communally, when there is no real involvement with the struggles of the poor. Conversely, riches of all kinds are dangerous.

(Ronald Rolheiser, Wrestling with God, Finding Hope and Meaning in our Daily Struggles to be Human, Image, New York, 2018)



Orphans, Widows and Strangers!

Wrestling with the Gospel Mandate to Reach Out to the Poor

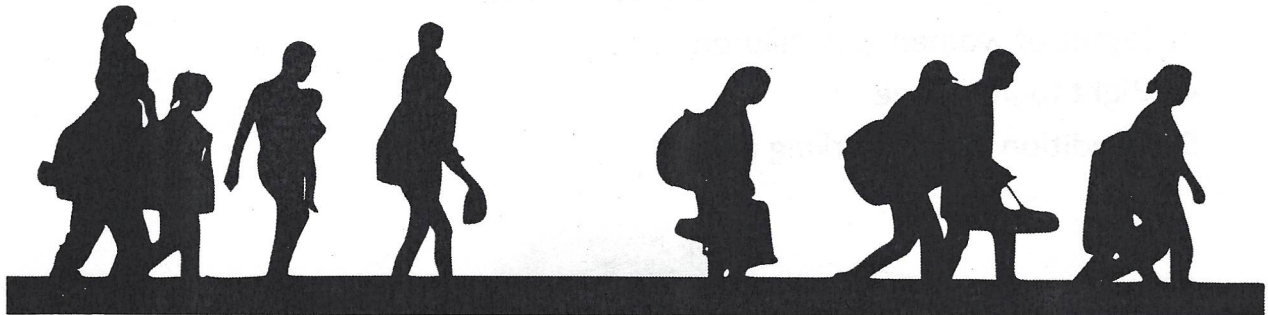
The Stranger, the Foreigner, the Refugee...

*"I was a stranger and you made me welcome ... or ...
you never made me welcome."*

If Jesus is to be believed, we will be judged religiously more by how we treat refugees than by whether or not we are going to church ... I was a Syrian refugee, and you welcomed me ...

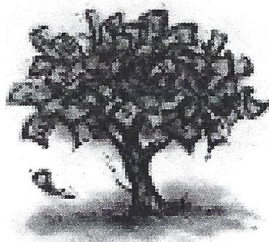
"We are to welcome the stranger, irrespective of convenience and even if there are some dangers. For all sorts of pragmatic reasons- political, social, economic and security- we can perhaps justify not welcoming the stranger, but we can never justify this on Christian grounds."

(Ron Rolheiser, Wrestling with God, Image, New York, 2018)



Judaism, Christianity and Islam all affirm the right of individual ownership and private property, but there are moral limits imposed on absolute private ownership of wealth and property. Each tradition affirms that we are not individuals alone but exist in community- a community that makes claims on us. The notion that "it is all mine" is a violation of these teachings and traditions.

(Bill Gates, Sr., Sojourners, February 2003)

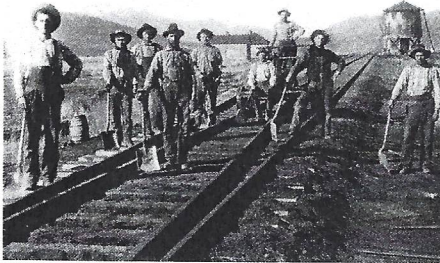


Leo XIII, 1891, "Of New Things"

On Capital and Labour (Rerum Novarum)

7 Principles:

1. Dignity of the human person
2. Common Good
3. Subsidiarity
4. Participation
5. Solidarity
6. Universal destination of goods
7. Right of private property



Leo revived the concept of **Catholic Social Teaching** and established a new role for the church:

1. Rights of workers and the dignity of work
2. Right to legitimate rest and religious freedom
3. Rights of women and children
4. Right to just wage
5. Condition of the working classes

