THEOLOGY OF SOCIAL DOCTRINES

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Chapter 1

Catholic Social Teaching: Introductory Remarks

Catholic Social Teaching is based on the belief that God has a plan for creation, a plan to build his kingdom of peace, love and justice. It holds that God has a special place in this story for each of us, whoever we are. Our part in this plan isn't just limited to things 'spiritual', or things we might do on Sundays, but that it involves every aspect of our lives, from the things we pray about, to how we live as a responsible global citizens. Our part in this story is a kind-of vocation for the common good, a call to treat everyone as your brothers and sisters and is something that we all share. Catholic Social Teaching is the tradition of papal reflection about how we live this vocation for the common good in our world. Catholic Social Teaching touches upon many different aspects of life, from the family to international development, how we think of those who are homeless to how we care for the environment, and from how we shop and consume to the rights of workers and the dignity of work. All the different areas that Catholic Social Teaching touches upon have developed from practical reflection on the

realities of modern life in the light of the principles and themes of Catholic Social Teaching.

The Church has always had social teaching and the most fundamental source is the Bible. There was also the tradition of the Church Fathers in such areas as ownership of property, the just war and the charging of interest. In its modern form, however, Catholic Social Teaching (CST) first emerged at the end of the nineteenth century as a response to the injustices of the Industrial Revolution and the threat of Communism. While recognizing that social teaching is a lived tradition and not just a written one, our focus is on the considerable development that has taken place over the last century.

What is Catholic Social Teaching?

- An authoritative Church teaching on social, political and economic issues.
- It is informed by Gospel values and the lived experience of Christian reflection.
- It analyses that lived experience of Christian reflection from different historical, political and social contexts.
- It provides principles for reflection, a criteria for judgment and guidelines for action.
- Thus, it enables us in our struggle to live our faith in justice and peace.

What Catholic Social Teaching is not

- It is not an ideology, but rather the result of a careful reflection on the complex realities of human existence, in society and in the international order, in the light of faith and the Church's tradition… It therefore belongs to the field of moral theology and not of ideology. (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, paragraph 41).
- It is not a 'third way' between liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism. It constitutes a category of its own. (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, paragraph 41).
- It is not a model: the Church has no models to present; models that are real and effective can only arise within the framework of different historical situations, through the efforts of all those

who responsibly confront concrete problems in their social, political and cultural aspects, as these interact with each other. (Centesimus Annus, pargraph 43).

Principles of Catholic Social Teaching:

Below are some of the main principles of Catholic Social Teaching.

- The dignity of the human person: The focal point of CST is the human person, made in the image of God, and so having fundamental freedom and dignity, the basis for human rights. Recognising this image in our neighbour, the teaching rejects any policy or system that reduces people to economic units or passive dependence. (See especially Pacem in Terris &Laborem Exercens).
- The Common Good: People exist as part of society. Every individual has a duty to share in promoting the welfare of the community and a right to benefit from that welfare. This applies at every level: local, national and international. Public authorities exist mainly to promote the common good and to ensure that no section of the population is excluded (See Sollicitudo Rei Socialis).
- Solidarity: As members of the one human family, we have mutual obligations to promote the rights and development of peoples across communities and nations. Solidarity is the fundamental bond of unity with our fellow human beings and the resulting interdependence. All are responsible for all; and in particular the rich have responsibilities towards the poor. National and international structures must reflect this. (See Populorum Progressio, Sollicitudo Rei Socialis & Centesimus Annus).
- Subsidiarity: All power and decision-making in society should be at the most local level compatible with the common good. Subsidiarity will mainly mean power passing downwards, but it could also mean passing appropriate powers upwards. The balance between the vertical (subsidiarity) and the horizontal (solidarity) is achieved through reference to the common good (See Quadragesimo Anno).

- ❖ Option for the poor: Implicit in earlier CST, this has now been taken up with new urgency and far-reaching consequences for pastoral action. Fidelity to Christ means seeing him above all in the faces of suffering and wounded people. (See Sollicitudo Rei Socialis & Centesimus Annus)

History of Catholic Social Teachings

At its core, Catholic Social Teaching is simply the attempt to spell out the ethical consequences of the confession, "Jesus is Lord," for the way in which we live. It is important to note that it is faith which is the starting-point for this reflection, not simply concern about particular issues facing society. Such reflection has been a feature of Christian faith since the first Easter. The first believers in Jerusalem had to learn how to relate their new faith to the faith of Judaism (Ac 2.42-7) and how it should change their attitudes to property (Ac 4.32-7), to their pagan neighbours and to their persecutors. They had to come to terms with the ways in which paganism underpinned so much of public life, from the food in the markets (Ro 14.1ff) to the worship of the emperor (1 Tim 2.1-4). And they sought to make sense of their experience of the equality of all believers within the stratified and slave-owning society they knew (Gal 3.25-8; Col 3.11).

Later on, in the High Middle Ages, Catholic theologians were key players in the attempt to restrict the violence unleashed by warring princes, developing what became "The Just War" theory, with its various checks and balances. St. Francis is now remembered for rethinking our relationship to the natural world. During the colonisation of the Americas Spanish, Dominican and Jesuit theologians upheld the dignity of the indigenous peoples whose lands were being invaded (Think of the film, The Mission), and laid the foundation for much of the modern concern for human rights. Whatever the limitations of their approaches, they made a serious attempt to think systematically about the moral value of human actions.

1. *Rerum Novarum - "Of New Things" (1891)*

However, these rich insights and sometimes sophisticated approaches did not become known as 'Catholic Social Teaching' until a series of papal Encyclical Letters on ethical issues was published, beginning in 1891. In that year, Pope Leo XIII wrote the Encyclical

Letter, *Rerum Novarum* – "Of New Things" addressing the new issues facing European society as a result of the Industrial Revolution and the social transformation this brought about.

On the one hand, he expressed moral outrage at the disparity between "the enormous fortunes of some few individuals, and the utter poverty of the masses" (paragraph 1), many of whom lived in conditions little better than slavery. On the other hand, Pope Leo upheld the right to private property and rejected Marxist belief in the inevitability of 'class-struggle'. He upheld the dignity of human work and, despite his desire to avoid violent revolution, laid down the basic principle of the priority of Labour over Capital: in other words, people are more important than property and everyone has a right to the basic necessities of life and a just wage (paragraph 34).

Moreover, he identified the role of the state as the promotion of both 'public well-being and private prosperity' (paragraph 26). This aim became known in later Catholic teaching as promoting the Common Good. It is the principle that the rights of one group cannot be set aside for the convenience of the majority. It demands of the state a special concern for the protection of the rights of the poor (paragraph 29), a theme much developed by Liberation Theologians in the last 40 years. Moreover, Leo acknowledged the legitimate role of Trade Unions as defenders of the working class. A concern for the dignity and value of the human person, and for the poor in particular, has proved to be an enduring feature of Catholic Social Teaching since the time of Pope Leo. But the real importance, historically, of *Rerum Novarum* - "Of New Things" was the new willingness of the Pope to engage with the rapid changes happening in contemporary society, drawing on the riches of Catholic Tradition to identify the moral issues involved. This is the core of all later Catholic Social Teaching.

2. *Catholic Social Teaching In The Age of the Dictators*

It wasn't until 1931 that another 'Social Encyclical', Quadragesimo Anno - "On the Fortieth Year", was published, by Pius XI. By this time, Mussolini was in power in Italy and the fear of Soviet Bolshevism hung over the West, which was in the midst of 'The Great Depression'. Much of the letter was a summary of Leo XIII's argument and much of the argument seems outdated, but a few points

retain their immediacy and relevance. The Pope criticises the failure to pay men a living wage able to support a family (paragraph 71) and blames this partly on those (as we would now say) consumers who unreasonably force down prices (paragraph 72). He points out that both wealth and "immense power and despotic economic domination," are concentrated in the hands of a few (paragraph 104), and he hits out both against the irresponsible behaviour of some banks and the damage done by those who promote illusory desires through marketing (paragraph 132).

The principal idea for which the Encyclical is remembered today is that of Subsidiarity (paragraph 79-80): decision-making and social organisation should be kept as close to the grass-roots as possible. But *Quadrogessimo Anno* - "On the Fortieth Year" can also be seen as recognising the structural nature of injustice, the forces in society which pervert people's intentions and distort social order - an idea not fully developed until the Pontificate of John Paul II; and Pius XI offers the beginnings of a spirituality of justice, centred on the four virtues of justice, courage, prudence and the love of Christ.

3.Good Pope John - Joy & Hope

The War-Time Pope, Pius XII, preoccupied with maintaining the outward neutrality of the Catholic Church, said relatively little on questions of economic order and, as the Cold War took hold, seemingly felt unable to criticise Western Capitalism, lest he give succour to Communism. So it was John XXIII who issued the next important statements of Catholic Social Teaching (as well as calling the Second Vatican Council). What was new was the more optimistic tone, and greater willingness to engage with the contemporary world. Mater et Magistra - "Mother and Teacher" (1961) is the first encyclical to be addressed to a global Church, rather than to purely European concerns. Thus, there is a lengthy treatment of the duty to provide both development and emergency aid (paragraph 84-157) and of the then-impending population explosion (paragraphs 99-185).

In accordance with its envisaged global audience, the Encyclical closes with an appeal to international cooperation founded on a moral order (paragraphs 200-211) and a prolonged exposition of the Christian vision of our humanity as creatures, bearing the image of God (paragraphs 219). From here onwards the dignity of the human person

was to become a central tenet of Catholic Social Teaching. Moreover, Catholics are called actively to seek responses to the challenges of the day (paragraphs 236). Ethics has to be lived both by our own individual conversion of heart and by changing structures, so that all can share in the riches of the world.

John XXIII's other social encyclical, *Pacem In Terris* - "Peace on Earth" (1963), "on building peace throughout the world on truth, justice, love and freedom," was written as he lay dying and shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis. This was the first such letter to be addressed "to all men of goodwill": The argument is based on his Catholic understanding of human nature and on the inalienable "fundamental rights and duties" planted therein by God (paragraph 9). Here the Church embraces fully protection of Human Rights (paragraph 143) and freedom of conscience, before applying these concepts to economic and political life. John XXIII's treatment of the matter introduces an important insight: every individual human right creates corresponding duties towards society (paragraphs 22, 28). Later papal letters on social ethics generally follow John XXIII's method of surveying developments in contemporary society to detect what he calls the 'signs of the times', indications of the action of the Holy Spirit in our world. The conclusion of his reflection is a denunciation of the arms race and a call for disarmament (paragraphs 93, 113).

John XXIII's approach to social ethics - the effort to discern the action of the Holy Spirit in our world - was picked up by the Second Vatican Council in its final document, *Gaudium et Spes* - "The Joys and Hopes" (1965), the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World. This begins with a meditation on our shared humanity, with our doubts and fears and hopes and longings. Only in the Crucified and Risen Christ, say the Council Fathers, do we find the key to understand ourselves and to answer the challenges of the present day. This is what Catholic Social Teaching is about: it does not seek to provide final, closed answers, derived solely from the Revelation once given through Christ. Rather, it seeks to mediate between that founding event (the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth) and our contemporary experience, moving between the two in search of illumination, wisdom, right living and justice.

Later in the 1960s, Pope Paul VI offered his own major contribution to Catholic Social Teaching, *Populorum Progressio* - 'The Development of Peoples' (1967), in which he argued that "Development is the new name for peace" and challenged the ideology of 'progress' which fails to meet the legitimate aspirations of the poor. All people are called to fulfilment and to a sharing in the good things of the earth - and all other considerations in economics must be subordinated to this principle (paragraph 22). Here the Church claims to be not an expert in economics but "an expert in humanity" and a voice for the voiceless (paragraph 13), placing three values at the centre of its life - solidarity, social justice and charity.

4. *John Paul II - Solidarity, Social Sin and Jubilee*

As might be expected, Pope John Paul II's long pontificate saw a whole series of profound, if sometimes difficult, Social Encyclicals, founded on his 'Personalist' philosophy (putting the infinite value of the human person centre-stage), beginning with *Laborem Exercens* - 'On Human Work' (1981), in which he begins to explore the theology of Solidarity, so significant for his Pontificate and for the events then unfolding in Poland and across Eastern Europe.

Another milestone was *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* - "The Social Concern of the Church" (1987) which offered a critique of both Capitalist and Communist economics and introduced the concept of structures of Sin (section 36) to describe social systems and market mechanisms which cause evil (e.g. ecological damage, increasing inequality, social exclusion) even though no one set out directly to cause harm when they were devised. This was also the first Papal letter to commit the whole Church to 'the option or love of preference for the poor', in imitation of Christ and living out of our social responsibilities (paragraph 42); and it began tentatively to formulate a response to the ecological crisis (paragraph 34).

The commemorative letter to mark the centenary of Leo XIII's 1891 Encyclical *Centesimus Annus* - "The One Hundredth Year" (1991) provokes both a reflection on the collapse of Marxist ideology in Europe in 1989 and prescient warnings against an 'idolatry of the market' and a culture in which 'having' is more important than 'being'.

Lastly, Pope John Paul's letter in preparation for the Third Millennium, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (1994), took up the biblical concept of Jubilee to explore the necessity for a deep conversion of both the Church and Society in preparation for the new century. This included both acts of repentance by the Church community and an insistence on the Church's need to proclaim Good News to the Poor.

5. *Benedict XVI – Love, Hope and Truth*

With the election of Pope Benedict XVI, a new page has been turned in Catholic Social Teaching. His social encyclical, *Caritas In Veritate* - "Charity in Truth" (2009) should be read in the light of his two earlier letters, *Deus Caritas Est* - "God is love" (2005) and *Spe Salvi* - "In hope we were saved" (2007): It is God's love which is the basis for our ethical response and it is Christian hope in God which motivates our actions for justice.

According to Pope Benedict, reality is essentially encountered as a gift and so our response to the reality of the world should have the same quality of 'gratuitousness'. What might, at first sight, seem to be very dense and rather abstract reflections on the nature of Christian charity then take flesh as very concrete requirements for the ordering of the economy: proper human relationships don't stop at the level of 'contractual obligations', but are characterised by love, warmth, understanding: "charity transcends justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving" (paragraph 6).

Proper human living - and hence proper economics - seeks "relationships of gratuitousness, mercy and communion." Only this commitment to charity (expressed in economic life through the not-for-profit, cooperative and voluntary sectors) is capable of producing real development that promotes the Common Good. Moreover, respect for Truth and for our own nature as moral beings requires that the 'free market' be brought under ethical direction and regulation (paragraph 36). Finally, the concept of justice is extended to include inter-generational justice - our duty to those who will inherit stewardship of the earth from us (paragraph 48), and we are called to accept our finitude and mortality. Only in embracing our dependence on God can we find the wisdom to direct authentic development, 'doing love in truth'.

6. Beyond The Social Encyclicals

This very brief sketch of the papal 'Social Encyclicals' of the last 120 years cannot hope to provide an adequate guide to the riches of Catholic Social Teaching, although the key concepts can be seen as they emerge - the priority of Labour over Capital and the promotion of Human Dignity; seeking the Common Good, on the one hand, and promoting Subsidiarity, on the other; the discernment of the action of the Spirit in our world and the denunciation of structural injustice; the different factors prompting Catholic Christians to get involved in building up society - a concern for Justice, a commitment to Solidarity and the sheer demands of Love; and so on. (These themes have been developed more systematically in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, published by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace in 2004).

However, alongside the papal documents should be placed the teaching documents and initiatives of the local churches. Most striking and most influential are the Latin American Bishops' Conference (CELAM) gatherings at Medellín (1968) and, Puebla (1979) which gave currency to the term, 'option for the poor'. But the USA Bishops' (USCCB) documents on The Challenge of Peace (1983) and Economic Justice For All (1986), like the English & Welsh Bishops' Conference The Common Good (1997), are good examples of how the ethical principles developed by papal theologians have been (and must be) applied in different local situations.

This is as it should be, for Catholic Social Teaching is not principally a fixed block of doctrine or received wisdom from the past. Rather, it is a way of reflecting about the world today, viewing it as God's world, entrusted to us, and viewing all others as our brothers and sisters. "Am I my brother's keeper?" asked Cain (Gen 4.9). "Yes," says Catholic Social Teaching. That is our task and our gift.

Chapter 2

Principles of Christian Social Teaching

Jesus rescued the adulteress from stoning, ate with tax collectors and prostitutes, spoke to the Samaritan woman at the well, and healed the sick and the sinner. He promised the most severe punishments for those who were indifferent to the plight of the poor: "Depart from me, you accursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, a stranger and you gave me no welcome, naked and you gave me no clothing, ill and in prison, and you did not care for me." Then they will answer and say, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or ill or in prison, and not minister to your needs?" He will answer them, "Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me." And these will go off to eternal punishment, but the righteous to eternal life. (Matt. 25:41-45)

Christians through the ages have sought to take the example and words of Jesus to heart and to live them in social settings very different from ancient Palestine. Catholic social teaching is an offspring of this effort.

Certain teachings of the Catholic Church are very clear and relatively easy to articulate. We believe in God. We believe in Jesus, truly God and truly a human being. We believe in seven sacraments and the infallibility of the pope. Catholic social teaching, on the other hand, is difficult to summarize so neatly. Catholics of good will disagree about the meaning of Catholic social teaching and especially about how to apply it in a given situation. Moreover, there is ongoing development of doctrine on social questions, as seen in the writings of various pontiffs, from Pope Leo XIII's charter of Catholic social thought *Rerum Novarum*, through Blessed Pope John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris* and Pope John Paul II's *Centesimus Annus*, to the second part of Pope Benedict XVI's *Deus Caritas Est*. Catholic social teaching is complex, linked with changing social conditions and deepening understandings of both the work of God in history and ethical principles. Nevertheless, this complexity can be summarized imperfectly in terms of seven key principles of Catholic social teaching.

1. Respect the Human Person

The foundation for Catholic social thought is the proper understanding and value of the human person. In the words of Pope John Paul II, the foundation of Catholic social teaching "is a correct view of the human person and of his unique value, inasmuch as 'man … is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself.' God has imprinted his own image and likeness on man (cf. Gen 1:26), conferring upon him an incomparable dignity" (*Centesimus Annus* 11). In a sense, all Catholic social teachings articulate the ethical implications of a proper understanding of the dignity of the person.

The principle of Catholic social teaching is the correct view of the human person. "Being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give."

The concept of "human rights" has been adopted by popes to communicate that each and every human being, as a child of God, has certain immunities from harm by others and merits certain kinds of treatment. In particular, the Church has been forceful in defending

the right to life of every single innocent human being from conception to natural death. Opposition to abortion and euthanasia forms the necessary foundation for respecting human dignity in other areas such as education, poverty, and immigration.

The foundational principle of all Catholic social teachings is the sanctity of human life. Catholics believe in an inherent dignity of the human person starting from conception through to natural death. They believe that human life must be valued infinitely above material possessions. Pope John Paul II wrote and spoke extensively on the topic of the inviolability of human life and dignity in his watershed encyclical, *Evangelium Vitae*, (Latin for "The Gospel of Life").

Catholics oppose acts considered attacks and affronts to human life, including abortion,euthanasia, capital punishment, genocide, torture, the direct and intentional targeting of noncombatants in war, and every deliberate taking of innocent human life. In the Second Vatican Council's Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, *Gaudium et Spes* (Latin for "Joy and Hope"), it is written that "from the moment of its conception life must be guarded with the greatest care." The Church does not oppose war in all circumstances. The Church's moral theology has generally emphasised just war theory.

In recent years, some Catholics have discouraged application of the death penalty, though even the most opposed must concede that "the traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude recourse to the death penalty, if this is the only practicable way to defend the lives of human beings effectively against the aggressor." The Roman Catechism says of capital punishment that a kind of lawful slaying belongs to the civil authorities, to whom is entrusted power of life and death, by the legal and judicious exercise of which they punish the guilty and protect the innocent. The just use of this power, far from involving the crime of murder, is an act of paramount obedience to this Commandment which prohibits murder. The end of the Commandment is the preservation and security of human life. Now the punishments inflicted by the civil authority, which are the legitimate avengers of crime, naturally tend to this end, since they give security to life by repressing outrage and violence. Hence these words of David: *In the morning I put to death all the wicked of the land, that I might cut off all the workers of iniquity from the city of the Lord*.

Related to the same concern of the above quotation from the Roman Catechism, the more recent Catechism of the Catholic Church also says of capital punishment (*repetition of some previous text for sake of context*): The traditional teaching of the Church does not exclude, presupposing full ascertainment of the identity and responsibility of the offender, recourse to the death penalty, when this is the only practicable way to defend the lives of human beings effectively against the aggressor. "If, instead, bloodless means are sufficient to defend against the aggressor and to protect the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person.

"Today, in fact, given the means at the State's disposal to effectively repress crime by rendering inoffensive the one who has committed it, without depriving him definitively of the possibility of redeeming himself, cases of absolute necessity for suppression of the offender 'today ... are very rare, if not practically non-existent.'[John Paul II, Evangelium vitae 56.]."

Believing humans are made in the image and likeness of God, Catholic doctrine teaches to respect all humans based on an inherent dignity. According to John Paul II, every human person "is called to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of his earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the very life of God." Catholics oppose racism and other forms of discrimination. In 2007, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote: Catholic teaching about the dignity of life calls us... to prevent genocide and attacks against noncombatants; to oppose racism; and to overcome poverty and suffering. Nations are called to protect the right to life by seeking effective ways to combat evil and terror without resorting to armed conflicts except as a last resort, always seeking first to resolve disputes by peaceful means. We revere the lives of children in the womb, the lives of persons dying in war and from starvation, and indeed the lives of all human beings as children of God. A belief in the inherent dignity of the human person also requires that basic human needs are adequately met, including food, health care, shelter, etc. Many see this as a basis for the support of the welfare state and of governmental economic policies that promote equitable distribution of income and access to essential goods and services.

Based on this foundational right to life, human beings also enjoy other rights. In this, the Church joins with a chorus of other voices in proclaiming the dignity of the person and the fundamental rights of man. Nevertheless, this apparent consensus conceals very serious disagreements about the nature and scope of these rights. One of the most controversial of these areas in present culture is the understanding of the family.

2. Promote the Family

The human person is not simply an individual but is also a member of a community. Failing to acknowledge the community aspect leads to a radical individualism. A full understanding of the person considers the social aspects of the individual. The first social consideration, in order and importance, is the family. It is the basic unit of society, and it predates and in a sense surpasses all other societies in a community. Catholic social teaching emphasizes the importance of the family, in particular the importance of fostering stable marriages where children are welcomed and educated.

The wider social network plays an important role in promoting the family. In particular, the Church has spoken of a "family wage" whereby one breadwinner can adequately support spouse and children. Social conditions either contribute to the stabilization or the destabilization of family structures. Social conditions that destabilize include mandatory and unreasonably long work hours, a toxic "social culture" that denigrates fidelity, legal dissolution of the definition of marriage between one man and one woman, and excessive taxation.

3. Protect Property Rights

Catholic social teaching from Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum* (1891) through John Paul II's *Centesimus Annus* (1991) has defended the right to private property against the claim that the state should own all things. Even much earlier, St. Thomas Aquinas - whose writings are of central importance in understanding the foundations of Catholic social teaching - gave three reasons why private property is essential to human flourishing: First because every man is more careful to procure what is for himself alone than that which is common to many or to all: since each one would shirk the labor and leave to another that which concerns the community, as happens where there is a

great number of servants. Secondly, because human affairs are conducted in more orderly fashion if each man is charged with taking care of some particular thing himself, whereas there would be confusion if everyone had to look after any one thing indeterminately. Thirdly, because a more peaceful state is ensured to man if each one is contented with his own. Hence it is to be observed that quarrels arise more frequently where there is no division of the things possessed. (*Summa Theologiae* II.II.66.2)

In addition to these reasons, private property also helps to secure human freedom. A person's ability to act freely is greatly hindered if he is not allowed to own anything. Indeed, without possessions of any kind, a person can be reduced to a kind of slavery in which labor is not rewarded and speaking against the exercise of state authority is taken at enormous risk.

The right to private property, however, is not unconditional. May a person take what is legally the property of another in order to secure survival? This question was posed in dramatic fashion in *Les Miserables*. Does Jean Valjean, who steals bread to feed his starving family, deserve to be punished? St. Thomas's answer is no. In cases when there is no other way to secure the basic necessities for human survival, taking them from those who have in abundance is not wrongful because these basic necessities are rightfully theirs as human beings.

To be sure, Thomas speaks of cases of "need" - not cases of "want." At issue here are situations of famine or disaster, where people's lives are at risk for lack of basic necessities such as food, shelter, or clothing. These necessities do not include DVDs, CDs, or TVs, no matter how great the desire for them. Moreover, such reallocation must be a last resort. One may not take basic necessities if these necessities could be provided through one's own work or through the voluntary assistance of others, be it governmental agencies or private charities.

Catholic social teaching also notes that private property can become a kind of idol, leading people to assess the goal and meaning of human life simply in terms of dollars and cents. The right to private property also brings with it responsibilities, in particular the responsibility to care for and promote the common good.

4. Work for the Common Good

Pope John XXIII defined the common good as "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily" (*Pacem in Terris* 55). This good is *common* because only together as a community, and not simply as isolated individuals, is it possible to enjoy, achieve, and spread this good. All people are obligated to work towards making the common good a greater and greater reality.

Sometimes the common good is misunderstood to mean simply the common desires or interests of the multitude. But the common good, as Pope John Paul II noted, "is not simply the sum total of particular interests; rather it involves an assessment and integration of those interests on the basis of a balanced hierarchy of values; ultimately, it demands a correct understanding of the dignity and the rights of the person" (*Centesimus Annus* 47). The common good, in other words, is not simply what people happen to want, but what would be authentically good for people, the social conditions that enable human flourishing.

Human flourishing is multifaceted because the human being as such has many dimensions. Human fulfillment includes a physical dimension of health and psychological well being. If a country does not have sufficient pure drinking water, nourishing food, and a relatively toxin-free environment, human beings will not be able to achieve their full potential. Moreover, human flourishing has an intellectual dimension that can be helped or hampered by educational opportunities or the lack thereof. Finally, each of us bears an ethical or moral dimension that will be frustrated without the avoidance of vice and the cultivation of virtue. The common good includes all these elements, the loss of any one of which can hinder our seeking of fulfillment.

However, the common good, as important as it is, is not the greatest good. The ultimate fulfillment of every human person can be found only in God, but the common good helps groups and individuals to reach this ultimate good. So, if social conditions are such that people are inhibited or deterred from being able to love God and neighbor, then the common good has not been realized.

Participation and solidarity are two other fundamental principles of Catholic social thought. Participation is defined by the recent

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church as when each "citizen, either as an individual or in association with others, whether directly or through representation, contributes to the cultural, economic, political and social life of the civil community to which he belongs. Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good."

Solidarity, a frequent theme especially in the writings of Pope John Paul II, is more than a "feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good. That is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all" (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis 38).

5. Observe the Principle of Subsidiarity

Some Christian thinkers conceive of the state or government as being established simply to repress evil desires and evil people. In Catholic thought, the government also has a more positive role, namely to help secure common good. Pope John Paul II put the point as follows: "It is the task of the state to provide for the defense and preservation of common goods such as the natural and human environments, which cannot be safeguarded simply by market forces. Just as in the time of primitive capitalism the state had the duty of defending the basic rights of workers, so now, with the new capitalism, the state and all of society have the duty of defending those collective goods which, among others, constitute the essential framework for the legitimate pursuit of personal goals on the part of each individual." (Centesimus Annus 40)

The government has many necessary and indispensable functions to play, roles that cannot be accomplished by individuals acting alone or even by smaller groups in society. Yet states and governments often exceed their legitimate role and infringe upon individuals and groups in society so as to dominate rather than to serve them. To combat this tendency, Catholic social thought emphasizes the principle of subsidiarity. Non-Catholics also have discovered this principle. Abraham Lincoln wrote: "The legitimate object of government is to do for a community of people whatever they need to have done, but cannot do at all or cannot so well do, for themselves - in their separate

and individual capacities." Government should be as small as possible, but as big as necessary to accomplish whatever needs to be accomplished that cannot be accomplished in any other way. National defense, interstate cooperation, and treaties with other nations are obvious examples of matters properly undertaken by the federal government. Administration of the criminal justice system is another example of a matter that properly pertains to government. On the other hand, the government should not intervene to attempt to alleviate all problems. A welfare or "nanny" state, offering cradle-to-grave security and attempting to provide for all human needs, expands the state beyond its proper scope and violates the principle of subsidiarity. Pope John Paul II explained: "Malfunctions and defects in the social assistance state [or welfare state] are the result of an inadequate understanding of the tasks proper to the state. Here again the principle of subsidiarity must be respected: A community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good." (Centesimus Annus 48)

This overreaching by the state leads to situations that are both inefficient and detrimental to human welfare: "By intervening directly and depriving society of its responsibility, the social assistance state leads to a loss of human energies and an inordinate increase of public agencies, which are dominated more by bureaucratic ways of thinking than by concern for serving their clients, and which are accompanied by an enormous increase in spending. In fact, it would appear that needs are best understood and satisfied by people who are closest to them and who act as neighbors to those in need." (Centesimus Annus 48)

When should the state intervene and when should governmental authority refrain? Such questions are difficult to answer outside of the concrete situation, for they depend upon prudential judgments about particular situations. People of good will, including Catholics who are attempting to put into action Catholic social teaching, may legitimately disagree about whether a given piece of legislation or governmental intervention is warranted to alleviate a social problem. Many social

questions, such as, “Should this welfare benefit be offered to people in this particular situation?” do not admit of an answer that would be binding upon all Catholics. Nevertheless, all Catholics are obliged to work to find solutions to contemporary social problems in light of the Gospel and their best practical wisdom.

6. Respect Work and the Worker

According to Genesis, God not only creates man but puts him to work naming the animals and caring for the garden. Obviously, this task was not given to Adam because God was too tired to finish the job. Rather, human work participates in and reflects God’s creative and providential care of the universe. Even before the fall, man is created to till and keep the Garden of Eden, to imitate God’s work in creation through human work. After the fall, work becomes at times a toilsome task, but work remains part of man’s vocation from God. Any honest work can be sanctified, offered to God, and made holy through the intentions of the worker and the excellence of the work done.

Furthermore, workers are not mere drones, means to the production of capital for owners, but must be respected and accorded the opportunity to form unions to secure collectively a just compensation. In Catholic thought, the right of association is a natural right of the human being, which therefore precedes his incorporation into political society. Indeed, the formation of unions “cannot... be prohibited by the state” because, as Pope John Paul II notes, “the state is bound to protect natural rights, not to destroy them; and if it forbids its citizens to form associations, it contradicts the very principle of its own existence” (*Centesimus Annus* 7). The Church was instrumental in helping workers form unions to combat the excesses of industrialization.

Society must pursue economic justice and the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Employers must not “look upon their work people as their bondsmen, but... respect in every man his dignity as a person ennobled by Christian character.” Employers contribute to the common good through the services or products they provide and by creating jobs that uphold the dignity and rights of workers.

Workers have a right to work, to earn a living wage, and to form trade unions to protect their interests. All workers have a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, and to safe working conditions.Workers also have responsibilities - to provide a fair day’s work for a fair day’s pay, to treat employers and co-workers with respect, and to carry out their work in ways that contribute to the common good. Workers must “fully and faithfully” perform the work they have agreed to do.

In 1933, the Catholic Worker Movement was founded by Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin. It was committed to nonviolence, voluntary poverty, prayer, and hospitality for the marginalized and poorest in Society. Today over 185 Catholic Worker communities continue to protest injustice, war, racism, and violence of all forms.

7. Pursue Peace and Care for the Poor

Peace means more than just an absence of violent conflict. Peace is the “tranquility of order” in Augustine’s phrase. War between nations may be necessary at times - but solely in order to restore peace. The Catholic Church from at least the time of Augustine has endorsed “just war theory.” Pacifism rejects outright waging war as morally evil for a variety of reasons, some secular (violence breeds violence) and some religious (Jesus acted non-violently). Realism, in the context of the ethics of war, contends that war has no rules whatsoever, aside perhaps from survival of the fittest. Just war theory is a mean between pacifism and realism, a mean that has been explicitly adopted and appealed to by most contemporary governments. As articulated by the*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, the criteria for a just war include that: “The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave and certain; all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective; there must be serious prospects of success; the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition. These are the traditional elements enumerated in what is called the “just war” doctrine. The evaluation of these conditions for moral legitimacy belongs to the prudential judgment of those who have responsibility for the common good.” (CCC 2309)

Recent discussions have addressed the question of whether a "preemptive" war, a war launched into order to prevent attack, could be justified according to traditional just war teaching. Other discussions question, given contemporary technology, whether a just war is possible.

These questions notwithstanding, the fact remains that peace involves a just ordering of society. This just order of society also includes solicitude for the poor. Not only the direct or indirect effects of individual actions, but also wise social policies are necessary for a just ordering of society, social policies that must take into account the likely effect on the poor.

As noted, Catholic social teaching does not address exactly how this should be done in every society. It may be that aggressive social action through the intervention of governmental policy is necessary. It may be that private and voluntary initiatives of religious groups (such as St. Vincent de Paul) and secular groups (such as the United Way) should take place. It may be that businesses should be compelled by law or voluntarily adopt policies that aid the poor. It may be that families and private persons should undertake the responsibility. Most likely a combination of governmental, social and religious, and individual initiatives are needed. What exactly will help the poor (and society in general) will not always be clear in every situation, but every Catholic has an obligation to think seriously and act purposely to aid those suffering around them and around the world.

In *Caritas in Veritate*, the Catholic Church declared that "Charity is at the heart of the Church". Every responsibility and every commitment spelt out by that doctrine is derived from charity which, according to the teaching of Jesus, is the synthesis of the entire Law (Matthew 22:36-40). It gives real substance to the personal relationship with God and with neighbor; it is the principle not only of micro-relationships but with friends, family members or within small groups.

The Church has chosen the concept of "charity in truth" to avoid a degeneration into sentimentality in which love becomes empty. In a culture without truth, there is a fatal risk of losing love. It falls prey to contingent subjective emotions and opinions, the word "love" is abused and distorted, to the point where it comes to mean the opposite. Truth frees charity from the constraints of an emotionalism that deprives it

of relational and social content, and of a fideism that deprives it of human and universal breathing-space. In the truth, charity reflects the personal yet public dimension of faith in God and the Bible.

Jesus taught that on the Day of Judgement God will ask what each of us did to help the poor and needy: "Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me." This is

reflected in the Church's canon law, which states, "The Christian faithful are also obliged to promote social justice and, mindful of the precept of the Lord, to assist the poor from their own resources."

Through our words, prayers and deeds we must show solidarity with, and compassion for, the poor. When instituting public policy we must always keep the "preferential option for the poor" at the forefront of our minds. The moral test of any society is "how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of the nation. We are called to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor."

Pope Benedict XVI has taught that "love for widows and orphans, prisoners, and the sick and needy of every kind, is as essential as the ministry of the sacraments and preaching of the Gospel." This preferential option for the poor and vulnerable includes all who are marginalized in our nation and beyond - unborn children, persons with disabilities, the elderly and terminally ill, and victims of injustice and oppression.

These seven principles - respect for the human person, promotion of the family, the individual's right to own property, the common good, subsidiarity, the dignity of work and workers, and pursuit of peace and care for the poor - summarize some of the essentials of Catholic social teaching from Leo XIII through Benedict XVI. However, at the heart of Catholic social teaching is something both simple and noble: an effort to make the actions and words of Jesus real again today to transform and uplift social life for all people in light of the gospel.

Every person has a fundamental right to life and to the necessities of life. The right to exercise religious freedom publicly and privately by individuals and institutions along with freedom of conscience need

to be constantly defended. In a fundamental way, the right to free expression of religious beliefs protects all other rights. The Church supports private property and teaches that “every man has by nature the right to possess property as his own.” The right to private property is not absolute, however, and is limited by the concepts of the “universal destiny of the goods of the earth” and of the social mortgage. It is theoretically moral and just for its members to destroy property used in an evil way by others, or for the state to redistribute wealth from those who have unjustly hoarded it.

Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities - to one another, to our families, and to the larger society. Rights should be understood and exercised in a moral framework rooted in the dignity of the human person and social justice. Those that have more have a greater responsibility to contribute to the common good than those who have less.

We live our lives by a subconscious philosophy of freedom and work. The encyclical Laborem Exercens (1981) by Pope John Paul II, describes work as the essential key to the whole social question. The very beginning is an aspect of the human vocation. Work includes every form of action by which the world is transformed and shaped or even simply maintained by human beings. It is through work that we achieve fulfilment. So in order to fulfil ourselves we must cooperate and work together to create something good for all of us, a common good. What we call justice is that state of social harmony in which the actions of each person best serve the common good.

Freedom according to Natural Law is the empowerment of good. Being free we have responsibilities. With human relationships we have responsibilities towards each other. This is the basis of human rights. The Roman Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, in their document “The Common Good” (1996) stated that, “The study of the evolution of human rights shows that they all flow from the one fundamental right: the right to life. From this derives the right to a society which makes life more truly human: religious liberty, decent work, housing, health care, freedom of speech, education, and the right to raise and provide for a family” (section 37). Having the right to life must mean that everyone else has a responsibility towards me. To help sustain and develop my life. This gives me the right to whatever I need to

accomplish without compromising the mission of others, and it lays on others the corresponding responsibility to help me. All justice is the power of God compensated solely in terms of individual relationships.

The Ten Commandments reflect the basic structure of the Natural Law insofar as it applies to humanity. The first three are the foundation for everything that follows: The Love of God, the Worship of God, the sanctity of God and the building of people around God. The other seven Commandments are to do with the love of humanity and describe the different ways in which we must serve the common good : Honor your father and mother, you shall not murder, you shall not commit adultery, you shall not steal, you shall not bear false witness against your neighbor, you shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbour (Exodus 20:3-17). Our Lord Jesus Christ Summarised the Commandments with the New Commandment: “Love one another, as I have loved you” (John 13:34, 15:9-17). The mystery of Jesus is a mystery of love. Our relationship with God is not one of fear, of slavery or oppression; it is a relationship of serene trust born of a free choice motivated by love. Pope John Paul II stated that love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being. By his law God does not intend to coerce our will, but to set it free from everything that could compromise it’s authentic dignity and it’s full realisation (Pope John Paul II to government leaders, 5 November 2000).

Chapter 3

The Church's Social Doctrine in Our Time: Historical Notes

The term "social doctrine" goes back to Pope Pius XI and designates the doctrinal "corpus" concerning issues relevant to society which, from the Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* of Pope Leo XIII, developed in the Church through the Magisterium of the Roman Pontiffs and the Bishops in communion with them . The Church's concern for social matters certainly did not begin with that document, for the Church has never failed to show interest in society. Nonetheless, the Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum* marks the beginning of a new path. Grafting itself onto a tradition hundreds of years old, it signals a new beginning and a singular development of the Church's teaching in the area of social matters .

In her continuous attention to men and women living in society, the Church has accumulated a rich doctrinal heritage. This has its roots in Sacred Scripture, especially the Gospels and the apostolic writings, and takes on shape and body beginning from the Fathers of the Church and the great Doctors of the

Middle Ages, constituting a doctrine in which, even without explicit and direct Magisterial pronouncements, the Church gradually came to recognize her competence.

In the nineteenth century, events of an economic nature produced a dramatic social, political and cultural impact. Events connected with the Industrial Revolution profoundly changed centuries-old societal structures, raising serious problems of justice and posing the first great social question - *the labour question* - prompted by the conflict between capital and labour. In this context, the Church felt the need to become involved and intervene in a new way: the *res novae* ("new things") brought about by these events represented a challenge to her teaching and motivated her special pastoral concern for masses of people. A new discernment of the situation was needed, a discernment capable of finding appropriate solutions to unfamiliar and unexplored problems.

From *RERUM NOVARUM* to our own day

In response to the first great social question, Pope Leo XIII promulgated the first social Encyclical, Rerum Novarum [143]. This Encyclical examines the condition of salaried workers, which was particularly distressing for industrial labourers who languished in inhumane misery. The*labour question* is dealt with according to its true dimensions. It is explored in all its social and political expressions so that a proper evaluation may be made in the light of the doctrinal principles founded on Revelation and on natural law and morality.

Rerum Novarum lists errors that give rise to social ills, excludes socialism as a remedy and expounds with precision and in contemporary terms "the Catholic doctrine on work, the right to property, the principle of collaboration instead of class struggle as the fundamental means for social change, the rights of the weak, the dignity of the poor and the obligations of the rich, the perfecting of justice through charity, on the right to form professional associations" [144].

Rerum Novarum became the document inspiring Christian activity in the social sphere and the point of reference for this activity [145]. The Encyclical's central theme is the just ordering of society, in view of which there is the obligation to identify criteria of

judgment that will help to evaluate existing socio-political systems and to suggest lines of action for their appropriate transformation.

Rerum Novarum dealt with the *labour question* using a methodology that would become "*a lasting paradigm*" [146] for successive developments in the Church's social doctrine. The principles affirmed by Pope Leo XIII would be taken up again and studied more deeply in successive social encyclicals. The whole of the Church's social doctrine can be seen as an updating, a deeper analysis and an expansion of the original nucleus of principles presented in *Rerum Novarum*. With this courageous and farsighted text, Pope Leo XIII "gave the Church 'citizenship status' as it were, amid the changing realities of public life" [147] and made an "incisive statement" [148] which became "a permanent element of the Church's social teaching"[149]. He affirmed that serious social problems "could be solved only by cooperation between all forces" [150] and added that, "in regard to the Church, her cooperation will never be found lacking"[151].

At the beginning of the 1930s, following the grave economic crisis of 1929, Pope Pius XI published the Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*[152], commemorating the fortieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. The Pope reread the past in the light of the economic and social situation in which the expansion of the influence of financial groups, both nationally and internationally, was added to the effects of industrialization. It was the post-war period, during which totalitarian regimes were being imposed in Europe even as the class struggle was becoming more bitter. The Encyclical warns about the failure to respect the freedom to form associations and stresses the principles of solidarity and cooperation in order to overcome social contradictions. The relationships between capital and labour must be characterized by cooperation [153].

Quadragesimo Anno confirms the principle that salaries should be proportional not only to the needs of the worker but also to those of the worker's family. The State, in its relations with the private sector, should apply the *principle of subsidiarity*, a principle that will become a permanent element of the Church's social doctrine. The Encyclical rejects liberalism, understood as unlimited competition

between economic forces, and reconfirms the value of private property, recalling its social function. In a society in need of being rebuilt from its economic foundations, a society which itself becomes completely "the question" to deal with, "Pius XI felt the duty and the responsibility to promote a greater awareness, a more precise interpretation and an urgent application of the moral law governing human relations... with the intent of overcoming the conflict between classes and arriving at a new social order based on justice and charity" [154].

Pope Pius XI did not fail to raise his voice against the totalitarian regimes that were being imposed in Europe during his pontificate. Already on 29 June 1931 he had protested against the abuse of power by the totalitarian fascist regime in Italy with the Encyclical *Non Abbiamo Bisogno* [155]. He published the Encyclical *Mit Brennender Sorge*, on the situation of the Catholic Church under the German *Reich*, on 14 March 1937[156]. The text of *Mit Brennender Sorge* was read from the pulpit of every Catholic Church in Germany, after having been distributed in the greatest of secrecy. The Encyclical came out after years of abuse and violence, and it had been expressly requested from Pope Pius XI by the German Bishops after the *Reich* had implemented ever more coercive and repressive measures in 1936, particularly with regard to young people, who were required to enrol as members of the Hitler Youth Movement. The Pope spoke directly to priests, religious and lay faithful, giving them encouragement and calling them to resistance until such time that a true peace between Church and State would be restored. In 1938, with the spreading of anti-Semitism, Pope Pius XI affirmed: "Spiritually we are all Semites" [157].

With the Encyclical Letter *Divini Redemptoris* [158], on atheistic communism and Christian social doctrine, Pope Pius XI offered a systematic criticism of communism, describing it as "*intrinsically perverse*" [159], and indicated that the principal means for correcting the evils perpetrated

by it could be found in the renewal of Christian life, the practice of evangelical charity, the fulfilment of the duties of justice at both the interpersonal and social levels in relation to the common good, and the institutionalization of professional and interprofessional groups.

In the *Christmas Radio Messages* of Pope Pius XII [160], together with other important interventions in social matters, Magisterial reflection on a new social order guided by morality and law, and focusing on justice and peace, become deeper. His pontificate covered the terrible years of the Second World War and the difficult years of reconstruction. He published no social encyclicals but in many different contexts he constantly showed his concern for the international order, which had been badly shaken. "During the war and the post-war period, for many people of all continents and for millions of believers and nonbelievers, the social teaching of Pope Pius XII represented the voice of universal conscience. ... With his moral authority and prestige, Pope Pius XII brought the light of Christian wisdom to countless men of every category and social level" [161].

One of the characteristics of Pope Pius XII's interventions is the importance he gave to the relationship between morality and law. He insisted on the notion of natural law as the soul of the system to be established on both the national and the international levels. Another important aspect of Pope Pius XII's teaching was his attention to the professional and business classes, called to work together in a special way for the attainment of the common good. "Due to his sensitivity and intelligence in grasping the 'signs of the times', Pope Pius XII can be considered the immediate precursor of Vatican Council II and of the social teaching of the Popes who followed him" [162].

The 1960s bring promising prospects: recovery after the devastation of the war, the beginning of decolonization, and the first timid signs of a *thaw* in the relations between the American and Soviet blocs. This is the context within which Blessed Pope John XXIII reads deeply into the "signs of the times" [163]. *The social question is becoming universal and involves all countries*: together with the labour question and the Industrial Revolution, there come to the fore problems of agriculture, of developing regions, of increasing populations, and those concerning the need for global economic

cooperation. Inequalities that in the past were experienced within nations are now becoming international and make the dramatic situation of the Third World ever more evident.

Blessed Pope John XXIII, in his Encyclical *Mater et Magistra* [164], "aims at up-dating the already known documents, and at taking a further step forward in the process of involving the whole Christian community"[165]. The key words in the Encyclical are *community* and*socialization*[166]: *the Church is called in truth, justice and love to cooperate in building with all men and women an authentic communion*.

In this way economic growth will not be limited to satisfying men's needs, but it will also promote their dignity.

With the Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* [167], Blessed Pope John XXIII brings to the forefront the problem of peace in an era marked by nuclear proliferation. Moreover, *Pacem in Terris* contains one of the first in-depth reflections on rights on the part of the Church; it is the Encyclical of peace and human dignity. It continues and completes the discussion presented in *Mater et Magistra*, and, continuing in the direction indicated by Pope Leo XIII, it emphasizes the importance of the cooperation of all men and women. It is the first time that a Church document is addressed also to "all men of good will" [168], who are called to a great task: "to establish with truth, justice, love and freedom new methods of relationships in human society" [169]. *Pacem in Terris* dwells on the public authority of the world community, called to "tackle and solve problems of an economic, social, political or cultural character which are posed by the universal common good" [170]. On the tenth anniversary of *Pacem in Terris*, Cardinal Maurice Roy, the President of the Pontifical Commission for Justice and Peace, sent Pope Paul VI a letter together with a document with a series of reflections on the different possibilities afforded by the teaching contained in Pope John XXIII's Encyclical for shedding light on the new problems connected with the promotion of peace [171].

The Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* [172] of the Second Vatican Council is a significant response of the Church to the expectations of the contemporary world. In this Constitution, "in harmony with the ecclesiological renewal, a new concept of how to be a community of believers and people of God are reflected. It aroused new interest regarding the doctrine contained in the preceding documents on the witness and life of Christians, as authentic ways of

making the presence of God in the world visible" *Gaudium et Spes* presents the face of a Church that "cherishes a feeling of deep solidarity with the human race and its history", that travels the same journey as all mankind and shares the same earthly lot with the world, but which at the same time "is to be a leaven and, as it were, the soul of human society in its renewal by Christ and transformation into the family of God".

Gaudium et Spes presents in a systematic manner the themes of culture, of economic and social life, of marriage and the family, of the political community, of peace and the community of peoples, in the light of a Christian anthropological outlook and of the Church's mission. Everything is considered from the starting point of the person and with a view to the person, "the only creature that God willed for its own sake" [176]. Society, its structures and development must be oriented towards "the progress of the human person" [177]. For the first time, the Magisterium of the Church, at its highest level, speaks at great length about the different temporal aspects of Christian life: "It must be recognized that the attention given by the Constitution to social, psychological, political, economic, moral and religious.

changes has increasingly stimulated ... the Church's pastoral concern for men's problems and dialogue with the world" [178].

Another very important document of the Second Vatican Council in the corpus of the Church's social doctrine is the Declaration *Dignitatis Humanae* [179], in which *the right to religious freedom* is clearly proclaimed. The document presents the theme in two chapters. The first, of a general character, affirms that religious freedom is based on the dignity of the human person and that it must be sanctioned as a civil right in the legal order of society. The second chapter deals with the theme in the light of Revelation and clarifies its pastoral implications, pointing out that it is a right that concerns not only people as individuals but also the different communities of people.

"Development is the new name for peace" [180], Pope Paul VI solemnly proclaims in his Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* [181], which may be considered a development of the chapter on economic

and social life in *Gaudium et Spes,* even while it introduces some significant new elements. In particular, it presents the outlines of an integral development of man and of a development in solidarity with all humanity: "These two topics are to be considered the axes around which the Encyclical is structured. In wishing to convince its receivers of the urgent need for action in solidarity, the Pope presents development as 'the transition from less humane conditions to those which are more humane' and indicates its characteristics" [182]. This *transition* is not limited to merely economic or technological dimensions, but implies for each person the acquisition of culture, the respect of the dignity of others, the acknowledgment of "the highest good, the recognition of God Himself, the author and end of these blessings" [183]. Development that benefits everyone responds to the demands of justice on a global scale that guarantees worldwide peace and makes it possible to achieve a "complete humanism" [184] guided by spiritual values.

In this regard, in 1967, Pope Paul VI establishes the Pontifical Commission "*Iustitia et Pax*", thus fulfilling the wishes of the Council Fathers who considered it "most opportune that an organism of the Universal Church be set up in order that both the justice and love of Christ toward the poor might be developed everywhere. The role of such an organism would be to stimulate the Catholic community to promote progress in needy regions and international social justice" [185]. By initiative of Pope Paul VI, beginning in 1968, the Church celebrates the first day of the year as the *World Day of Peace*. This same Pontiff started the tradition of writing annual Messages that deal with the theme chosen for each *World Day of Peace*. These Messages expand and enrich the corpus of the Church's social doctrine.

At the beginning of the 1970s, in a climate of turbulence and strong ideological controversy, Pope Paul VI returns to the social teaching of Pope Leo XIII and updates it, on the occasion of the eightieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, with his Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* [186]. The Pope reflects on post-industrial society with all of its complex problems, noting the inadequacy of ideologies in responding to these challenges: urbanization, the condition of young people, the condition of women, unemployment,

discrimination, emigration, population growth, the influence of the means of social communications, the ecological problem.

Ninety years after *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II devoted the Encyclical *Laborem Exercens* [187] to *work*, the fundamental good of the human person, the primary element of economic activity and the key to the entire social question. *Laborem Exercens* outlines a spirituality and ethic of work in the context of a profound theological and philosophical reflection. Work must not be understood only in the objective and material sense, but one must keep in mind its subjective dimension, insofar as it is always an expression of the person. Besides being a decisive paradigm for social life, work has all the dignity of being a context in which the person's natural and supernatural vocation must find fulfilment.

With the Encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* [188], Pope John Paul II commemorates the twentieth anniversary of *Populorum Progressio* and deals once more with the theme of development along two fundamental lines: "on one hand, the dramatic situation of the modern world, under the aspect of the failed development of the Third World, and on the other, the meaning of, conditions and requirements for a development worthy of man" [189]. The Encyclical presents differences between progress and development, and insists that "true development cannot be limited to the multiplication of goods and service - to what one possesses - but must contribute to the fullness of the 'being' of man. In this way the moral nature of real development is meant to be shown clearly" [190]. Pope John Paul II, alluding to the motto of the pontificate of Pope Pius XII, "*opus iustitiae pax*" (peace is the fruit of justice), comments: "Today, one could say, with the same exactness and the same power of biblical inspiration (cf. *Is* 32:17; *Jas* 3:18), *opus solidaritatis pax* (peace is the fruit of solidarity)"[191].

On the hundredth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, Pope John Paul II promulgates his third social encyclical, *Centesimus Annus* [192], whence emerges the doctrinal continuity of a hundred years of the Church's social Magisterium. Taking up anew one of the fundamental principles of the Christian view of social and political organization, which had been the central theme of the previous

Encyclical, the Pope writes: "What we nowadays call the principle of solidarity ... is frequently stated by Pope Leo XIII, who uses the term 'friendship' ... Pope Pius XI refers to it with the equally meaningful term 'social charity'. Pope Paul VI, expanding the concept to cover the many modern aspects of the social question, speaks of a 'civilization of love"' [193]. Pope John Paul II demonstrates how the Church's social teaching moves along the axis of reciprocity between God and man: recognizing God in every person and every person in God is the condition of authentic human development. The articulate and in-depth analysis of the "new things", and particularly of the great breakthrough of 1989 with the collapse of the Soviet system, shows appreciation for democracy and the free economy, in the context of an indispensable solidarity.

In the Light and under the Impulse of the Gospel

The documents referred to here constitute the milestones of the path travelled by the Church's social doctrine from the time of Pope Leo XIII to our own day. This brief summary would become much longer if we considered all the interventions motivated, other than by a specific theme, by "the pastoral concern to present to the entire Christian community and to all men of good will the fundamental principles, universal criteria and guidelines suitable for suggesting basic choices and coherent practice for every concrete situation" [194].

In the formulation and teaching of this social doctrine, the Church has been, and continues to be, prompted not by theoretical motivation but by pastoral concerns. She is spurred on by the repercussions

that social upheavals have on people, on multitudes of men and women, on human dignity itself, in contexts where "man painstakingly searches for a better world, without working with equal zeal for the betterment of his own spirit" [195]. For these reasons, this social doctrine has arisen and developed an "updated doctrinal 'corpus' ... [that] builds up gradually, as the Church, in the fullness of the word revealed by Christ Jesus and with the assistance of the Holy Spirit (cf. *Jn* 14:16,26; 16:13-15), reads events as they unfold in the course of history" [196].

Catholic Social Doctrines: Encyclicals and other Official Documents

- *Rerum NovaruSm* (1891) - Leo XIII
- *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) – Pius XI
- *Mater et Magistra* (1961) – John XXIII
- *Pacem in Terris* (1963) – John XXIII
- *Dignitatis Humanae* (1965) -
- *Populorum Progressio* (1967) – Paul VI
- *Humanae Vitae* (1968) – Paul VI
- *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971) – Paul VI
- *Laborem Exercens* (1981) – John Paul II
- *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) – John Paul II
- *Centesimus Annus* (1991) – John Paul II
- *Evangelium Vitae* (1995) – John Paul II
- *Deus Caritas Est* (2005) – Benedict XVI
- *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2005)– Benedict XVI
- *Caritas in Veritate* (2009) - Benedict XVI

Catechism of the Catholic Church

On the social doctrines of the Church, Catechism of the Catholic Church observes the following:

Moral Teachings on Social Matters (2419-2420)

From the Gospel, the Church receives wisdom about man's social living. She proclaims man's dignity and the demands of peace and justice.

When human rights or the salvation of souls requires, the Church makes moral judgments on economic and social matters. She has a mission distinct from political authorities. The Church is concerned with temporal goods because they are ordered to man's salvation. She tries to inspire right attitudes to goods and economic relationships.

Catholic Social Teaching (2421-2422)

The Church's social doctrine developed in the 19th century when the Gospel confronted the new structures of production, new concepts of the state, and new forms of labor and ownership. The Church's Tradition has a permanent value which is always living and active.

In this social teaching (which comprises a body of doctrine), the Church interprets events in light of Christ's teachings. As Catholics follow this teaching, others will also accept it.

Three Doctrines (2423-2424)

This doctrine proposes the following:

1. Any system determined entirely by economic factors is contrary to the human person
2. Any theory which makes profit the exclusive and ultimate end of economic activity is morally unacceptable. It produces perverse effects and leads to conflicts.
3. Any system which subordinates the basic rights of persons and groups to the collective organization is contrary to human dignity. Reducing persons to merely means of profit is enslavement.

Law of the Marketplace (2425)

Although rejecting "communism" and "socialism," the Church has also refused to accept the absolute primacy of the law of the marketplace. There must be reasonable regulation of economic initiatives. Regulation solely by the "law of the marketplace" fails social justice.

Chapter 4

Leo XIII: Rerum Novarum

Rerum Novarum (from its first two words, Latin for "of new things") or "Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor" is an encyclical issued byPope Leo XIII on May 15, 1891. It discussed the relationships and mutual duties between labor and capital, as well as government and its citizens. Of primary concern was the need for some amelioration of "*The misery and wretchedness pressing so unjustly on the majority of the working class*." It supported the rights of labor to form unions, rejected communism and unrestricted capitalism, whilst affirming the right to private property. Many of the positions in *Rerum Novarum* were supplemented by later encyclicals, in particular Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931), John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra*(1961), and John Paul II's *Centesimus Annus* (1991).

Rerum Novarum is subtitled "On the Conditions of Labor." In this document, Leo set out the Catholic Church's response to the social conflict that had risen in the wake of industrialization and that had led to the rise of socialism. The Pope taught that the role of the

State is to promote social justice through the protection of rights, while the Church must speak out on social issues in order to teach correct social principles and ensure class harmony. He restated the Church's long-standing teaching regarding the crucial importance of private property rights, but recognized, in one of the best-known passages of the encyclical, that the free operation of market forces must be tempered by moral considerations:

"*Let the working man and the employer make free agreements, and in particular let them agree freely as to the wages; nevertheless, there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice.*"

Rerum Novarum is remarkable for its vivid depiction of the plight of the nineteenth-century urban poor and for its condemnation of unrestricted capitalism. Among the remedies it prescribed were the formation of trade unions and the introduction of collective bargaining, particularly as an alternative to state intervention.

The encyclical reaffirmed that private property as a fundamental principle of natural law. *Rerum Novarum* also recognized that the poor have a special status in consideration of social issues: the modern Catholic principle of the "preferential option for the poor" and the notion that God is on the side of the poor were expressed in this document.

One reason compelling Leo XIII to write Rerum Novarum was his conviction that the present age has handed over the working poor to inhumane employers and greedy competitors (a. 6). He saw the working poor as needy and helpless (a.66) and insufficiently protected against injustices and violence (a. 32). His sympathy went out to these poor, who have a "downcast heart" (a. 37).

There has been a strong tendency under capitalism to judge the poor harshly. Leo was not party to such judgment. He felt that most of the working poor live undeservedly in miserable and wretched

conditions (a. 5). The poor work so that they can procure and retain property and in order to get the means necessary for livelihood (a. 9), and most of the working poor prefer to secure better conditions by honest toil, without doing wrong to anyone (a. 55). The pope did, however, acknowledge that the working poor are envious of the rich (a. 7), and he thought that the minds of the working poor are inflamed and always ready for disorder (a. 66).

Leo was careful to point out that the poor are equal in citizenship to the rich (a. 49) and that their work is the source of the nation's wealth (a. 51). In making these points, he challenged the position of those who belittle and look down on the poor, considering the poor, even the working poor, a burden on society. Even more significantly, he challenged the position of those who use religion to support their oppression of the poor. In a clear anticipation of what would later be known as the preferential option for the poor, Leo XIII let it be known that the favor of God seems to incline more toward the poor as a class (a. 37). Those, therefore, who favor the poor in attitude and action are God-like.

The working poor, Leo asserts, should be liberated from the savagery of greedy people (a. 59). Those who seek to assist the working poor can do so through three types of institutions: associations for giving material aid, privately-funded agencies to help workers, and foundations to care for dependents (a. 68).

In speaking to the working poor, Leo XIII had much to say out of his concern for order in society. He wanted the poor to understand that the lowest in society cannot be made equal with the highest (a. 26) and that poverty is no disgrace (a. 37). To suffer and endure is human (a. 27), even if the suffering presents itself in the form of poverty, and anyway, what counts from the perspective of eternity is not how much we have but how we use what we have (a. 33). The working poor are told not to injure the property or person of their employers (a. 30) and not to seize forcibly the property of others (a. 55) because private ownership must be preserved inviolate (a. 23).

The message to the working poor up to this point seems to be aimed at calming and consoling the poor, encouraging them to accept their position in society without rancor and without doing harm to others.

Leo XIII was particularly concerned about harmony in society, and he sought to enlist the aid of the working poor in preserving good order. But there was something else that concerned him very much: the material well-being of the working poor. He told them in no uncertain terms that they should receive what will enable them to be housed, clothed, secure, and to live without hardship (a. 51). He made it clear that they were not to accept unjust treatment as though it were inevitable, and that they were to stand up for their rights at the same time that they helped to preserve good order in society. Protect your own interests, but refrain from violence and never riot (a. 30); your demands should be reasonable (a. 37); press your claims with reason (a. 82); form unions (a. 69) but do not strike (a. 56). The message about preserving good order is clear and unmistakable, but so is the message about standing up for rights. Leo XIII wanted the working poor to protect their interests, to make demands, to press their claims, and the principal means for doing this was the formation of unions. In their efforts to claim their rights, the working poor should find in the government an ally, and Leo made it clear that the working poor should be given special consideration by the government (a. 54).

The social activist component of Leo's program for dealing with the working poor was matched with a moral component. Christian morals must be re-established (a. 82), Leo felt, for true dignity resides in moral living (a. 37). For the worker, morality consists in doing one's work entirely and conscientiously (a. 30), in contributing to the sum total of common goods (a. 50), in working harmoniously with one's wealthy employer (a. 28), and in not associating with vicious people (a. 30). Leo unites these worker obligations with the universal Christian obligations of religious practice and a simple lifestyle, and he proclaims that "if human society is to be healed, only a return to Christian life and institutions will heal it" (a. 41).

Rerum Novarum also contained a message to those who deal with the working poor. Early on in his encyclical, Leo XIII declared that the working poor must be cared for (a. 5). This immediately put him at odds with those proponents of laissez faire who held that industry should not be burdened with moral concerns about the welfare of workers. For Leo, employers have clear moral obligations: workers are not to be treated as slaves (a. 31); the dignity of your workers'

human personality must be respected (a. 31); do not use people as things for gain (a. 31); do not oppress the needy and wretched for your own profit (a. 32). The approach to employers is on a high moral plane, but it is also very practical: you need your poor worker, so work with him harmoniously (a. 28). It is immoral to treat workers unjustly, and it is also not in the best interest of ownership and management.

Employers are not to give impossible or inappropriate work (a. 31). They are to give every worker what is justly due him (a. 32), and they are not to harm the savings of workers or regard their property as anything but sacred (a. 32). Leo combines these employer obligations with the duty to consider the religious interests and spiritual well-being of workers (a. 31) and to refrain from exposing workers to corrupting influences (a. 31). The result of this combination is a message of concern for the worker as a full human being, a person with physical, spiritual, psychological, moral, and familial needs.

Since employers have wealth, Leo has something to say to them about their wealth and their position in society as wealthy people. He warns them against the pitfalls of being wealthy, pointing out that wealth does not end sorrow and that it is a hindrance to eternal happiness (a. 34). In view of eternity, what counts is not how much we have but how we use what we have (a. 33), and we will have to account to God for our use of wealth (a. 34). The wealthy are told that their goods are for their perfection and the benefit of others (a. 36), and they are encouraged to share their goods when they see others in need: when the need is extreme, the demand is of justice; otherwise, the demand is of charity (a. 36).

Leo tells the wealthy the same thing he told the working poor: Christian morals must be re-established (a. 82), for true dignity resides in moral living (a. 37). Morality for the wealthy employers consists in coming to terms with their “proud spirit” (a. 37) and being “moved toward kindness” (a. 37). They are to be mindful of their duties (a. 82), which means that they are not to oppress workers with unjust burdens or inhuman conditions (a. 53).

Leo XIII deals in Rerum Novarum with a number of specific issues relating to the condition of workers.

Workers have a natural right to form unions, and this right is beyond the authority of government (a. 72). The associations that Leo envisioned could be of workers alone or of workers and employers (a. 69), for he dreamt of a harmonious society in which the different levels of society cooperated rather than competed. The encyclical comes down strongly in favor of unions, stating that their increase is to be desired (a. 69).The immediate object of unions is the private advantage of those associated (a. 71), so that workers are to use their unions to secure increase in goods of body, soul and prosperity (a. 76). In keeping with the spiritual tone of Leo’s worldview, the encyclical states that the principal goal of unions is moral and religious perfection (a. 77).Wise direction and organization are essential to the success of unions (a. 76). Members are free to adopt any organization and rules, but they should keep in mind that the organization should suit the purpose (a. 76). The proper operation of unions involves offices, funds, and arbitration (a. 78), and the union should seek to insure that every worker has sufficient work and that workers in need are helped (a. 79).

Leo XIII wanted very much for workers to claim their rights, but he also wanted harmony and peace in society. He took the position that strikes are evil and should not be permitted (a. 56), placing his hopes on the ability of employers and employees to sort things out amicably with the help of the government and the Church.

Wages must go beyond the free consent of the employer and employee; they must go beyond the personal desire of the employer; and they must satisfy the right to secure things to sustain life (a. 61-62). Wages should never be less than enough to support a worker who is thrifty and upright (a. 63): a worker should receive “a wage sufficiently large to enable him to provide comfortably for himself, his wife and his children” (a. 65). If a worker accepts less than this, he submits to force: he is the victim of injustice (a. 63).Work should not be so long that it dulls the spirit or that the body sinks from exhaustion

(a. 59). The factors in the establishment of hours are listed as: the nature of the work; the circumstances of time and place; the physical condition of the workers (a. 59).

A worker should “cease from work at regular intervals and rest” (a. 59), and he should be given “as much leisure as will compensate

for the energy consumed by toil" (a. 60). Writing at a time when it was commonplace to work people in factories seven days a week, Leo used religious obligations as a weapon in the struggle for a six-day work week, and he insisted that there should be rest combined with religion (a. 58).

Special care must be taken that women and children are not treated unjustly in the workplace (a. 60), and health safeguards are to be provided for all workers in the workplace, especially in factories (a. 64).

Leo XIII took a strong stand on the private ownership of property. Private ownership must be preserved inviolate (a. 23) and it must be regarded as sacred (a. 65). It is wrong, however, for ownership to be limited to a small number of people, and private property must be spread among the largest number of population (a. 65). In line with this, Leo declared that there should be "a more equitable division of goods" (a. 66), in other words, less of the wealth should be in hands of the few rich and there should be fewer poor people.

The purpose of government is to cause public and individual well-being (a. 48). The government must protect the community and its constituent parts (a. 52), and it should protect equitably each and every class of citizens (a. 49). Equitable protection of all citizens means that government should give special consideration to the weak and poor (a. 54), and this special care should include the working poor (a.54).

The government should seek to improve the condition of workers (a. 48) because part of its task is to safeguard the well-being and interests of workers (a. 49) and because it is in the government's self-interest to improve workers' conditions (a. 51). The government's care for workers should include protection of the goods of the worker's soul (a. 57). The government's intervention in matters of wages, hours, and working conditions should be avoided (a. 64), since these matters should be worked out between employers and employees. The government does not have the authority to forbid unions (a. 72), but it can oppose, prevent, and dissolve unions when their objective is at variance with good morals, justice, or the welfare of the state (a. 72).As custodian of good order in society, the government should see to it that there are no strikes (a. 56), but more than that, it should seek

to remove the causes of strikes (a. 56). It should also protect private property: "the masses ought to be kept within the bounds of their moral obligations" (a. 55).

The government must permit freedom of action to individuals and families (a. 52). It cannot abolish private property but it can control its exercise, although crushing taxes should be avoided (a. 67). Civil power should not enter arbitrarily into the privacy of homes, but the government can and should give public aid to families in extreme difficulty (a. 21). It can restore rights within the family, but it is not the government's job to care for children (a. 21). Public authority should intervene whenever "any injury has been done to or threatens either the common good or the interests of individual groups, which injury cannot in any other way be repaired or prevented" (a. 52). Specifically, the power and authority of law should be employed if strikes or work-stoppages threaten disorder, if family life begins to disintegrate, if opportunities for religious practice are not provided workers, if working conditions threaten the integrity of morals, or "if the employer class should oppress the working class with unjust burdens or should degrade them with conditions inimical to human personality or to human dignity" (a. 53).

- If the Church is disregarded, human striving will be in vain (a. 25). The contributions of the Church to the solution of social problems include the following:
- The Church regulates the life and morals of individuals (a. 25).
- The Church draws from the Gospel teachings that will solve or ameliorate the problem (a. 25).
- The Church ameliorates workers' conditions through her institutions (a. 25), for she excels in works of mercy (a. 43) and religious societies care for all forms of human misery (a. 44).
- The Church seeks to unite classes in protecting the interests of workers (a. 25). She can bring together the rich and the poor (a. 29), and she seeks to join the two social classes in closest neighborliness and friendship (a. 33).
- The Church points to the cure and administers the remedy (a. 40)

Chapter 5

Pius XI: Quadragesimo Anno

Pius XI made several positive judgments about the society of his day. He saw that the poverty which Leo XIII beheld in all its horror was less widespread, and the condition of workers had been improved (a. 59). The ranks of the workers were showing signs of a social reconstruction (a. 140): workers' associations of all types had been formed (a. 31-36) and associations of farmers and other middle-class people were flourishing (a. 37). Many leaders of workers' organizations were striving to satisfy workers' demands and to harmonize those demands with the prosperity of everyone involved in their occupation (a. 140). Meanwhile, rulers of nations were promoting a better social policy than before (a. 26), and laws had been passed protecting life, health, strength, family, home, workshops, wages, etc. (a. 28)

The pope's negative judgments about contemporary society were more numerous. Associations of employers were uncommon (38), and the number of the non-owning working poor had increased enormously (a. 59).

Capital had been able to appropriate too much to itself, so that economic institutions had moved in the direction of giving all accumulation of wealth to the rich (a. 54). The result was a huge disparity between the few rich and the many poor (a. 58, 60). Free competition had destroyed itself; economic dictatorship had supplanted the free market (a. 109). A despotic economic dictatorship was consolidated in the hands of a few (a. 105), and the characteristic mark of contemporary economic life was a concentration of power and might (a. 107). This concentration of power generated conflict on the economic, political, and international planes (a. 108) with the result that society was in a violent condition and was unstable and uncertain because it was divided into opposing classes (a. 82).

One section of socialism had degenerated into communism, which sought unrelenting class warfare and absolute extermination of private ownership (a. 112). All existing forms of communism and socialism were incompatible with the Gospel (a. 128). Capitalism, on the other hand, was not to be condemned in itself; it was not of its own nature vicious (a. 101). And yet, capitalism was laboring under the gravest of evils (a. 128). Some people had come to believe that they could use any means to increase their profits and protect their wealth against sudden changes of fortune. In uncontrolled business dealings, they raised or lowered prices so as to make quick profits with the least expenditure of work (a. 132). Corporations gave individuals the opportunity to perpetuate injustice and fraud under the shelter of a joint name (a. 132), and governments had been delivered to the passions and greed of individuals (a. 109). An economic imperialism had developed on the international level (a. 109).

The rich social life that was once highly developed through associations of various kinds had collapsed into a situation in which there remained virtually only individuals and the government (a. 78). The social order that once existed, an order that met to some extent the requirements of right reason, had perished because people had become too selfish and disrespectful of authority (a. 97).

Many people involved in economic life had fallen away from the Christian spirit (a. 127). The social and economic system had become an obstacle to people's eternal salvation (a. 130), and people were

confronted with a world that had almost fallen back into paganism (a. 141).

A body of economic teaching had arisen which gives completely free rein to human passions (a. 133). Families were being torn apart by poor housing conditions (a. 135). People and raw materials entered factories, which ennobled the raw materials and degraded the people (a. 135). The sordid love of wealth was the shame and great sin of the age (a. 136).

These negative judgments about society led Pius XI to see the need for a reconstruction of society. He decided that two things were especially necessary: a reform of institutions, and the correction of morals (a. 77). On the one hand, economic life must again be subjected to and governed by a true and effective directing principle (a. 88), and it must be led back to sound and right order (a. 136). The members of the body social should be reconstituted and the directing principle of economic-social life should be restored (a. 90). Economic activity should return to right and sound order (a. 110). On the other hand, there needs to be a reform of morality (a. 97). There must be a renewal of the Christian spirit (a. 127), and we long for a full restoration of human society in Christ (a. 138)

Pius XI laid down a number of guidelines for solving contemporary problems.

We should rely on the unchangeable principles drawn from the treasury of right reason and divine revelation (a. 11). The unchanged and unchangeable teaching of the Church should meet new demands and needs more effectively (a. 19).

We should seek in each kind of social and economic activity those purposes which God established for that kind of action and subordinate them to our supreme and last end (a. 43).

Our approach to ownership of property must avoid two extremes: individualism, denying or minimizing the social and public character of the right to own property; and collectivism, rejecting or minimizing the private and individual character of the right to own property (a. 46).

Commutative justice demands respect for the property of others; owners are obliged, but not by justice, to use their property in a right way (a. 47).

Ownership is acquired either by occupying something that is available to all but belongs to no one, or by one's labor (a. 52).

When a person works on another's property, the fruit of that labor belongs to both the owner and the laborer (a. 53), and both the wealthy owner and the poor worker should share the benefits (a. 57).

Those involved in producing goods can profit financially from doing so provided their increased wealth is obtained within the bounds of morality and reasonableness and without infringing on the rights of others (a. 136). The wealthy should remember, however, that material advantage is not the only, or even the highest, value (a. 118). If a person has superfluous income, he is bound by a very grave precept to practice almsgiving, beneficence and munificence (a. 50). The wealthy are virtuous when they invest their surplus incomes in ways that produce jobs (a. 51).

The distribution of goods in society should be more even, and everyone should have his own share of goods (a. 58): the social economy will not be in order until each and every person is provided with all the goods available through natural resources, technology, and social organization (a. 75).

People are born to work, just as birds are born to fly (a. 61), although labor is not the only way to earn a living (a. 57). Everyone should use his time and energies to provide for himself (a. 57), and the opportunity to work must be provided to those who are able and willing to work (a. 74).

It is wrong for businessmen to act in pure self-interest, ignoring the dignity of workers and what is just and good for all of society (a. 101). Christian social principles regarding capital and labor must be put into practice (a. 110).

The working poor should get enough so that they can increase their property by thrift and wise management (a. 61). Partnership-contracts should replace work-contracts, so that workers can become sharers in ownership/management (a. 65). The individual and social

character of work demand that wages be established as follows: 1) the worker must be paid a wage sufficient to support him and his family; 2) the condition of the business must be taken into account; 3) the amount of the pay must be adjusted to the public economic good (a. 69-74). Wages should not be lowered so much as to produce poverty, nor should they be raised so much as to produce unemployment (a. 74).

Free competition is justified and useful, but the right ordering of economic life cannot be left to a free competition of forces (a. 88). Free competition must be effectively controlled by the government (a. 110).

Catholics are not to compromise with socialism (a. 117). No one can be at the same time a good Catholic and a true socialist (a. 120).

The rich and powerful should develop an attitude of loving concern and forgiveness towards their poorer brothers; the working poor should learn to value their position in society (a. 137).

Workers should be apostles among workers, managers among managers (a. 141).

Women should work primarily in or near the home and should not be forced by economic circumstances to work outside the home (a. 71).

It is wrong to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do (a. 79).

The basis for the social order should be social justice and social love (a. 88). Charity cannot substitute for justice, but justice alone cannot bring people together in social harmony (a. 137). There should be international cooperation in economic life (a. 89) In discussing the means for a reconstruction of society, Pius XI proposed that professional guilds (vocational groups) should be re-established (a. 82), joining people not by their position in the labor market but by the respective social functions which each performs (a. 83). Unions should contribute to the development of vocational groups (a. 87). These vocational groups should give priority to the interests common to the whole industry or profession (a. 85). They can be organized however the members see fit (a. 86). Strikes and lockouts would

be forbidden; if things cannot be worked out, the government will intervene (a. 94).

Of course, the only way to a sound restoration of society is the Christian reform of morals (a. 15).

Like Leo XIII before him, Pius XI saw an active role for the government. The function of the rulers of the state is to watch over the community and its parts, giving special consideration to the weak and the poor (a. 25). The government cannot take away the right to ownership, but it should define in detail the duties involved in ownership and determine what is and is not permitted to owners in the use of their property (a. 49). The government should let subordinate groups handle what they can (a. 80). It should strive to abolish class conflict, and it should promote cooperation among the vocational groups (a. 81), which it should try to re-establish (a. 82).

The government should be free from all partiality (a. 109). It should make all society conform to the needs of the common good (a. 110), and it should enforce strict and watchful moral restraint over corporate business (a. 133).

Chapter 6

John XXIII: Mater et Magistra

Pope John XXIII situated his encyclical within the tradition of social documents that included Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum, Pius XI's Quadragesimo Anno, and Pius XII's radio broadcast of Pentecost, 1941.

He says that Rerum Novarum can be regarded as a summary of Catholic social teaching (a. 15). Its major points include the following: work is more than a mere commodity, and therefore wages should be based on principles of justice (a. 18); private property is a natural right possessed by all, but with a social aspect (a. 19); the government should be actively involved in economic matters, including the rights of workers (a. 20); workers have the right to organize (a. 22); unregulated competition and the class struggle should give way to solidarity and brotherhood (a. 23).

John then points out that Quadragesimo Anno reaffirmed and updated Leo's encyclical. Its major points include the following: work agreements should include partnership arrangements (a. 32); wages should be based

on the needs of the worker and his family, the condition of the business, and the public good (a. 33); the views of communists and Christians are radically opposed, and Catholics cannot approve of even moderate socialism (a. 34); economic power has been substituted for the free marketplace (a. 35-36); economic life cannot be based on self-interest, unregulated competition, the power of the wealthy, or national vainglory (a. 38); there should be established a national and international order inspired by social justice (a. 40).

Pope Pius XII's radio broadcast in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of Rerum Novarum focused, John indicates, on three interdependent issues: the use of material goods, labor, and the family. Its major points include the following: the right to use material goods to satisfy basic human needs has priority over all other economic rights, including the right to private property (a. 43); labor matters should be regulated by the parties concerned and only by the government as a last resort (a. 44); families must have the necessary material goods and the freedom to migrate (a. 45).

Pope John calls attention to significant changes since 1941: scientific and technological (atomic energy, synthetic products, automation, mass communication and transportation, space exploration; a. 47); social (social security systems, worker awareness, educational improvements, increased affluence and mobility, growing imbalances among sectors of society and regions of the world; a. 48); and political (citizen participation, decolonization of Asia and Africa, widespread democratization; a. 49). In the light of this changed world, John XXIII sets out to say some new things about the old topics raised in the previous documents.

Private initiative should receive first place in economic affairs (a. 51), and political tyranny and economic stagnation prevail wherever private initiative is lacking (a. 57). All individuals have the right and duty to provide the necessities of life for themselves and their dependents (a. 55). Individuals should be considered and treated as persons and they should be encouraged to participate in the affairs of the community (a. 65).

Government intervention should encourage, stimulate, regulate, supplement, and complement (a. 53). The absence of appropriate

state intervention leads to social disorders and exploitation of the weak (a. 58). Public authorities should understand the common good as embracing the sum total of those conditions of social living, whereby people are enabled more fully to achieve their perfection (a. 65), and so they should work to reduce imbalances in society, to keep economic fluctuations within bounds, and to avoid mass unemployment (a. 54). Public authorities should not restrict the freedom of private citizens (a. 55).

Private citizens and public authorities should work together in economic affairs (a. 56). A proper balance should be kept between the freedom of individual citizens and the regulating activity of the government (a. 66).

John spoke of the contemporary phenomenon of "a multiplication of social relationships" (called "socialization" in all of the translations, a. 59). He saw this socialization as both a symptom and a cause of growing public intervention in aspects of personal life (a. 60). The advantages of increased socialization are found in the areas of basic human necessities, health services, education, housing, labor, recreation, and mass communication (a. 61). The disadvantage is found in the restriction of opportunities for individual freedom of action (a. 62).

Wages. Pope John asserts that the basis for judging economic prosperity is not how much the country produces but how well the goods of society are distributed among the populace (a. 74). It is unacceptable, he says, for the wealth and conspicuous consumption of a few to stand out in open contrast with the extreme need of the majority (a. 69). The normal means for proper distribution of wealth is remuneration for work, and the problem is that too many workers are earning too little (a. 68) while others have huge incomes from performing less important and less useful tasks (a. 70).

A just wage structure cannot be left entirely to unregulated competition or the arbitrary will of the more powerful. A just wage is one that makes possible a decent human life and the care of one's dependents. Individuals should be paid according to the contribution they make to the economic effort, and their wages and salaries should conform to the economic condition of the enterprise and the need for the community to provide jobs to as many as possible (a. 71). Where

possible, workers should be given a share in the ownership of the enterprise (a. 75).

Managers, owners, and stockholders should receive earnings in light of the demands of the common good. Pope John lists these demands as follows:

- on the national level,
  - the provision of employment for as many as possible,
  - the prevention of privileged groups among workers,
  - the maintenance of a balance between wages and prices,
  - universal accessibility to goods and services for a better life,
  - the elimination or reduction of inequalities among agriculture, industry, and services,
  - the balancing of increases in output with advances in services,
  - the adjustment of the means of production to technological progress,
  - and concern for future generations (a. 79);
- on the international level,
  - the removal of bad faith from the competitive striving of peoples to increase output,
  - the fostering of harmony and cooperation in economic affairs,
  - and effective aid for the economically underdeveloped nations (a. 80).

Just wage principles are universal in nature, but they require concrete application in light of the resources at hand (a. 72).

Worker organizations. An economic order is unjust, the pope asserts, if it compromises the human dignity of workers, weakens their sense of responsibility, or removes their freedom of action. Developing this principle, he advocates the promotion of artisan enterprises and cooperative associations (a. 85-90), the participation of workers in the decision-making processes of the company (a. 92), and an active role for unions in the political life of the country (a. 97-99).

Private and public property. Like his predecessors, Leo XIII and Pius XI, John XXIII defends the right to private property as

permanently valid, based on the priority of the person over society and the right to individual freedom of action (a. 109). But he deals with private property within what he recognizes to be a changed context: ownership and management have often become separated (a. 104); property is no longer the universal guarantor of security (a. 105); the earning of income has become for many more important than the owning of property (a. 106). Because of this changed context, the pope sees fit to stress the importance of the distribution of ownership among the greatest number of citizens (a. 113-115); the responsibilities attached to ownership of property (a. 119-120); and especially, the increasing role of government ownership of property, which, he points out, is lawful as long as it does not infringe too far upon the right of individuals to own property (a. 116-118).

After addressing the topics that had been taken up by his predecessors, John XXIII now turns his attention to a series of new topics.

Agriculture. In order to prevent productive imbalances between agriculture, industry, and the services; and in order to equalize the standards of living in city and country; and in order to increase farmers' self-esteem, Pope John lists approaches which he thinks society must take (a.125):

- Rural dwellers must receive all essential public services (a.127);
- Farmers should be enabled to increase output through an orderly introduction of new technology (a. 128-30);
- The government should tax farmers in accordance with their peculiar circumstances (a. 132-33);
- Farmers should have available to them: capital at reasonable rates of interest (a. 134); social security and insurance (a.135-36); price protection (a. 137-40); the means to strengthen farm income (a. 141);
- Farming should be organized appropriately, and especially in support of the family farm (a. 142-43).

In working for these improvements, the principal agents should be the farmers themselves (a. 144), who should organize mutual-aid societies and professional associations (a. 146).

Government should work to bolster less economically developed areas of the country (a. 150), making sure that people feel responsible for their own progress (a. 151) and promoting private enterprise (a. 152).

International concerns. John challenges the world to come to grips with the dire poverty and hunger in countries that are in progress of development (a. 157) as well as with the wasting and destruction of surplus goods while masses of people experience want and hunger (a. 161). He locates the main causes of poverty and hunger in the primitive states of some economies (a. 163), but at the same time he asserts that we all share responsibility for the fact that populations are undernourished (a. 158).

His proposals for dealing with these problems include emergency assistance with surplus food (a. 161-62) and scientific, technical, and financial cooperation (a. 163). He warns, however, that all aid to developing countries should reflect respect for the individual characteristics and cultural traditions ofthose countries (a. 169-70) and that such aid should not be given to serve political aims (a. 171-72) or with domination in mind (a. 173).

Population increase and economic development. The pope addresses the view of some that procreation needs to be kept within limits or else greater economic imbalances will occur (a. 186) and a serious crisis will develop (a. 187). He dismisses their arguments as inconclusive and controversial (a. 188), and he professes confidence in God, who has provided nature with almost inexhaustible productive capacity, and in science and technology, which give almost limitless promise for the future (a. 189). He warns against using methods and means contrary to human dignity (a. 191, 199), and he encourages respect for the laws of life (a. 193-95).

In working to solve these and other problems, countries have become more independent and should cooperate more closely (a. 200-202), but instead they distrust and stand in fear of one another (a. 203). The reason for this is a failure to acknowledge the moral order (a. 205-06) and God as the foundation of the moral order (a. 207-11).

Pope John concludes his encyclical with some thoughts on Catholic social teaching, which he says is valid for all time (a. 218). It is based on the principle that individuals are the foundation, cause, and end of all social institutions (a. 219), and it cannot be separated from the church's traditional teaching regarding human life (a. 222). He encourages increased attention to the social teaching of the church among clergy and laity (a. 223-25) and application of this teaching in economic and social affairs (a. 226-32). He warns against the obstacles to such application: self-interest, a materialistic philosophy of life, and the difficulty of discerning the demands of justice in given situations (a. 229). He suggests that people apply the social teaching of the church using the method of: observe, judge, act (a. 236), and he tells them not to get bogged down in useless controversies (a. 238).

Chapter 7

Pope John Paul II: Centesimus Annus

At the general audience of May 1, 1991, Pope John Paul II introduced his encyclical letter Centesimus Annus (The Hundredth Year) by pointing out that "[o]ne event seems to dominate the difficult period in which we are living: the conclusion of a cycle in the history of Europe and the world. The Marxist system has failed, and precisely for the very reasons which Rerum Novarum had already acutely and almost prophetically indicated."' Marxism, the Pope argued, destroyed the institutional prerequisites for economic and political liberty.

On the economic side, the Pope mentioned not only the "individual's right to private ownership of the means of production," but also, and perhaps more importantly, "the ethical value of the free market and of entrepreneurial activity within it.' " The Pope warned that whatever kind of political state emerges in these countries, it must set aside the "over-bureaucratic and centralized command economy." On the political and juridical side, John Paul II insisted that "[n]o free

economy can function for long and respond to the conditions of a life more worthy of the human person, unless it is framed in solid legal and political structures, and above all, unless it is supported and 'enlivened' by a strong ethical and religious conscience." As the Pope says in the encyclical itself, "these events are a warning to those who in the name of political realism wish to banish law and morality from the political arena."

Centesimus Annus is, among other things, a "rereading" of Leo XIII's encyclical Rerum Novarum (New Things), which the Pope deems a "lasting paradigm" for the church's social teaching. Yet, in both the general audience and in the encyclical, his emphasis upon the events of 1989 indicates that the timing of this encyclical represents something more than an occasion for revisiting his predecessor's teachings. Pope John Paul II stresses the need to take a view of present and future conditions that bespeak "new things" dissimilar to those that prevailed in 1891. For this Pope, the events of 1989 disclose truths about the human condition that need to be understood in the context of this historical period-truths that have to be learned, as he says, in historia, or, as he puts its elsewhere in the encyclical, *experientia historica*.

In the brief introduction, John Paul II indicates he will look back to*Rerum Novarum* and forward to prospects for the future. In the first chapter of six, John Paul affirms Leo XIII's teachings that there should be rights for people who work, including the right to private property and the right to a family-supporting wage, and that individuals and families should be served by the economy rather than the reverse.

The second chapter examines the "new things of today," by which John Paul means emerging economic arrangements. He strongly rejects that idea that socialism is the proper response to current economic conditions. He then argues that the state should assist workers as they participate in economic life. The state should adopt measures to help those who become unemployed and encourage proper wage levels. However, the state's role should not be so extensive as to discourage individual initiative in the economy. The state can play a positive role by encouraging authentic development of human beings.

The third chapter, entitled "1989," considers the remarkable events of that year, when many totalitarian governments toppled in a wave

across eastern and central Europe. John Paul argues that communism failed not only because it was an inefficient economic system and could not produce sufficient consumer goods but also because it neglected to regard the spiritual nature of humans.

The most significant theme of this encyclical is capitalism. John Paul clearly asserts that Marxism is not an appropriate economic system and affirms that under appropriate conditions, capitalism is legitimate. A foundational element of capitalism is private property, and the pope strongly affirms the right of private property. That, however, does not mean that he endorses an economic system divorced from moral concerns and where individuals engage only in rapacious economic activity. Economic life should provide a place for individuals to engage in economic initiatives and participate in business life. Under capitalism, individuals have a positive duty toward those less fortunate, and employers a duty toward their employees. The state must promote just economic conditions within its jurisdiction, and developed nations must aid poorer nations.

John Paul examines capitalism within the context of justice, not just economic efficiency and productivity. He argues that private property and the allowance of individual activity is just and that individuals and families must be treated in a just manner. He also argues that individual freedom bounded by traditional morality is the appropriate form of human freedom. True freedom recognizes the inherent dignity of human beings.

Finally, John Paul addresses proper social action when he defends the actions of those who toppled communist regimes and others working for systems that encourage the authentic development of the human person.

Should Capitalism Be Their Only Option?

The Pope answered the question this way: If by 'capitalism' is meant an economic system which recognises the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free human creativity in the economic sector, then the answer is certainly in the affirmative ... But if by 'capitalism' is meant a system in which freedom

in the economic sector is not circumscribed within a strong juridical framework which places it at the service of human freedom in its totality, and which sees it as a particular aspect of that freedom, the core of which is ethical and religious, then the reply is certainly negative (# 42).

He said it appeared that the 'the free market is the most efficient instrument for utilising resources and effectively responding to needs' (# 34).

Some politicians and economists quote this sentence as being an unqualified endorsement of free-market ideology. However, the Pope immediately spells out some important qualifications:

- Products must be able to fetch a fair and reasonable price that respects the dignity of the buyer and seller.
- There are many human needs that have no place on the market.
- Fundamental human needs should not remain unsatisfied - the market cannot allow people to perish.
- Assistance must be provided to ensure vulnerable people can 'enter the circle of exchange, and to develop their skills in order to make the best use of their capacities and resources'.
- Even prior to the law of supply and demand, there is something owed to the human person because of his or her human dignity - 'the possibility to survive and, at the same time, to make an active contribution to the common good of humanity' (# 34).

These qualifications are not expressions of an 'anti-market' sentiment. They are the rightful demands that should be advanced by the State for the proper management of the market (# 35). The possession of material goods is not an absolute rights and the legitimacy of private ownership has limits that recognise the common destination of goods as God intended (# 30).

Authentic Human Development

Pope John Paul II was particularly concerned about the phenomenon of consumerism in advanced capitalist nations. He said that 'a given culture reveals its overall understanding of life through the choices it

makes in production and consumption'. A culture that appeals to opulent life-styles, artificial need and instant gratification is offering much less than authentic human development.

"It is not wrong to want to live better; what is wrong is a style of life which is presumed to be better when it is directed towards 'having' rather than 'being', and which wants to have more, not in order to be more but in order to spend life in enjoyment as an end in itself." (# 36)

He said that the force of consumerism was damaging to individuals and society as a whole. Ironically, this aspect of the free market has similarities to the Marxist ideology it opposed - it totally reduces people 'to the sphere of economics and the sphere of material needs' (#19). The Pope called for a great deal of educational and cultural work to counter consumerism and ensure authentic human development: "It is therefore necessary to create life-styles in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of common growth are the factors which determine consumer choices, savings and investments. In this regard, it is not a matter of the duty of charity alone, that is, the duty to give from one's 'abundance', and sometimes even out of one's needs, in order to provide what is essential for the life of a poor person." (# 36).

Solidarity

What would this solidarity look like? What can we do? Pope John Paul indentified the first step when he said: "It will be necessary to abandon a mentality in which the poor – as individuals and as peoples – are considered a burden, as irksome intruders trying to consume what others have produced. The poor ask for the right to share in enjoying material goods and to make good use of their capacity for work, thus creating a world that is more just and prosperous for all" (# 28).

Drawing on the encyclicals of his predecessors, the Pope highlights again the programs and policies that the State must implement as a practical expression of solidarity and charity. Some of these include:

- adequate family wage levels ensuring saving
- adequate conditions, protections and investment in the labour force

- the support of union membership and workers' organisations
- job creation and a solid system of social security and, on occasion, industry protection
- support for particularly vulnerable groups, including refugees, immigrants, the elderly, the sick, substance abusers etc. (# 15,19,34,35,48)

He stresses that a concrete commitment to solidarity and charity provides a kind of antidote to the individualism and selfishness in society: The advancement of the poor constitutes a great opportunity for the moral, cultural and even economic growth of all humanity (# 28).

Chapter 8

The Dignity of Work

We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic and ideological differences. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions and requires us to eradicate racism and address the extreme poverty and disease plaguing so much of the world. Solidarity also includes the Scriptural call to welcome the stranger among us - including immigrants seeking work, a safe home, education for their children, and a decent life for their families. In light of the Gospel's invitation to be peacemakers, our commitment to solidarity with our neighbors - at home and abroad - also demands that we promote peace and pursue justice in a world marred by terrible violence and conflict. Decisions on the use of force should be guided by traditional moral criteria and undertaken only as a last resort. As Pope Paul VI taught: "If you want peace, work for justice" (World Day of Peace Message, January 1, 1972).

Labour is work done by mind or body either partly or wholly for the purpose of producing utilities.

This definition is broad enough to include the work of the actor, the physician, the lawyer, the clergyman, and the domestic servant, as well that of the business man, the mechanic, the factory operative, and the farmer. When used without qualification today, the word *labour*, commonly designates hired labor, and frequently hired manual labour. This is particularly true when the term is used to describe the persons who labour rather than the work or effort. The explanation of this narrower usage is that in most occupations hired labourers are more numerous than self-employing workers, and that among wage-earners manual labourers exceed in numbers those whose activity is predominantly mental. In this article *labour* always means the laboring classes. When used of the ages preceding the industrial revolution, it includes not merely hired workers, but all who get their living mainly through their own labour, and only in a slight degree by employing others. Hence it takes in the master artisans of the Middle Ages, and the agricultural tenants who worked partly on their own account and partly for the feudal lord; for the former did work that is now performed by hired labour, and the latter possessed even less economic independence than do the wage-workers of today. Moreover, usage justifies this extension of the terms, *labour* and *labouring class*.

The industrial and commercial supremacy of the world passed, in the fifth and fourth centuries before Christ to the Greeks, but slave labour continued to be its main support. Although a considerable proportion of the tillers of the soil seem to have been freeholders at the beginning of Greek history, the majority were slaves in classical and post-classical times. During the latter period the slaves considerably outnumbered the free population as a whole; consequently, they must have formed a large majority of the labouring class. Their condition, however, especially atAthens, was not nearly so wretched as that of the Roman slaves during the classical period of that country. They had some protection from the law against injuries, and considerable opportunities of emancipation. In fact, labour seems to have been less disdained in Greece in the fifth and fourth centuries than in any other country at that time, exceptJudea, and it was certainly held in higher respect than in Rome. A great deal is said concerning the organizations that existed among the Greek artisans, but they do not appear to have exercised much

influence over the conditionsof employment. Many of these associations which are reckoned as labour unions were chiefly religious and convivial. While the labourers of Athens who were citizens participated to some extent in the affairs of government, they do not seem to have obtained any legislation for the benefit of labour.

History of the Formation of the Notion: Dignity of Labour

In the early centuries of the Roman Republic its commerce and industry were of very little importance. Agriculture was almost the only occupation, and perhaps the majority of the cultivators were freeholders, or at least free tenants. By the beginning of the fourth century, however, there were so many large estates tilled by slave labour that the Licinian law forbade any citizen to hold more than 500 *jugera* of land, or to employ slaves out of due proportion to the number of his free workers. The tendency to large estates, cultivation by slaves, and the impoverishment of the freemen continued, however, until the period of the *latifundia*, when, as Pliny informs us, all the land of Italy was in the hands of a few persons, and the free tillers of the soil had almost entirely disappeared. Most of the latter had gone into the city to swell the number of idlers who were supported at the public expense. Soon after the Roman wars of conquest the commerce of the country assumed large proportions, but the greater part of the labour was performed by slaves. In the last days of the republic there were more slaves than freemen in most of the towns of Italy. Concerning their treatment at the hands of their masters, Mommsen declares: "It is very possible that, compared with the sufferings of the Roman slaves, the sum of all Negro sufferings is but a drop" (History of Rome, III, 308). From the earliest historical period of Rome there existed, indeed, several associations of free craftsmen, called *collegia*, which later on were extended to most of the countries that were under the Romandominion.

A few years before the birth of Christ, these organizations became recognized and regulated by the law of the empire. Nevertheless, they comprised but an insignificant proportion of the working population. And theireconomic condition was probably not much superior to that of the enslaved labourers. It could not be otherwise, since they were everywhere in competition with the latter, whose

labour under a policy of reckless and inhuman exploitation was evidently cheaper than that of freemen. Such, in fact, was the lot of the free labourers in every country where slave labour predominated. As to labour legislation, there is no evidence that any measure for the benefit of the working classes was ever enacted in ancient Rome, except the Licinian law mentioned above. The proposition is generally true that the man who got his living by the sweat of his brow was held in more or lesscontempt by the nations of antiquity, and that legislation on their behalf was rarely if ever thought of by the ruling classes. The one conspicuous exception is furnished by the Hebrews.

As soon as the Christian teaching on the essential dignity and equality of men, and the nobility and obligation of labour began to take hold of the Roman mind, the condition of the toiler began to change for the better. The number of the slaves decreased both absolutely and relatively to the number of freemen. In the second and third centuries the slaves obtained certain legal rights, such as a partial recognition of their marriages and domestic relations, and redress in the courts for injuries suffered from the master. A considerable proportion of them were gradually transformed into serfs, that is, instead of being obliged to expend all their labour for the benefit of the master, they were enabled to work a part of the time on their own account on land which they rented from him. Instead of being subject to sale, they were merely bound to the soil. In a sense, they could indeed be sold with the land upon which they worked. From the time of Alexander Severus freemen and freedmen seem to have predominated in urban industry, although they were not free in the modern sense of that term. They were members of associations which they were forbidden by law to abandon, and they were not allowed to leave their occupations. The State took this measure on the theory that these labourers were engaged in an industrial function which was necessary for the welfare of society. It was, therefore, the duty of the law to provide that this function should be properly discharged. Although this particular restriction of the freedom of labour seems very unreasonable to the modern mind, the fact is that some form of minute regulation of industry has been the rule rather than the exception in Christian times. In the latter days of the empire the slave labourers were chiefly domestic servants, the employees

of the large landholders, and the workers in the imperial mines and manufactures. At the beginning of the fourth century the emperor Diocletian issued an edict fixing the wages of artisans. According to the computations of Levasseur, the rates of remuneration prescribed in this edict were about the same as those that prevailed in France at the end of the eighteenth century, and a little more than half as high as the wages in that country at the end of the nineteenth century. It was not, however, the purpose of this rescript to benefit the labourer. The rates of wages laid down were maximum rates, and the object was to prevent the price of labour as well as of goods from rising above the point which the emperor regarded as sufficient.

Despite the teaching and influence of Christianity, the laws and institutions, the ruling classes and public opinion, the intellectual classes, and, indeed, the bulk of the people were still pagan. A few years later, Constantine madeChristianity the official religion of the empire, but he did not thereby make the people Christian. The majority were still dominated by selfishness, dislike and contempt for labour, and by the desire to exploit their fellows, especially through usurious practices. The language employed by Ambrose, Augustine, Basil, Chrysostom, and Jerome against the rich of their time, is at once a proof that the powerful classes were not imbued with the Christian spirit, that the labouring classes were suffering great hardships, and that the Christian teachers were the truest friends of the poorand the toilers. The doctrine laid down by these Fathers, sometimes in very radical terms, that the earth was intended by God for all the children of men, and that the surplus goods of the rich belonged of right to the needy has been the most fruitful principle of human rights, and the most effective protection for labour that ever fell from the lips of men. It is, in fact, although not always so recognized, the historical and ethical basis of the now universally accepted conviction among Christian peoples that the labourer has a right to a living wage, and that the owner ofproperty may not do all that he likes with his own. During this brief period (the fourth century), likewise, large numbers of men and women who found it impossible to live a life of Christian perfection in the still semi-pagansociety of the time, founded monasteries and convents, and there gave to the world its first effective lesson in the dignity and necessity of work.

These foundations gradually became centres of industry and peace, and later on developed into those medieval towns in which labour became for the first time fully self-respecting and free.

By the time of the barbarian invasions in the sixth century, the majority of rural slaves had become either free tenants or serfs. The latter were soon reduced to their former condition, and all the legislation and customs which, under the influence of Christianity, had been introduced for the protection of the slave were ruthlessly set aside by the new masters of the Roman Empire. With the exception of the Visigoths and Burgundians, the barbarian tribes generally restored to the landlord the power of removing the serf from the land, and to the master the power of lifeand death over his slave. Speaking generally, this continued to be the situation down to the time of Charlemagne. From the beginning of his reign the lot of the slaves rapidly improved and their numbers rapidly decreased, so that by the middle of the tenth century they had almost been transformed into serfs throughout the Holy Roman Empire. One hundred years later, about seven per cent of the inhabitants of England were slaves, but the institution had practically disappeared in that country by the middle of the twelfth century. In the year 1170 the last remnant of it inIreland was abolished by St. Lawrence O'Toole.

At the end of Charlemagne's reign practically all the land within his dominions was held by the great warriors, theclergy, and the monasteries. The majority of the workers on these great estates were serfs, while the proprietors were feudal lords. Politically, the latter were not only the military defenders of their territory, but to a great extent legislators, administrators, and judges; economically, they had the right to receive from the cultivators of the soil a rent, either in services, produce, or money. Serfdom differed very much in its degrees at different times and in different places, but it always assumed that the serf, while not owned like a slave, belonged in a general sense to the lord, was obliged to expend a certain portion of his labour for the benefit of the latter, and was bound to the soil. Very often he was compelled to make other contributions to the lord, such as a fine on the occasion of his own or his son's marriage. In the course of time the serf was relieved of these less regular burdens, his labour

services were definitely fixed by custom, and his tenure of the land that he cultivated on his own account was made secure by custom, if not by law. Between the eighth and the twelfth century serfdom was the condition of the majority of the labouring class, not only throughout the Holy Roman Empire, but, with the exception of Ireland, all over Europe.Ireland had the clan system. During the period now under discussion town life was generally less important than it had been before the downfall of the old empire. Most Most of the towns were merely integral elements of the feudalestates. Since there was very little commerce between one country and another or between different portions of the same country, the town handicrafts supplied as a rule only those comparatively few local needs that could not be met by labour within each household. The condition of the labouring class seems to have been on the whole better than at any previous time. The fact that the great majority of the workers were no longer slaves, and that they were enabled to till on their own account land of which their possession was fairly secure, represented a large measure of progress. With the exception of ordinances mitigating and abolishing slavery, there was no important labour legislation during this period.

Between the twelfth and the end of the fifteenth century, the great majority of the serfs of England became free tenants, that is, they were gradually relieved from the fines and petty exactions imposed upon them by the lord, and from other disabilities, economic and civil; they were permitted to pay their rent in money instead of in labour or produce; they were no longer bound to the soil, and their possession of their holdings was secured by law, or by custom which had the force of law. In France emancipation was not quite so rapid, nor was it so thorough in the individual case; still it had been extended to a great majority of the serfs by the time of the Reformation. It was effected much more slowly in Germany. At the beginning of the Reformation the condition of the majority of the tenants there was that of serfdom, and a particularly oppressive form of serfdom in the case of a considerable number. As a consequence of their revolt and its bloody suppression, their emancipation was set back for at least a century. The majority of the German peasants were still serfs at the end of the eighteenth century. Serfdom lasted in Russia until 1861.

The condition of the labouring classes both in town and country during these two centuries was much better than it had ever been before. In the first place, the worker enjoyed considerable security of position, either on the land that he tilled or in the craft that he pursued. According to the theories of the time, the members of every class performed a social function which gave them a social claim to a livelihood in conformity with their needs and customs. Hence the feudal lord and the monastery were charged with the care of all the inhabitants of their estates, while the guilds were required to find work or relief for their members. Although the workers enjoyed as a whole less individual freedom than they do today, their economic position was more secure, and their future less uncertain. There was no proletariat in the modern sense, that is, no considerable number of persons for whose welfare no person or agency was held socially responsible. As to the content of the livelihood obtained by the average labourer of that period, any attempt at a precise statement would be misleading. Nor is it possible to institute any general comparison that would be of value between the welfare of the labourer then and now. This much, however, may be asserted with confidence: the poorest one-tenth of the labouring population were probably better fed and better clothed, if not better housed, than is the poorest one-tenth today; for the grinding and hopeless poverty, just above the verge ofactual starvation, so often prevalent in the present time, did not belong to medieval life (Gibbins, *Industry inEngland*, 177); the labouring class (meaning all persons who got their living as wage-earners or through self-employment, and not by employing others) received a larger share per capita of the wealth then created than our wage-earners obtain from the wealth produced in our time; and, finally, the guild system which governed town industry did for a time, and in large measure, succeed in reconciling the interests of consumers and producers (Ashley, *English Economic History*, II, 168).

Legislation pertaining to labour during the three centuries immediately preceding the Reformation was mostly enacted by the towns, the feudal lords, and the guilds. Its main results were the emancipation of the serfs and theprivileges by which the guilds were enabled to become the real, if not the nominal, lawmakers in all things affecting the economic welfare of their members. The towns frequently, and the national governments occasionally, regulated the

prices of bread and other articles of food. For the industrial principle of the time was regulation, not competition. In 1349 the English Parliament enacted the first of the many statutes of labourers that have been passed in that country. It prohibited higher wages than those that had prevailed in 1347, the year before the Black Death. A similar law was enacted at the same time in France. Both ordinances aimed at keeping down the remuneration of the labourer, but neither was very successful.

The modern industrial era, the factory system, the age of machine production, began, properly speaking, with the industrial revolution. The latter phrase describes that series of changes which was effected by several notable inventions, chiefly the steam-engine, spinning machinery, and the power-loom, during the last quarter of the eighteenth century. Among their most important immediate results were: the grouping of workingmen into factories where they tended machines instead of working in their homes with the old and simple tools; the ownership of the factories and machinery by capitalist employers, instead of by the labourers themselves; a great increase in the dependence of the labourer upon the employer; and congestion of the working population in the cities which grew up close to the factories and commercial establishments. Hereafter, *labour* in this article is to be understood of wage-earners only. Simultaneously with the revolution in industrial processes and relations, there occurred a revolution, as thorough if not as sudden, in economic theory and legislation. The teaching of the physiocrats and the eighteenth-century political writers in France, the economico-political theories of Smith and Ricardo in England, and the self-interest of the English capitalists, all combined to inaugurate a regime of complete freedom of contract, complete freedom of competition, and almost complete non-intervention of Government in industry. The old legislation fixing wages, and requiring a seven-year's period of apprenticeship, was abolished in 1813 and 1814, and nothing was substituted for the protection of the labourer. While every law that in any way restricted the freedom of the employer or regulated the conditions of employment was abolished, the old Combination Acts, which made labour organizations criminal, were re-enacted in 1799. This act prohibited even the contribution of money in furtherance of a strike. In fact, the prevailing theory of industrial liberty seemed to require that the individual employer should always

deal with the individual worker, and to assume that this would be for the best interests of all. Undoubtedly, many of the old regulations, such as the law of apprenticeship, had outlived their usefulness and ought to have been repealed, but some of them were still valuable or could have been made so by amendment. What was needed was new and appropriate regulation, not the absence of all regulation. As a result of the policy of non-intervention, the working classes of England experienced during the first half of the nineteenth century a depth of misery and degradation which has obtained the name of "English wage slavery".

Christian Teaching on Work

Work is not punishment or a necessary evil, nor is it mans means of accumulating control, power and wealth. Both of these ideas are contrary to the biblical view of work. We understand work as something intrinsically good, we are co-creators of Gods world and work is part of our contribution. Work must be undertaken responsibly and labour treated well, this includes how we approach the work we do, what it is we do with our work and how employers treat their employees. A strong theme in Catholic Social Thought is support for trade unions and state measures to ensure concrete safeguards in place like living wages and holiday leave.

Jesus speaks a lot about work, while much of this is in parables, we shouldn't restrict interpretations of these parables to be only spiritual ones. Jesus spent most of the years of his life learning the trade of carpentry and we shouldn't forget this when we hear him lament about the servant who hides his talent in the ground. Dignity in work also touches upon work life balance, in some places cultures where people are expected to give more and more to their employers to the determent of other spheres of our lives. The keystone of this is the importance of the Sabbath, but the principle extends to other areas of our lives and has implications for how we use our own time and how we mange the work of others in our employment.

Scriptural Attestations

Right to have Rest

- Gen 2:1-3, God rests on the seventh day - It means the right of rest by the worker as

- Gen 2:15, God settles man in the garden of Eden to cultivate and care for it. It means right to have a dignified place of work
- Deut 5:13-15, The Sabbath is for everyone - all are allowed to rest from their work.
- Deut 14:28-29, The Lord blesses our work so that we may share its fruits with others.
- Mk 2:27, The Sabbath was made for people, not people for the Sabbath.

Right to have Just wages

- Deut 24:14-15, Do not withhold wages from your workers, for their livelihood depends on them.
- Sir 34:20-22 , To deprive an employee of wages is to commit murder.
- Isa 58:3-7, To observe religious practices, but oppress your workers is false worship.
- Jer 22:13, Woe to him who treats his workers unjustly.
- Mt 20:1-16, All workers should be paid a just and living wage.

Dignity of the Worker

- Lk 3:10-14 , Practice integrity in your work.
- Lk 12:13-21 , One's worth is not determined by an abundance of possessions.
- Js 5:1-6 , Those who become rich by abusing their workers have sinned against God.

Tradition of the Church

The Catholic Church's social teachings are very clear on the importance of justice in the work place. Going back to Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *Rerum Novarum* - "Of New Things" (1891), the Church recognised the inequality of the lone worker with just his or her labour to sell versus the overwhelming power of the employer or owner of the means of production.In order to even out this inequality the existence of trade unions was vindicated. As the Church solemnly reaffirmed in the recent Council, "the beginning, the subject and the

goal of all social institutions is and must be the human person." All people have the right to work, to a chance to develop their qualities and their personalities in the exercise of their professions, to equitable remuneration which will enable them and their families "to lead a worthy life on the material, social, cultural and spiritual level" and to assistance in case of need arising from sickness or age. A Call to Action (Octogesima Adveniens... , #14)

John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem Excercens* - "On Human Work" (1981), asserted that the interests of labour must always take precedent over those of capital.

- Work is, as has been said, an obligation, that is to say, a duty, on the part of man... Man must work, both because the Creator has commanded it and because of his own humanity, which requires work in order to be maintained and developed. Man must work out of regard for others, especially his own family, but also for the society he belongs to, the country of which he is a child, and the whole human family of which he is a member, since he is the heir to the work of generations and at the same time a sharer in building the future of those who will come after him in the succession of history. On Human Work (Laborem Exercens... , #16).

- Work is a good thing for man-a good thing for his humanity-because through work man not only transforms nature, adapting it to his own needs, but he also achieves fulfilment as a human being and indeed, in a sense, becomes "more a human being." On Human Work (Laborem Exercens... , #9).

- All these rights, together with the need for the workers themselves to secure them, give rise to yet another right: the right of association, that is to form associations for the purpose of defending the vital interests of those employed in the various professions. These associations are called labor or trade unions. On Human Work(Laborem Exercens... , #20)

Indeed, Pope John Paul II seemed to suggest the scope and role of unions' activity needed to expand to meet the demands of the new globalised workplace. "Today unions are called to act in new ways, widening the scope of their activity of solidarity so that protection is afforded not only to the traditional categories of workers, but also to

workers with non-standard or limited-time contracts, employees whose jobs are threatened by business mergers that occur with ever increasing frequency, even at international level: to those who do not have a job, to immigrants, seasonal workers and those who, because they have not had professional updating, have been dismissed from the labour market and cannot be readmitted without proper training." The Church in this respect very much read the signs of the times, namely that trade unions are as important now as at any time in the past.

One trade union leader who strongly supports the Church's social teaching on trade unions is Billy Hayes, the General Secretary of the Communication Workers Union. He argues that unions are about "social solidarity and everyone having their say." Mr Hayes says he has not seen any religion yet that says selfishness is a good thing, yet the form of globalised market capitalism being pursued at present goes in that very direction. Despite Pope John Paul II's assertion that unions will become more relevant as work patterns become more insecure, membership in Britain has come down substantially since the 1960s and 70s, almost halving from 13 million to 6.5 million (28 per cent of the working population). This has come about partly through the reshaping of the economy. Traditional areas of work like manufacturing have been devastated due to a combination of neo-liberal government policies and the process of globalisation. Pope John Paul II's encyclical *Centesimus Annus* - "The One Hundredth Year" (1991), states that these workers constitute "the firm's most valuable asset."

- The obligation to earn one's bread by the sweat of one's brow also presumes the right to do so. A society in which this right is systematically denied, in which economic policies do not allow workers to reach satisfactory levels of employment, cannot be justified from an ethical point of view, nor can that society attain social peace. The Hundredth Year (Centesimus Annus...), #43

- In many cases, poverty results from a violation of the dignity of human work, either because work opportunities are limited (through unemployment or underemployment), or "because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family." Charity in Truth (Caritas in Veritate..., #63).

- All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions, as well as to organize and join unions or other associations. A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, #5.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states that: "business owners and management must not limit themselves to taking into account only the economic objectives of the company, the criteria for economic efficiency and the proper care of "capital" as the sum of the means of production. It is also their precise duty to respect concretely the human dignity of those who work in the company."

The injustice of the relationship of an individual worker alone facing the powerful employer has been set out in social teaching going as far back as Rerum Novarum. The Church also teaches that wealth is to be shared, not taken by one group of people for their own gratification. The inequality remains the same and representation is as vital now as ever. Pope Benedict also gives clear guidelines on these issues:

- The economic sphere is neither ethically neutral, or inherently inhuman or opposed to society. It is part and parcel of human activity and precisely because it is human, it must be structured and governed in an ethical manner. Charity in Truth (Caritas in Veritate... , #36)

- I would like to remind everyone, especially governments engaged in boosting the world's economic and social assets, that the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity: "Man is the source, the focus and the aim of all economic and social life." Charity in Truth (Caritas in Veritate... , #25), quoting The Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes... , #63)

Pope Francis on the Dignity of Work

On the feast of Saint Joseph the Worker, the pope spoke about societies that put company profits above human dignity or even human life. "What point have we come to?", he asked. He noted that Jesus was a worker and lamented companies that put much more attention to profits than the dignity of labor. He lifted up the slave labor in garment factories in Bangladesh (there had been recent tragic deaths

in a collapsed garment factory in Dakka). Expounding on the theme of the dignity of work, Francis said: "We do not get dignity from power or money or culture. We get dignity from work." He noted: "Work is fundamental to the dignity of the person. Work, to use an image, 'anoints' with dignity, fills us with dignity, makes us similar to God who has worked and still works, who always acts." Those familiar with the Ignatian Spiritual Exercises will note that this theme of God working or laboring comes from the signal contemplation for attaining the love of God where Ignatius speaks of a God who labors in all things. He ended his homily with the admonition: "I address a strong appeal that the dignity and safety of the worker always be protected."

On several occasions, Francis has talked about tackling unemployment and signaled out the high unemployment of youth as one of the two most salient issues facing the world at present. He also attacked what he called unjust salaries. On his trip to the World Youth Day in Brazil, the pope told reporters on the plane: "We are running the risk of having a generation that does not work. From work comes a person's dignity." He seemingly underscores a point found in the social teaching of John Paul II that dignified work not only implies remuneration sufficient for adequate housing, food, medical help etc. but also involves a kind of justice as participation. Through work we participate in society and have an active voice. Thus, even if welfare for those who cannot find work or cannot do it for physical reasons is a good thing, it is no substitute for the dignity which accrues to those who actively participate in work and in society.

On the 23rd of September, Francis met with a group of unemployed workers. He listened intently as they narrated their plight as people without work. Francis prayed at the end: "God give us work-teach us to fight for work"- that last phrase would seem to include unions and an active participation of workers in finding and co-creating work. They fight for it! At that same meeting, Francis said: "Not paying fairly, not giving a job because you are only looking at how to make a profit, that goes against God." Of course, other popes have said much the same but what is remarkable is that Francis chose a venue where he was actually talking to workers when he spoke!

In his famous Oct. 1 interview with the atheist journalist, Eugenio Scalfari, which appeared in the Italian newspaper, La Repubblica, Francis said that the two biggest social evils which need to be addressed are the loneliness of the old and the unemployment of the young. He stated: "The young need work and have neither one nor the other and the problem is that they don't even look for them anymore. They have been crushed by the present. Can you live crushed under the weight of the present? Can you go on living like this ?" Scalfari rejoined that gaining employment was more a matter of the state to work out and did not, as such, effect the church. Francis in turn forcefully argued that humans are both bodies and souls, each effecting the other. Crush the body and soul, too, is damaged. Dignity is lost.

Just recently, Francis held a meeting with the Director General of the International Labor Organization (ILO), Guy Ryder. In private audience, the two, according to Ryder: "Discussed many of the issues that I think the church shares concerns about with the ILO. We are very much concerned with promoting decent work in the world at the ILO and Pope Francis spoke about the dignity of work, the importance with which the church and he personally attaches to the dignity of work and the challenges that that presents in today's world. And we talked particularly about the plight of some of the most vulnerable people in the world. And he spoke particularly about his concerns about human trafficking and migrant workers. I think we shared very much a concern that the way the global economy is working right now does not always work in favor of those weakest and this needs to be corrected." One is reminded of the two gnawing issues of growing income inequality around the world and low wages. Ryder and the pope also talked about two often overlooked groups of workers (domestic workers and mariners) and the need to make clear their labor rights.

In an address to workers in Italy on Sept. 22, Francis linked human ecology with the environment: "Work must be combined with the preservation of creation, so that this may be responsibly safeguarded for future generations. Creation is not a good to be exploited but a gift to look after. Ecological commitment itself affords an opportunity for new concern in the sectors linked to it, such as energy, the

prevention and removal of different forms of pollution, being alert to forest fires. May caring for creation and looking after man through dignified work be a common task. Ecology is also human ecology."

Francis once said pastors should smell like their sheep. In his famous interview with the Jesuit journals, such as America, the pope distinguished between a kind of abstract looking at issues and a real insertion in the life of people as they live it. He mingled widely with ordinary workers in Argentina and, rather a new thing, as pope, offers mass for various workers in the Vatican. A phrase Francis used in his visit to Lampedusa needs to resonate widely. He talked about the danger of 'the globalization of indifference,' that is to say, that we stand back, look at these phenomena and somehow regard them as inevitable and normal in our world. That is a reaction we must absolutely refuse and react against. We need to fight for the dignity of work around the world!

"The Compendium" on the Dignity of Work

In what Follows, we will analyse the major instructions of *The* Compendium of Social Doctrine of the Church related to the dignity of work.[*The Text is from paragraphs 270-322 of the COMPENDIUM OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH Published in 2005 by Pontifical Council for Freedom and Justice*] #

1. The subjective and objective dimensions of work

Human work has a twofold significance: objective and subjective. In the *objective sense*, it is the sum of activities, resources, instruments and technologies used by men and women to produce things, to *exercise dominion over the earth*, in the words of the Book of Genesis. In the*subjective sense*, work is the activity of the human person as a dynamic being capable of performing a variety of actions that are part of the work process and that correspond to his personal vocation: "Man has to subdue the earth and dominate it, because as the 'image of God' he is a person, that is to say, a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself, and with a tendency to self-realization. As a person, man is therefore the subject of work" [586].

Work in the objective sense constitutes the contingent aspect of human activity, which constantly varies in its expressions according to the changing technological, cultural, social and political conditions. *Work in the subjective sense, however, represents its stable dimension*, since it does not depend on what people produce or on the type of activity they undertake, but only and exclusively on their dignity as human beings. This distinction is critical, both for understanding what the ultimate foundation of the value and dignity of work is, and with regard to the difficulties of organizing economic and social systems that respect human rights.

This subjectivity gives to work its particular dignity, which does not allow that it be considered a simple commodity or an impersonal element of the apparatus for productivity. Cut off from its lesser or greater objective value, work is an essential expression of the person, it is an "*actus personae*". Any form of materialism or economic tenet that tries to reduce the worker to being a mere instrument of production, a simple *labour force* with an exclusively material value, would end up hopelessly distorting the essence of work and stripping it of its most noble and basic human finality. *The human person is the measure of the dignity* of work: "In fact there is no doubt that human work has an ethical value of its own, which clearly and directly remains linked to the fact that the one who carries it out is a person" [587].

The subjective dimension of work must take precedence over the objective dimension, because it is the dimension of the person himself who engages in work, determining its quality and consummate value. If this awareness is lacking, or if one chooses not to recognize this truth, work loses its truest and most profound meaning. In such cases - which are unfortunately all too frequent and widespread - work activity and the very technology employed become more important than the person himself and at the same time are transformed into enemies of his dignity.

Human work not only proceeds from the person, but it is also essentially ordered to and has its final goal in the human person. Independently of its objective content, work must be oriented to the subject who performs it, because the end of work, any work whatsoever, always remains man. Even if one cannot ignore the

objective component of work with regard to its quality, this component must nonetheless be subordinated to the self-realization of the person, and therefore to the subjective dimension, thanks to which it is possible to affirm that *work is for man and not man for work*. "It is always man who is the purpose of work, whatever work it is that is done by man - even if the common scale of values rates it as the merest 'service', as the most monotonous, even the most alienating work" [588].

Human work also has an intrinsic social dimension. A person's work, in fact, is naturally connected with that of other people. Today "more than ever, work is *work with others* and *work for others*. It is a matter of doing something for someone else" [589]. The fruits of work offer occasions for exchange, relationship and encounter. Work, therefore, cannot be properly evaluated if its social nature is not taken into account: "For man's productive effort cannot yield its fruits unless a truly social and organic body exists, unless a social and juridical order watches over the exercise of work, unless the various occupations, being interdependent, cooperate with and mutually complete one another, and, what is still more important, unless mind, material things, and work combine and form as it were a single whole. Therefore, where the social and individual nature of work is neglected, it will be impossible to evaluate work justly and pay it according to justice" [590].

Work is also "an obligation, that is to say, a duty on the part of man" [591]. Man must work, both because the Creator has commanded it and in order to respond to the need to maintain and develop his own humanity. Work is presented as a moral obligation with respect to one's neighbour, which in the first place is one's own family, but also the society to which one belongs, the nation of which one is son or daughter, the entire human family of which one is member. We are heirs of the work of generations and at the same time shapers of the future of all who will live after us.

Work confirms the profound identity of men and women created in the image and likeness of God: "As man, through his work, becomes more and more the master of the earth, and as he confirms his dominion over the visible world, again through his work, he nevertheless remains in every case and at every phase of this process

within the Creator's original ordering. And this ordering remains necessarily and indissolubly linked with the fact that man was created, as male and female, 'in the image of God" [592]. This describes human activity in the universe: men and women are not its owner, but those to whom it is entrusted, called to reflect in their own manner of working the image of him in whose likeness they are made.

2. The relationship between labour and capital

Work, because of its subjective or personal character, is superior to every other factor connected with productivity; this principle applies, in particular, with regard to capital. The term "capital" has different meanings today. Sometimes it indicates the material means of production in a given enterprise, sometimes the financial resources employed to bring about production or used in stock market operations. One can also speak of "*human capital*" to refer to human resources, that is, to man himself in his capacity to engage in labour, to make use of knowledge and creativity, to sense the needs of his fellow workers and a mutual understanding with other members of an organization. The term "*social capital*" is also used to indicate the capacity of a collective group to work together, the fruit of investments in a mutually-binding fiduciary trust. This variety of meanings offers further material for reflecting on what the relationship between work and capital may be today.

The Church's social doctrine has not failed to insist on the relationship between labour and capital, placing in evidence both the priority of the first over the second as well as their complementarities.

Labour has an intrinsic priority over capital. "This principle directly concerns the process of production: in this process labour is always a primary efficient cause, while capital, the whole collection of means of production, remains a mere instrument or instrumental cause. This principle is an evident truth that emerges from the whole of man's historical experience" [593]. This "is part of the abiding heritage of the Church's teaching" [594].

There must exist between work and capital a relationship of complementarities: the very logic inherent within the process of production shows that the two must mutually permeate one another

and that there is an urgent need to create economic systems in which the opposition between capital and labour is overcome [595]. In times when "capital" and "hired labour", within a less complicated economic system, used to identify with a certain precision not only two elements of production but also and above all two concrete social classes, the Church affirmed that both were in themselves legitimate [596]: "Capital cannot stand without labour, nor labour without capital" [597]. This is a truth that applies also today, because "it is altogether false to ascribe either to capital alone or to labour alone what is achieved by the joint work of both; and it is utterly unjust that the one should arrogate unto itself what is being done, denying the effectiveness of the other" [598].

In considering the relationship between labour and capital, above all with regard to the impressive transformations of our modern times, we must maintain that the "principal resource" and the "decisive factor" [599] *at man's disposal is man himself*, and that "the integral development of the human person through work does not impede but rather promotes the greater productivity and efficiency of work itself" [600]. In fact, the world of work is discovering more and more that the value of "human capital" is finding expression in the consciences of workers, in their willingness to create relationships, in their creativity, in their industriousness in promoting themselves, in their ability consciously to face new situations, to work together and to pursue common objectives. These are strictly personal qualities that belong to the subject of work more than to the objective, technical, or operational aspects of work itself. All of this entails a new perspective in the relationship between labour and capital. We can affirm that, contrary to what happened in the former organization of labour in which the subject would end up being less important than the object, than the mechanical process, in our day the subjective dimension of work tends to be more decisive and more important than the objective dimension.

The relationship between labour and capital often shows traits of antagonism that take on new forms with the changing of social and economic contexts. In the past, the origin of the conflict between capital and labour was found above all "in the fact that the workers put their powers at the disposal of the entrepreneurs, and these, following the principle of maximum profit, tried to establish the lowest

possible wages for the work done by the employees". [601] *In our present day, this conflict shows aspects that are new and perhaps more disquieting*: scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets, of themselves a source of development and progress, expose workers to the risk of being exploited by the mechanisms of the economy and by the unrestrained quest for productivity [602].

One must not fall into the error of thinking that the process of overcoming the dependence of work on material is of itself capable of overcoming alienation in the workplace or the alienation of labour. The reference here is not only to the many pockets of non-work, concealed work, child labour, underpaid work, exploitation of workers - all of which still persist today - but also to new, much more subtle forms of exploitation of new sources of work, to over-working, to work-as-career that often takes on more importance than other human and necessary aspects, to excessive demands of work that makes family life unstable and sometimes impossible, to a modular structure of work that entails the risk of serious repercussions on the unitary perception of one's own existence and the stability of family relationships. If people are alienated when means and ends are inverted, elements of alienation can also be found in the new contexts of work that is immaterial, light, qualitative more than quantitative, "either through increased sharing in a genuinely supportive community or through increased isolation in a maze of relationships marked by destructive competitiveness and estrangement" [603].

3. Work, the right to participate

The relationship between labour and capital also finds expression when workers participate in ownership, management and profits. This is an all-too-often overlooked requirement and it should be given greater consideration. "On the basis of his work each person is fully entitled to consider himself a part-owner of the great workbench where he is working with everyone else. A way towards that goal could be found by associating labour with the ownership of capital, as far as possible, and by producing a wide range of intermediate bodies with economic, social and cultural purposes. These would be bodies enjoying real autonomy with regard to public authorities, pursuing their specific aims in honest collaboration with each other

and in subordination to the demands of the common good. These would be living communities both in form and in substance, as members of each body would be looked upon and treated as persons and encouraged to take an active part in the life of the body" [604]. The new ways that work is organized, where knowledge is of greater account than the mere ownership of the means of production, concretely shows that work, because of its subjective character, entails the right to participate. This awareness must be firmly in place in order to evaluate the proper place of work in the process of production and to find ways of participation that are in line with the subjectivity of work in the distinctive circumstances of different concrete situations [605].

4. The relationship between labour and private property

The Church's social Magisterium sees an expression of the relationship between labour and capital also in the institution of private property, in the right to and the use of private property. The right to private property is subordinated to the principle of the universal destination of goods and must not constitute a reason for impeding the work or development of others. Property, which is acquired in the first place through work, must be placed at the service of work. This is particularly true regarding the possession of the means of production, but the same principle also concerns the goods proper to the world of finance, technology, knowledge, and personnel.

The means of production "cannot be possessed against labour, they cannot even be possessed for possession's sake". [606] It becomes illegitimate to possess them when property "is not utilized or when it serves to impede the work of others, in an effort to gain a profit which is not the result of the overall expansion of work and the wealth of society, but rather is the result of curbing them or of illicit exploitation, speculation or the breaking of solidarity among working people" [607].

Private and public property, as well as the various mechanisms of the economic system, must be oriented to an economy of service to mankind, so that they contribute to putting into effect the principleof the universal destination of goods. The issue of ownership and use of new technologies and knowledge

- which in our day constitute a particular form of property that is no less important than ownership of land or capital [608] - becomes significant in this perspective. These resources, like all goods, have a *universal destination*; they too must be placed in a context of legal norms and social rules that guarantee that they will be used according to the criteria of justice, equity and respect of human rights. The new discoveries and technologies, thanks to their enormous potential, can make a decisive contribution to the promotion of social progress; but if they remain concentrated in the wealthier countries or in the hands of a small number of powerful groups, they risk becoming sources of unemployment and increasing the gap between developed and underdeveloped areas.

5. Rest from work

Rest from work is a right [609]. As God "rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had done" (*Gen* 2:2), so too men and women, created in his image, are to enjoy sufficient rest and free time that will allow them to tend to their family, cultural, social and religious life [610]. The institution of the Lord's Day contributes to this [611]. On Sundays and other Holy Days of Obligation, believers must refrain from "engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's Day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body" [612]. Family needs and service of great importance to society constitute legitimate excuses from the obligation of Sunday rest, but these must not create habits that are prejudicial to religion, family life or health.

Sunday is a day that should be made holy by charitable activity, devoting time to family and relatives, as well as to the sick, the infirm and the elderly. One must not forget the "brethren who have the same needs and the same rights, yet cannot rest from work because of poverty and misery" [613]. *Moreover, Sunday is an appropriate time for the reflection, silence, study and meditation that foster the growth of the interior Christian life*. Believers should distinguish themselves on this day too by their moderation, avoiding the excesses and certainly the violence that mass entertainment sometimes occasions [614]. The Lord's Day should always be lived as a day of liberation that allows us to take part in "the festal gathering and the

assembly of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven" (cf. *Heb* 12:22-23), anticipating thus the celebration of the definitive Passover in the glory of heaven [615].

Public authorities have the duty to ensure that, for reasons of economic productivity, citizens are not denied time for rest and divine worship. Employers have an analogous obligation regarding their employees [616]. Christians, in respect of religious freedom and of the common good of all, should seek to have Sundays and the Church's Holy Days recognized as legal holidays. "They have to give everyone a public example of prayer, respect and joy, and defend their traditions as a precious contribution to the spiritual life of society" [617]. "Every Christian should avoid making unnecessary demands on others that would hinder them from observing the Lord's Day" [618].

The Right to Work

1. Work is necessary

Work is a fundamental right and a good for mankind,[619] a useful good, worthy of man because it is an appropriate way for him to give expression to and enhance his human dignity. The Church teaches the value of work not only because it is always something that belongs to the person but also because of its nature as something necessary [620]. Work is needed to form and maintain a family, [621] to have a right to property, [622] to contribute to the common good of the human family [623]. In considering the moral implications that the question of work has for social life, the Church cannot fail to indicate unemployment as a "real social disaster", [624] above all with regard to the younger generations.

Work is a good belonging to all people and must be made available to all who are capable of engaging in it. "Full employment" therefore remains a mandatory objective for every economic system oriented towards justice and the common good. A society in which the right to work is thwarted or systematically denied, and in which economic policies do not allow workers to reach satisfactory levels of employment, "cannot be justified from an ethical point of view, nor can that society attain social peace" [625]. An important role and, consequently, a particular and grave responsibility in this

area falls to "indirect employers", [626] that is, those subjects - persons or institutions of various types - in a position to direct, at the national or international level, policies concerning labour and the economy.

The planning capacity of a society oriented towards the common good and looking to the future is measured also and above all on the basis of the employment prospects that it is able to offer. The high level of unemployment, the presence of obsolete educational systems and of persistent difficulties in gaining access to professional formation and the job market represent, especially for many young people, a huge obstacle on the road to human and professional fulfilment. In fact, those who are unemployed or underemployed suffer the profound negative consequences that such a situation creates in a personality and they run the risk of being marginalized within society, of becoming victims of social exclusion [627]. In general, this is the drama that strikes not only young people, but also women, less specialized workers, the persons with disabilities, immigrants, ex-convicts, the illiterate, all those who face greater difficulties in the attempt to find their place in the world of employment.

Maintaining employment depends more and more on one's professional capabilities [628]. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation, which are necessary for gainfully fulfilling one's responsibilities. The ever more widespread necessity of changing jobs many times in one's lifetime makes it imperative that the educational system encourage people to be open to on-going updating and re-training. Young people should be taught to act upon their own initiative, to accept the responsibility of facing with adequate competencies the risks connected with a fluid economic context that is often unpredictable in the way it evolves [629]. Equally indispensable is the task of offering suitable courses of formation for adults seeking re-training and for the unemployed. More generally, people need concrete forms of support as they journey in the world of work, starting precisely with formational systems, so that it will be less difficult to cope with periods of change, uncertainty and instability.

2. The role of the State and civil society in promoting the right to work

Employment problems challenge the responsibility of the State,

whose duty it is to promote active employment policies, that is, policies that will encourage the creation of employment opportunities within the national territory, providing the production sector with incentives to this end. The duty of the State does not consist so much in directly guaranteeing the right to work of every citizen, making the whole of economic life very rigid and restricting individual free initiative, as much as in the duty to "sustain business activities by creating conditions which will ensure job opportunities, by stimulating those activities where they are lacking or by supporting them in moments of crisis" [630].

Given the quickly developing global dimensions of economic-financial relationships and of the labour market, there is a need to promote an effective international cooperation among States by means of treaties, agreements and common plans of action that safeguard the right to work, even in the most critical phases of the economic cycle, at the national and international levels. It is necessary to be aware of the fact that human work is a right upon which the promotion of social justice and civil peace directly depend. Important tasks in this regard fall to international organizations and to labour unions. Joining forces in the most suitable ways, they must strive first of all to create "an ever more tightly knit fabric of juridical norms that protect the work of men, women and youth, ensuring its proper remuneration" [631].

To promote the right to work it is important today, as in the days of *Rerum Novarum*, that there be "an open process by which society organize[s] itself".[632] Meaningful testimonies and examples of self-organization can be found in the numerous initiatives, business and social, characterized by forms of participation, cooperation and self-management that manifest the joining of energies in solidarity. These are offered to the market as a multifaceted sector of work activity whose mark of distinction is the special attention given to the relational components of the goods produced and of the services rendered in many areas: instruction, health care, basic social services and culture. The initiatives of this so-called "third sector" represent an ever more important opportunity for the development of labour and the economy.

3. The family and the right to work

Work is "a foundation for the formation of family life, which is a natural right and something that man is called to"[633]. It

ensures a means of subsistence and serves as a guarantee for raising children [634]. Family and work, so closely interdependent in the experience of the vast majority of people, deserve finally to be considered in a more realistic light, with an attention that seeks to understand them together, without the limits of a strictly private conception of the family or a strictly economic view of work. In this regard, it is necessary that businesses, professional organizations, labour unions and the State promote policies that, from an employment point of view, do not penalize but rather support the family nucleus. In fact, family life and work mutually affect one another in different ways. Travelling great distances to the workplace, working two jobs, physical and psychological fatigue all reduce the time devoted to the family.[635] Situations of unemployment have material and spiritual repercussions on families, just as tensions and family crises have negative influences on attitudes and productivity in the area of work.

4. Women and the right to work

The feminine genius is needed in all expressions in the life of society, therefore the presence of women in the workplace must also be guaranteed. The first indispensable step in this direction is the concrete possibility of access to professional formation. *The recognition and defence of women's rights in the context of work generally depend on the organization of work, which must take into account the dignity and vocation of women*, whose "true advancement... requires that labour should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them" [636]. This issue is the measure of the *quality of society* and its *effective defence* of women's right to work.

The persistence of many forms of discrimination offensive to the dignity and vocation of women in the area of work is due to a long series of conditioning that penalizes women, who have seen "their prerogatives misrepresented" and themselves "relegated to the margins of society and even reduced to servitude" [637]. These difficulties, unfortunately, have not been overcome, as is demonstrated wherever there are situations that demoralize women, making them objects of a very real exploitation. An urgent need to recognize

effectively the rights of women in the workplace is seen especially under the aspects of pay, insurance and social security [638].

5. Child labour

Child labour, in its intolerable forms, constitutes a kind of violence that is less obvious than others but it is not for this reason any less terrible [639]. This is a violence that, beyond all political, economic and legal implications, remains essentially a moral problem. Pope Leo XIII issued the warning: "in regard to children, great care should be taken not to place them in workshops and factories until their bodies and minds are sufficiently developed. For, just as very rough weather destroys the buds of spring, so does too early an experience of life's hard toil blight the young promise of a child's faculties, and render any true education impossible" [640]. After more than a hundred years, the blight of child labour has not yet been overcome.

Even with the knowledge that, at least for now, in certain countries the contribution made by child labour to family income and the national economy is indispensable, and that in any event certain forms of part-time work can prove beneficial for children themselves, the Church's social doctrine condemns the increase in "the exploitation of children in the workplace in conditions of veritable slavery".[641] This exploitation represents a serious violation of human dignity, with which every person, "no matter how small or how seemingly unimportant in utilitarian terms",[642] is endowed.

6. Immigration and work

Immigration can be a resource for development rather than an obstacle to it. In the modern world, where there are still grave inequalities between rich countries and poor countries, and where advances in communications quickly reduce distances, the immigration of people looking for a better life is on the increase. These people come from less privileged areas of the earth and their arrival in developed countries is often perceived as a threat to the high levels of well-being achieved thanks to decades of economic growth. In most cases, however, immigrants fill a labour need which would otherwise remain unfilled in sectors and territories where the local workforce is insufficient or unwilling to engage in the work in question.

Institutions in host countries must keep careful watch to prevent the spread of the temptation to exploit foreign labourers, denying them the same rights enjoyed by nationals, rights that are to be guaranteed to all without discrimination. Regulating immigration according to criteria of equity and balance [643] is one of the indispensable conditions for ensuring that immigrants are integrated into society with the guarantees required by recognition of their human dignity. Immigrants are to be received as persons and helped, together with their families, to become a part of societal life [644]. In this context, the *right of reuniting families should be respected and promoted* [645]. At the same time, conditions that foster increased work opportunities in people's place of origin are to be promoted as much as possible [646].

7. The world of agriculture and the right to work

Agricultural labour merits special attention, given the important social, cultural and economic role that it continues to play in the economic systems of many countries, and also considering the many problems that need to be met in the context of an ever more globalized economy as well as its growing significance in safeguarding the natural environment. "Radical and urgent changes are therefore needed in order to restore to agriculture - and to rural people - their just value as the basis for a healthy economy, within the social community's development as a whole" [647].

The profound and radical changes underway at the social and cultural levels also in agriculture and in the more expansive rural world urgently call for a thorough examination of the meaning of agricultural work in its many different dimensions. This is a challenge of great importance that must be met with agricultural and environmental policies that are capable of overcoming a concept of welfare continuing from the past and of developing new perspectives for modern agriculture that is in a position to play a significant role in social and economic life.

In some countries a redistribution of land as part of sound policies of agrarian reform is indispensable, in order to overcome the obstacles that an unproductive system of latifundium - condemned by the Church's social doctrine [648] - *places on the*

path of genuine economic development. "Developing countries can effectively counter the present process under which land ownership is being concentrated in a few hands if they face up to certain situations that constitute real structural problems, for example legislative deficiencies and delays regarding both recognition of land titles and in relation to the credit market, a lack of concern over agricultural research and training, and neglect of social services and infrastructures in rural areas" [649]. Agrarian reform therefore becomes a moral obligation more than a political necessity, since the failure to enact such reform is a hindrance in these countries to the benefits arising from the opening of markets and, generally, from the abundant growth opportunities offered by the current process of globalization [650].

The Rights of Workers

1. The dignity of workers and the respect for their rights

The rights of workers, like all other rights, are based on the nature of the human person and on his transcendent dignity. The Church's social Magisterium has seen fit to list some of these rights, in the hope that they will be recognized in juridical systems: the right to a just wage; [651] the right to rest; [652] the right "to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers' physical health or to their moral integrity"; [653] the right that one's personality in the workplace should be safeguarded "without suffering any affront to one's conscience or personal dignity"; [654] the right to appropriate subsidies that are necessary for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families; [655] the right to a pension and to insurance for old age, sickness, and in case of work-related accidents; [656] the right to social security connected with maternity; [657] the right to assemble and form associations [658]. These rights are often infringed, as is confirmed by the sad fact of workers who are underpaid and without protection or adequate representation. It often happens that work conditions for men, women and children, especially in developing countries, are so inhumane that they are an offence to their dignity and compromise their health.

2. The right to fair remuneration and income distribution

Remuneration is the most important means for achieving justice in work relationships [659]. The "just wage is the legitimate fruit of work" [660].

They commit grave injustice who refuse to pay a just wage or who do not give it in due time and in proportion to the work done (cf. *Lv* 19:13; *Dt* 24:14-15; *Jas* 5:4). A salary is the instrument that permits the labourer to gain access to the goods of the earth. "Remuneration for labour is to be such that man may be furnished the means to cultivate worthily his own material, social, cultural, and spiritual life and that of his dependents, in view of the function and productiveness of each one, the conditions of the factory or workshop, and the common good".[661] The simple agreement between employee and employer with regard to the amount of pay to be received is not sufficient for the agreed-upon salary to qualify as a "just wage", because a just wage "must not be below the level of subsistence"[662] of the worker: natural justice precedes and is above the freedom of the contract.

The economic well-being of a country is not measured exclusively by the quantity of goods it produces but also by taking into account the manner in which they are produced and the level of equity in the distribution of income, which should allow everyone access to what is necessary for their personal development and perfection. An equitable distribution of income is to be sought on the basis of criteria not merely of commutative justice but also of social justice that is, considering, beyond the objective value of the work rendered, the human dignity of the subjects who perform it. Authentic economic well-being is pursued also by means of suitable *social policies for the redistribution of income* which, taking general conditions into account, look at merit as well as at the need of each citizen.

3. The right to strike

The Church's social doctrine recognizes the legitimacy of striking "when it cannot be avoided, or at least when it is necessary to obtain a proportionate benefit",[663] when every other method for the resolution of disputes has been ineffectual.[664] Striking, one of the most difficult victories won by labour union associations, may be defined as the collective and concerted refusal on the part of workers to continue rendering their services, for the purpose of obtaining by means of such pressure exerted on their employers, the State or on public opinion either better working conditions or an improvement in

their social status. Striking "as a kind of ultimatum" [665] must always be a peaceful method for making demands and fighting for one's rights; it becomes "morally unacceptable when accompanied by violence, or when objectives are included that are not directly linked to working conditions or are contrary to the common good".[666]

Solidarity Among Workers

1. The importance of unions

The Magisterium recognizes the fundamental role played by labour unions, whose existence is connected with the right to form associations or unions to defend the vital interests of workers employed in the various professions. Unions "grew up from the struggle of the workers - workers in general but especially the industrial workers - to protect their just rights*vis-à-vis* the entrepreneurs and the owners of the means of production" [667]. Such organizations, while pursuing their specific purpose with regard to the common good, are a positive influence for social order and solidarity, and are therefore an *indispensable element of social life*. The recognition of workers' rights has always been a difficult problem to resolve because this recognition takes place within complex historical and institutional processes, and still today it remains incomplete. This makes the practice of authentic solidarity among workers more fitting and necessary than ever.

The Church's social doctrine teaches that relations within the world of work must be marked by cooperation: hatred and attempts to eliminate the other are completely unacceptable. This is also the case because in every social system both "labour" and "capital" represent indispensable components of the process of production. In light of this understanding, the Church's social doctrine "does not hold that unions are no more than a reflection of the 'class' structure of society and that they are a mouthpiece for a class struggle which inevitably governs social life" [668]. *Properly speaking, unions are promoters of the struggle for social justice*, for the rights of workers in their particular professions: "This struggle should be seen as a normal endeavour 'for' the just good... not a struggle 'against' others"[669]. Being first of all instruments of solidarity and justice, unions may not misuse the tools of contention; because of what they are called to do,

they must overcome the temptation of believing that all workers should be union-members, they must be capable of self-regulation and be able to evaluate the consequences that their decisions will have on the common good [670].

Beyond their function of defending and vindicating, unions have the duty of acting as representatives working for "the proper arrangement of economic life" and of educating the social consciences of workers so that they will feel that they have an active role, according to their proper capacities and aptitudes, in the whole task of economic and social development and in the attainment of the universal common good [671]. Unions and other forms of labour associations are to work in cooperation with other social entities and are to take an interest in the management of public matters. Union organizations have the duty to exercise influence in the political arena, making it duly sensitive to labour problems and helping it to work so that workers' rights are respected. Unions do not, however, have the character of "political parties" struggling for power, and they should not be forced to submit to the decisions of political parties nor be too closely linked to them. "In such a situation they easily lose contact with their specific role, which is to secure the just rights of workers within the framework of the common good of the whole of society; instead they become*an instrument used for other purposes*" [672].

2. New forms of solidarity

The modern socio-economic context, characterized by ever more rapid processes of economic and financial globalization, prompts unions to engage in renewal. Today, unions are called to act in new ways, [673] widening the scope of their activity of solidarity so that protection is afforded not only to the traditional categories of workers, but also to workers with*non- standard* or limited-time contracts, employees whose jobs are threatened by business mergers that occur with ever increasing frequency, even at the international level; to those who do not have a job, to immigrants, seasonal workers and those who, because they have not had professional updating, have been dismissed from the labour market and cannot be re- admitted without proper re-training.

Given the changes that have taken place in the world of work, solidarity can be recovered, and perhaps with a firmer foundation

in respect to the past, if the effort is made to rediscover the subjective value of work: "there must be continued study of the subject of work and of the subject's living conditions". For this reason, "there is a need for ever new movements of solidarity of the workers and with the workers" [674].

Pursuing "new forms of solidarity", [675] *workers' associations must focus their efforts on the acceptance of greater responsibilities* not only in relation to the traditional mechanisms for redistribution but also in relation to the production of wealth and the creation of social, political and cultural conditions which will permit all who are able and willing to work to exercise their right to work in full respect for their dignity as workers. The gradual obsolescence of organizational models based on salaried workers in big business makes it fitting to update the norms and systems of social security that have traditionally protected workers and guaranteed their fundamental rights.

The "New Things" of The World of Work

1. An epoch-making phase of transition

The phenomenon of globalization is one of the most important causes of the current change in the organization of work. This phenomenon brings about new forms of production where plants are located away from where strategies are decided and far from the markets where the goods are consumed. There are two primary factors driving this phenomenon: the extraordinary speed of communication no longer limited by space or time, and the relative ease with which merchandise and people are transported from one part of the world to another. This entails a fundamental consequence for processes of production, as property is ever further removed and often indifferent to the social effects of the decisions made. On the other hand, if it is true that globalization is neither good nor bad in itself, but depends on how it is used,[676] it must be affirmed that *a globalization of safeguards, minimum essential rights and equity is necessary*.

One of the most significant characteristics of the new organization of work is the physical fragmentation of the cycle of production,

promoted in order to obtain greater efficiency and greater profits. In this perspective, the traditional space-time coordinates within which the cycle of production formerly took place undergoes an unprecedented transformation that determines a change in the structure of work itself. All of this has significant consequences for the life of individuals and communities subjected to radical changes both on the level of material conditions and of culture and values. On the worldwide and local levels, this phenomenon presently involves millions of people, independently of their profession, social standing or cultural preparation. The reorganization of time, its standardization and the changes currently underway in the use of space - comparable in extent to the first Industrial Revolution insofar as they involve every sector of production, on every continent, independent of their level of development - are therefore to be considered a crucial challenge, also at the level of ethics and culture, in the area of defining a renewed system for the defence of work.

The globalization of the economy, with the liberalization of markets, the stiffening of competition, the increase of specialized businesses in providing goods and services, requires greater flexibility in the labour market and in organizing and managing production processes. In making an evaluation in this delicate area, it seems appropriate to lend greater moral, cultural and planning attention to giving direction to social and political activity concerning issues connected with the identity and content of new work, in a market and an economy that are themselves new. In fact, the changes in the labour market are often an effect of the change to which work has been subjected, and not one of its causes.

Work, above all within the economic systems of the more developed countries, is going through a phase that marks the passage from an industrial-type economy to an economy essentially built on services and technological innovations. In other words, what is happening is that services and activities with a predominant informational content show a much greater rapidity of growth than traditional primary and secondary sectors. This entails far-ranging consequences for organizing the production and exchange of goods, defining job requirements and providing effective social protection.

Thanks to technological innovations, the world of work is being enriched with new professions while others are disappearing. In fact, in the present phase of transition there is a continuous movement of workers from the industrial sector to that of services. As the economic and social models connected with big factories and with a homogenous working class lose ground, the employment prospects in the third sector improve. In particular, there is an increase in job activity in the area of personal services, in part-time, temporary and "non-traditional" employment, that is, work that does not fit into a category that would classify the job-holder either as an employee or as self-employed.

The transition currently underway signals the move from dependent work with no prescribed time limit, understood as a stable job, to a series of jobs characterized by many kinds of work activities, from a world of a unified, definite and recognized concept of work to a universe of jobs where there is great variety, fluidity and a wealth of promises. There are also many questions of concern, especially with regard to the growing uncertainty of work, the persistent presence of structural unemployment and the inadequacy of current systems of social security. The demands of competition, technological innovation and the complexities of financial fluxes must be brought into harmony with the defence of workers and their rights.

This uncertainty and instability involve not only the labour conditions of workers in more developed countries but affect also, and above all, the less advanced economic realities in developing countries and countries with economies in transition. This latter category, besides the complicated problems associated with changing models of the economy and of production, must deal daily with the difficult adjustment required by the current phenomenon of globalization. The situation is particularly dramatic for the world of work, affected by vast and radical cultural and structural changes in contexts that are often without legislative support and lack programmes of professional training and social assistance.

The decentralization of production, which assigns to smaller companies several tasks previously undertaken by larger production interests, gives vitality and new energy to the area of

small and medium-sized businesses. In this way, alongside traditional artisans there emerge new businesses characterized by small production interests at work in modern production sectors or in decentralized activities of larger companies. Many activities that yesterday required the hiring of employees are today carried out in new ways that encourage independent labour and are therefore marked by higher risk and greater responsibility.

Work in small and medium-sized businesses,the work of artisans and independent work can represent an occasion to make the actual work experience more human, both in terms of the possibility of establishing positive personal relationships in smaller-sized communities and in terms of the opportunities for greater initiative and industriousness. In these sectors, however, there are more than just a few cases of unjust treatment, of poorly paid and, above all, uncertain work.

In developing countries, moreover, there has been an expansion in recent years of "informal" and "hidden" economic activities. This represents a promising sign of economic growth and development, but it raises many ethical and legal problems. In fact, the significant increase in job opportunities in the context of such activities is owed to the lack of specialization in a large segment of the local work force and to disorderly growth in formal economic sectors. Large numbers of people are thus forced to work under seriously distressing conditions and in situations that lack the rules necessary for safeguarding workers' dignity. Levels of productivity, income and living standards are extremely low and often inadequate for guaranteeing to workers and their families the minimum level of subsistence.

2. Social doctrine and the "new things"

Given these impressive "new things" in the world of work, the Church's social doctrine recommends first of all to avoid the error of insisting that the current changes take place in a deterministic manner. The decisive factor and "referee" of this complex phase of change is *once more the human person*, who must remain the true protagonist of his work. He can and must take on in a creative and responsible fashion the present innovations and re-organizations, so that they lead to the growth of the person, the family, society and the

entire human family [677]. Enlightenment for all can be found in the appeal of the *subjective dimension of work,* which according to the teaching of the Church's social doctrine must be given due priority, because human work "proceeds directly from persons created in the image of God and called to prolong the work of creation by subduing the earth" [678].

Mechanistic and economistic interpretations of the activity of production, however prevalent and influential they may be, have been outdated by scientific analysis of the problems connected with work. More today than in the past, these conceptions are seen to be completely inadequate for interpreting the facts, which everyday demonstrate more and more the meaning of work as a free and creative activity of the human person. Concrete findings should also provide the impetus for the immediate dismissal of theoretical perspectives and restrictive, insufficient operative criteria concerning the present dynamics. These prove to be intrinsically incapable of identifying the broad spectrum of concrete and urgent human needs that go well beyond merely economic categories. The Church is well aware and has always taught that men and women, unlike every other living being, have certain needs that are not restricted merely to "having" [679], because their nature and vocation are inextricably linked with the Transcendent One. The human person faces the adventure of the transformation of things through work in order to satisfy requirements and needs that are first of all material, but he does so in obedience to an impulse that pushes him ever further beyond the results obtained, to the quest of what will correspond most intimately to his vital inner needs.

The historical forms in which human work is expressed change, but not its permanent requirements, which are summed up in the respect of the inalienable human rights of workers. Faced with the risk of denying these rights, *new forms of solidarity* must be envisioned and brought about, taking into account the interdependence that unites workers among themselves. The more substantial the changes are, the more decisive the commitment of intellect and will to defend the dignity of work needs to be, in order to strengthen, at different levels, the institutions involved. This perspective makes it possible to orient the current transformations for the best, in the

direction - so necessary - of complementarities between the local and the global economic dimensions, the "old" and the "new" economy, technological innovation and the need to safeguard human work, as well as economic growth and development compatible with the environment.

Men and women of science and culture are called to make their particular contribution to solving the vast and complex problems connected with work, which in some areas take on dramatic proportions. This contribution is very important for coming up with the proper solutions. This is a responsibility that requires that they identify the occasions and risks present in the changes taking place, and above all that they suggest lines of action for guiding change in a way that will be most beneficial to the development of the entire human family. To these men and women falls the important task of reading and interpreting the social phenomena with wisdom and with love of truth, leaving behind concerns imposed by special or personal interests. Their contribution, precisely because it is of a theoretical nature, becomes an essential point of reference for the concrete action prescribed by economic policies [680].

The present scenarios of profound transformation of human work call even more urgently for an authentically global development in solidarity that is capable of involving every region of the world including those less advantaged. Regarding these less advantaged regions, the start of a process of wide-ranging development in solidarity not only represents a concrete possibility for creating new job opportunities, but is also seen as a genuine condition for the survival of entire peoples. "Solidarity too must become globalized" [681].

Economic and social imbalances in the world of work must be addressed by restoring a just hierarchy of values and placing the human dignity of workers before all else. "The new realities that are having such a powerful impact on the productive process, such as the globalization of finance, economics, trade and labour, must never violate the dignity and centrality of the human person, nor the freedom and democracy of peoples. If solidarity, participation and the possibility to govern these radical changes are not the solution, they are certainly the necessary ethical guarantee so that individuals and

peoples do not become tools but the protagonists of their future. All this can be achieved and, since it is possible, it becomes a duty" [682].

There is an ever greater need for a careful consideration of the new situation of work in the present-day context of globalization, in a perspective that values people's natural tendency to establish relationships. In this regard it must be affirmed that universality is a dimension of human beings, not of things. Technology may be the instrumental cause of globalization, but the universality of the human family is its ultimate cause. For this reason, work too has a universal dimension, insofar as it is based on the relational nature of human beings. Technology, especially electronics, has allowed the relational aspect of work to spread throughout the world, giving to globalization a particularly rapid rhythm. The ultimate foundation of this dynamism is the working person, who is always the subjective - and never the objective - element. Therefore, globalized work too originates in the anthropological foundation of the inherent relational dimension of work. The negative aspects of the globalization of work must not damage the possibility opening up for all people: *that of giving expression to a humanism of work on a planetary scale,* to solidarity in the world of work on this same level, so that working in similar contexts, spread throughout the world and interconnected, people will understand ever better their one, shared vocation.

Chapter 9

Human Rights and Catholic Social Teachings

The concept of human dignity, delicately interwoven with the concept of human rights, is rooted in the biblical values of Hebrew and Christian Scripture and in reflection on centuries of Catholic tradition. From the times and narratives of Christ to the more recent papal encyclicals, the call for a commitment to human life and dignity, to human rights and solidarity, has always been a universal calling for all people, Catholic and non-Catholic alike, as promoted by Catholic social teachings. The protection of human rights and defense of dignity has become an outgrowth of faith and spirituality in contemporary Catholicism and a central principle of social teachings by which believers are challenged to apply standards of and promote educational programs of human dignity in all aspects of daily living. Just as Catholic social teaching is an essential element of Faith, both inseparable from a conceptual framework of human life and human dignity, so too are the concepts of humandignity and human rights inseparable from a

personal understanding and modeling of principles of peace and justice in Catholic thought. The social mission of the Catholic Church has always included programs that shaped the development of standards for human rights and human dignity (Dorr, 1983). These fundamental teachings provided a broad underlying perspective from which believers could interact with other cultures, shape personal philosophies on life, and model attitudes and behaviors central to a peaceful and just society. These teachings are innately, irrefutably, and irrevocably.

Catholique

Keating in a 1998 article on Catholic social teaching wrote of John Paul II's claim for "... human rights to be the minimum of human dignity in our time." John Paul II's magisterialtheology was influenced by many earlier religious writings (i.e., John XXIII, Vatican II, Paul VI,etc.) and firmly places the core of human rights issues at macro- and micro-levels of involvement. That the concepts of human rights and dignity, which for centuries has served as the basis for social teachings of the Catholic Church, also became the foundation for the Universal Declaration on Human Rights (1948) adopted by the United Nations is a celebratory factor in the evangelization of the human culture. Viewed as a universal inalienable tenet of all human life, the defense of human dignity has become the focus of many international treaties and covenants, especially with regard to sustainable human development in the global South, or Third World countries. Accepted unanimously by almost every nation on earth, the Universal Declaration refers to human rights as "equal and inalienable" and to human beings as having "inherent dignity, (1948)" principles that reflect the Catholic Church's contribution to international human rights.

The acknowledgment of human dignity is the cornerstone of the Universal Declaration

In John Paul II's 1998 World Day of Peace message, he declared the adoption of the Declaration "one of the highest expressions of the human conscience in our time."National and international attempts to foster long-lasting, positive change such as economic opportunity, equity, democracy, peace, and spiritual and emotional well being (Shuman & Harvey, 1993) are dependent upon adherence to recognized human rights standards (At the Crossroads, 1995). Similarly, the call to action that accompanies membership in a Faith community

stems from key themes of Catholic social teaching that are interdependent upon an understanding of human rights and human dignity.

Key Themes Recognizing the themes of life and dignity of the human person and human rights and responsibilities is central to the development of the dignity of work and the rights of workers.

Other key themes presented via Catholic social teaching that are interdependent upon thepromotion of human dignity and protection of human rights include the option for the poor; call to family, community, and participation; solidarity; and care for God's creations.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person The principle that all people are sacred, grounded in the idea that humans are made inthe image of God, is the key theme around which all human culture revolves. Without life, all other principles and thoughts are preempted. A solid belief in the sanctity of human life and inherent dignity of each person has always been the foundation of Catholic social teachings. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

Factors such as abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, and genetic engineering carrya tremendous disregard for the importance of human dignity. Life and human dignity is solelythe result of human existence. It is not earned by personal achievement or conferred by anyentity of human design. It is not dependent on ethnicity, religious preference, socioeconomicstatus, political power, personal abilities, or gender. It is the inalienable birthright of every livingperson.Human Rights and ResponsibilitiesThis principle stresses that people have a fundamental right to life as well as that whichis necessary for a health quality of life, such as healthcare, shelter, food, clothing, employment,etc. A belief in the common good and respect for others is reciprocal to human rights.

In a world where some speak mostly of 'rights' and others mostly of 'responsibilities,' the Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.

In the global South, for example, many people are still unable to obtain safe drinkingwater, adequate nutrition, proper sanitation, and

access to health care and elementaryeducation (Sivard, 1993). In the global North, many people still feel the effects of poverty,racism, discrimination, and disease. The denial of fundamental human rights is a denial ofhuman dignity. A thorough description of human rights involving personal, social, and instrumental rights was produced via the International Bill of Rights (1997) as wellas in John XXIII's.

Pacem in Terris (1967).Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers This principle emphasizes that people in the labor force have a right to humane working conditions and fair wages. Workers have the protected right to organize into associations toadvance their career interests, to have access to training and education, and the ability to be self supporting.

Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then 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.

From child labor and foreign sweat-shops abroad to low wages, lack of insurancecoverage, and sexual harassment in the U.S., people in the workforce continually face a streamof unjust and inequitable situations built on disrespect for human dignity and denial offundamental human rights. According to John Paul II's.

Laborum Exercens (1981), work servesan individual's dignity as a "fundamental dimension of human existence" necessary for authentichuman development, securing goods for family survival, and for contributing to the common-good.

Interestingly, Catholic social teaching also differentiates between authentic humandevelopment and economic development. Paul VI in Populorum Progresio (1967) spoke of" avarice as the most prevalent form of moral underdevelopment" by which people could actuallystunt growth and development. Advancement in authentic human development is social,cultural, political, and economic and entails service to others for the common good. Similarly in Solicitudo Rei Socialis , John Paul II cited the miseries of economic underdevelopment andpoverty that accompany economic superdevelopment and consumerism. Advancement in thematerial wealth of individuals, companies, or countries reflects economic development, but

notnecessarily full human development.ConclusionCatholic social teaching is an essential element of Faith. Based on a personal understanding of human rights and human dignity, it is inseparable from all else that occurs inthe lives of believers (and non-believers) around the world. The pursuit of human rights and thefight for justice has become part and parcel of the Catholic identity in mainstream America and around the globe. Whether becoming a watchdog for human rights violations, working in educational programs, or fostering human rights consciousness, the pursuit of human rights isan integral concern on both the macro- and micro-level. As stated in the U.S. Bishops' 1993pastoral letter, protecting human rights and defending human dignity is "an indispensablecondition for a just and peaceful world order."The need to educate all Catholics on the Church's social teaching and to share the social demands of the Gospel and Catholic traditions has been repeatedly established andpassed down through many papal encyclicals and pastoral documents over time, albeit in avariety of different vocabulary, educational methods, and delivery formats. The 1998 U.S. Bishops' letter lamented that many Catholics were not familiar with the basic content of Catholic social teaching. In this document the bishops called upon ministers, religious instructors, and catechists to introduce the principles of social teaching at every level of Catholic education programs and other religious formation programs.This author shares the bishops' hopes that the social dimensions of Faith can and will come alive in caring service, creative education, and principled action throughout the Catholic community. The personal understanding and adoption of principles of Catholic social tradition istruly a milestone in both the religious education and identity formation of members in a Faith community. However, Catholic social teaching is also the perfect tool with which all people worldwide can reinvent a society and culture rooted in human rights via the sharing of the Catholic tradition and its commitment to social justice at the heart of individual and universal existence. It is this author's belief that by emphasizing the individual parishioner as educator and the global family as community, the percentage of Catholic persons unfamiliar with social teachings will decrease in direct proportion to the percentage of the global population that becomes more actively involved in human rights advocacy.

Chapter 10

Protection Private Property Rights

Catholic social teaching from Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum (1891) through John Paul II's Centesimus Annus (1991) has defended the right to private property against the claim that the state should own all things. Even much earlier, St. Thomas Aquinas-whose writings are of central importance in understanding the foundations of Catholic social teaching-gave three reasons why private property is essential to human flourishing:

First because every man is more careful to procure what is for himself alone than that which is common to many or to all: since each one would shirk the labor and leave to another that which concerns the community, as happens where there is a great number of servants. Secondly, because human affairs are conducted in more orderly fashion if each man is charged with taking care of some particular thing himself, whereas there would be confusion if everyone had to look after any one thing indeterminately. Thirdly, because a more peaceful state is ensured to man if each one is contented with his own.

Hence it is to be observed that quarrels arise more frequently where there is no division of the things possessed. (Summa Theologiae II. II.66.2)

In addition to these reasons, private property also helps to secure human freedom. A person's ability to act freely is greatly hindered if he is not allowed to own anything. Indeed, without possessions of any kind, a person can be reduced to a kind of slavery in which labor is not rewarded and speaking against the exercise of state authority is taken at enormous risk.

The right to private property, however, is not unconditional. May a person take what is legally the property of another in order to secure survival? This question was posed in dramatic fashion in Les Miserables. Does Jean Valjean, who steals bread to feed his starving family, deserve to be punished? St. Thomas's answer is no. In cases when there is no other way to secure the basic necessities for human survival, taking them from those who have in abundance is not wrongful because these basic necessities are rightfully theirs as human beings.

Opponents of private property

The present order of society is largely based on the private property of individuals, families, and communities. Now there are many communists and socialists who condemn this kind of ownership as unjust and injurious, and who aim at abolishing either all private property or at least the private ownership of productive goods, which they wish to replace by a community of goods. Their intention may be good, but it proceeds from a total misunderstanding of human nature as it is, and, if carried out, would result in disastrous failure. The so-called agrarian, socialists, among whom must be numbered the single-taxists, do not propose to abolish private ownership of all productive goods, but maintain only that the land with the natural bounties which it holds out tomankind essentially belongs to the whole nation. As a logical conclusion they propose that ground rent be confiscated for the community. This theory, too, starts from false premises and arrives at conclusions which are impracticable.

Insufficient justification of private property

Outside the communistic and socialistic circles all concede that private property is justified; but in regard to its foundation opinions differ widely. Some derive the justice of private property from personality (personality theory). They look upon private property as a necessary supplement and expansion of personality. Thus H. Ahrens ("Naturrecht", 6th ed., 1871, § 68) thinks that the "individuality of every human mind, in choosing and attaining its ends, requires property, i.e. the free contract and disposal of holdings, whereby the entire personality is brought intoaction. Similar views are held by Bluntschli, Stahle, and others. This theory admits of a correct explanation, but is in itself too indefinite and vague. If it is understood to mean only that, as a rule, private property is necessary for the free development of the human personality and for the accomplishment of its tasks, then it is correct, as will appear in the course of our discussion. But if these theorists remain within the pure notion of personality, then they cannot derive from it the necessity of private property, at least of productive goods or land. At most they might prove that everybody is entitled to the necessary means of subsistence. But this is possible without private property strictly so called. Those who are either voluntarily or involuntarily poor and live at the expense of others possess no property and yet do not cease to be persons. Though the children of a family are without property during the lifetime of theirparents, still they are true persons. Others derive private property from a primitive contract, express or tacit (contract theory), as Grotius (De jure belli et pacis, II, c. 2, § 2), Pufendorf, and others. This theory is founded on the supposition, which has never been and never can be proved, that such a contract ever has or must have taken place. And even supposing the contract was actually made, what obliges us today to abide by it? To this question the theory is unable to give a satisfactory answer.

Others again derive the justice of private property from the laws of the State (legal theory). The first to advance this hypothesis was Hobbes (Leviathan, c. 2). He considers the laws of the State as the fountain-head of all the rightswhich the subjects have, and consequently also as the source of private ownership. The same view is taken byMontesquieu, Trendelenburg, Wagner, and others, as far as ownership is concerned. Kant (Rechtslehre, p. 1, §§ 8, 9) grants

indeed a provisory proprietorship in the condition of nature prior to the formation of the State; but definite and peremptory ownership arises only through the civil laws and under the protection of the coercive power of Government. Most of the partisans of this theory, like Hobbes, proceed from the wrong supposition that there is nonatural right properly so called, but that every genuine right is a concession of the civil power. Besides, their appreciation of actual facts is superficial. It is true that the laws everywhere protect private property. But why? A fact, like private property, which we meet in one form or another with all nations, ancient or modern, cannot have its last and true reason in the civil laws which vary with time and clime. A universal, constant effect supposes auniversal, constant cause, and the civil laws cannot be this cause. If they were the only basis of private property, then we might abolish it by a new law and introduce communism. But this is impossible. Just as the individual and the family existed prior to the State, so the rights necessary for both, to which belongs the right of property, existedprior to the State. It is the duty of the State to bring these rights into harmony with the interests of the community at large and to watch over them, but it does not create them.

John Locke saw the real foundation of private property in the right which every man has to the products of his labour (labour theory). This theory was loudly applauded by the political economists, especially by Adam Smith, Ricardo, Say, and others. But it is untenable. There is no doubt that labour is a powerful factor in the acquisition of property, but the right to the products of one's labour cannot be the ultimate source and basis of the right of property. The labourer can call the product of his work his own only when the material on which he works is his property, and then the question arises how he came to be the owner of the material. Suppose, for instance, that a number of workmen have been engaged to cultivate a vineyard; after the work is done, they may indeed claim their wages, but the products of their labour, the grapes and the wine, do not belong to them, but to the owner of the vineyard. Then the further question may be asked: How did the owner of the vineyard acquire his property? The final answer cannot be the right to the product of his labour. There were some who asserted that the Roman law derived private property solely from the right of first occupation (*jus primi occupantis*), as for instance Wagner (Grundlegung 1, c. § 102). But they confound two things.

Though the Roman jurists regarded occupation the original title of acquisition, they supposed as self-evident the right of private property and the right to acquire it.

The doctrine of the Catholic Church

The Catholic Church has always regarded private property as justified, even though there may have existed personal abuses. Far from abolishing the commandments of the Old Law (Thou shalt not steal; thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's house, nor anything that is his) Christ inculcated them anew (Matthew 19:18-19; Mark 10:19; Romans 13:9). And though the Catholic Church, following in the footsteps of her Founder, has always recommended voluntary poverty as an evangelical counsel, yet she has at the same time asserted the justice and, as a rule, the necessity of private property and rejected the contrary theories of the Circumcellions, Waldenses, Anabaptists etc. Moreover,theologians and canonists have at all times taught that private ownership is just. Leo XIII, especially in severalencyclicals, strongly insisted on the necessity and justice of private ownership. Thus the encyclical "Rerum novarum" expressly condemns as unjust and pernicious the design of the socialists to abolish private property. The right of acquiring private property has been granted by nature, and consequently he who would seek a solution of the socialquestion must start with the principle that private property is to be preserved inviolate (*privatas possessionesinviolate servandas*). And Pius X, in his Motu Proprio of 18 Dec., 1903, laid down the following two principles for the guidance of all Catholics:

* "Unlike the beast, man has on earth not only the right of use, but a permanent right of ownership; and this is true not only of those things which are consumed in their use, but also of those which are not consumed by their use";

* "Private property is under all circumstances, be it the fruit of labour or acquired by conveyance or donation, anatural right, and everybody may make such reasonable disposal of it as he thinks fit."

Economic theory based on the natural law

The doctrine of the Church as here explained points out the right way to a philosophical justification of privateproperty. It is derived from

the natural law, since the present order in general demands it for the individual as well as for the family and the community at large; hence it is a postulate of reason and everybody receives by nature theright to acquire private property. This justification of private property, which is outlined by Aristotle (Polit., 2, c. 2), may be called the "economical theory based on the natural law". The necessity of private ownership arises partly from the external conditions of life under which the human race actually exists, partly and especially from humannature as we know it by experience, with all its needs and faculties, inclinations both good and bad, which the average man reveals at all times and in all places. This theory does not assert that there should be nothing else than private property, much less that there should be private property of individuals only. Families, privatecorporations, communities, and states, as well as the Church, may own property. Its distribution is not something settled by nature uniformly and immutably for all times and circumstances, but full play is given to human liberty. Generally speaking, what is necessary is that private property should also exist. The boundaries between private and public property may vary from age to age; but, as a rule, private ownership becomes the more necessary and the more prevalent the farther the civilization of a people progresses.

In order to gain a clear insight into the basis of property, we must carefully distinguish three things:

(1) The institution of private property, i.e. the actual existence of private property with all its essential rights. In general, it is necessary that private property should exist, at least to a certain extent, or, in other words, thenatural law demands the existence of private property. From the necessity of private property follows immediately;

(2) every man's right to acquire property. The institution of private property supposes this right; for the former cannot rightly exist unless everybody has the right to acquire private property. Nature, or rather the Author ofnature, requires the institution of private property; hence He must also will the means necessary for it, namely, the right of everyone to acquire private property. This right refers to no object in particular; it is merely the general capacity of acquiring property by licit means, just as one may say that owing to the freedom of trade everybody has the right to engage in

any legitimate business. The right to acquire property belongs to every man from the first moment of his existence; even the child of the poorest beggar has this right.

(3) From the right of acquisition arises the right of owning a certain concrete object through the medium of some fact.

Nobody, basing his claim on his existence alone, can say: this field or this house is mine. God did not distribute immediately the goods of this earth among men. He left this distribution to man's activity and to historicaldevelopment. But since private property and consequently the acquisition of a definite object by a definite person isnecessary, there must also be some facts on which such acquisition may be based. Among these facts the first intime and by nature is simple occupation. Originally the goods of this earth were without a definite owner, i.e. there was nobody who could call them his exclusive property. But since they had been given to man and since everybody had the right of acquiring property, the first men could take as much of these goods by simple occupation as seemed useful to them. Later generations, too, could make their own such goods as were still without a master. As timewent on and the earth was populated, its goods passed more and more into the hands of individuals, families, or whole tribes. Now in order to acquire or occupy something, the mere will to possess it as private property is not sufficient; the object must, by some exterior fact, be brought under our control and must be permanently marked as our own. These marks may be of various kinds and depend on custom, agreement etc.

Philosophical explanation

We shall prove first of all that, generally speaking, the institution of private property is necessary for human societyand that it is consequently a postulate of the natural law; this established, it follows at once that the right of acquiring property is a natural right. The first reason for the necessity of private property is the moral impossibility of any other disposition of property. If all goods remained without a master and were common to all, so that anybody might dispose of them as he saw fit, then peace and order would be impossible and there would be no sufficient incentive to work. Who indeed would care to cultivate a field or build a house, if everybody else were allowed to harvest the crop or occupy the building? Consequently, the right of ownership must rest either wholly with communities, as the

communists and socialists maintain, or with private persons. It is impossible to reduce thedoctrines of communism and socialism to practice. All attempts hitherto made have ended in failure. Of longest duration were the experiments of some sects which were founded on a religious basis. But it is manifest that communities based on religious fanaticism cannot become the general rule. History, too, testifies to the necessity of private property. An institution which meets us everywhere and at all times with only a few negligible exceptions, which develops more and more among the nations as their civilization advances, which has always been recognized and protected as just cannot be an arbitrary invention, but must be the necessary outcome of the tendencies and needs of human nature. For a universal and permanent phenomenon supposes a universal and permanent cause, and this cause in the present question can only be human nature with its wants and inclinations, which remainessentially the same. Besides, only private property is a sufficient stimulus for man to work. The earth does not furnish the products and fruits which man needs for the sustenance and development of soul and body, except at the expense of hard, continued labour. Now men will not undertake this labour unless they have a guarantee that they can freely dispose of its fruits for their own benefit and can exclude all others from their enjoyment. This argument, however, does not bind us to the labour theory refuted above. This theory maintains that each one can call hisproperty all that and only that which is the product of his labour. This is wrong. The correct theory on the other hand says, if man had not the right to acquire private property, the necessary stimulus to work would be wanting; and the fruit of labour in this theory signifies private property in the widest sense, for instance, wages.

Private ownership alone is able to harmonize order and freedom in the social life. If no one could exclude others from using his property, order would be impossible. Nobody could lay down in advance a plan of his life and activity, or procure in advance the means and the material for his livelihood. If on the other hand productive goods were theproperty of the community and subject to its administration, liberty would be impossible. Man is not really free unless he can, at least to a certain degree, dispose of external goods at will, not only of goods of consumption but also of productive goods. The largest portion of human activity, directly or indirectly, aims at procuring external,

useful goods; without private property, all would lapse into abject dependence on the community, which would beobliged to assign to each man his office and his share of the work. But with private property, both freedom and order can exist as far as the imperfection of all human conditions allows it. This is proved by history and by daily experience. Thus also the peace of society is best guaranteed. True it is that in spite of private property many disputes arise about "mine and thine." But these are settled by the law courts and do not disturb the essential order of society. In any other disposition of property among free men, the disputes would be far more numerous andviolent, and this would necessarily lead to quarrels and feuds. Just as for the individual, so private property isnecessary for the family. The family cannot exist as an independent organism unless it can freely manage its internal affairs, and unless the parents have to provide for the maintenance and education of their children, and this without any external interference. All this demands property, the exclusive use of a dwelling, food, clothes, and other things, which frequently must be procured in advance so that a well-regulated and secure family life may be made possible. Like the individual, the family, when deprived of all property, easily falls into a vagabond life or becomes wholly dependent on the will of others. The duty to care for the preservation and education of the family urges the father and mother to work unceasingly, while the consciousness that they are responsible for their children before God andmen is a powerful stay and support of their moral lives. On the other hand, the consciousness of the children that they are wholly dependent on their parents for their maintenance and start in life is a very important element in theireducation. The socialists are quite logical in seeking to transfer not only the possession of productive goods, but also the care of the education of children to the community at large. But it is obvious that such a scheme would end in the total destruction of the family, and hence that socialism is an enemy of all genuine civilization.

Private property is also indispensable for human society in general. Progress in civilization is possible only when many co-operate in large and far-reaching enterprises; but this co-operation is out of the question unless there are many who possess more than is required for their ample maintenance and at the same time have an interest indevoting the surplus to such enterprises. Private interest and public welfare here

meet each other half way. Privateowners, if they consult their own interest, will use their property for public enterprises because these alone are permanently paying investments. The advances and discoveries of the last century would not have been accomplished, at least the greater part of them, without private property. If we but recall the extensive net-work of railroads, steamship lines, telegraphs, and telephones, which is spread around the world, the gigantic tunnels and canals, the progress made in electricity, aerial navigation, aviation, automobiles etc., we must confess that privateproperty is a powerful and necessary factor in civilization. Not only economic conditions, but also the higher fields of culture are bettered by the existence of wealthy proprietors. Though they themselves do not become artists and scholars, still they are indirectly the occasion for the progress of the arts and sciences. Only the rich can order works of art on a large scale, only they have the means that frequently are necessary for the education of artists and scholars. On the other hand, poverty and want are the reason why many become eminent artists and scholars. Their advance in life and their social position depend on their education. How many brilliant geniuses would have been crippled at their birth if fortune had granted them every comfort. Lastly, we must not overlook the moral importance of private property. It urges man to labour, to save, to be orderly, and affords both rich and poor frequent opportunity for the exercise of virtue.

Though private property is a necessity, still the use of earthly goods should in a manner be general, as Aristotleintimated (Polit., 1. 2, c. 5) and as Christian philosophy has proved in detail (St. Thomas, "Summa" II-II, Q. lxvi, a. 2; Leo XIII's encyclical, "De conditione opificum"). This end is obtained when the rich not only observe the laws ofjustice, by not taking unjust advantage, but also, out of charity and liberality, share their abundance with the needy. Earthly goods are meant to be, in a certain manner, useful to all men, since they have been created for all men, and consequently the rich are strictly obliged to share their superfluities with the poor. True Christian charity will even go beyond this strict obligation. A wide and fertile field is thus opened up to its activity, through the existence ofpoverty. For the poor themselves, poverty is a hard, but beneficial, school of trust in God, humility, renunciation. It is of course self-evident that poverty should not degenerate into wretchedness, which is no

less an abundant source of moral dangers than is excessive wealth. It is the function of a wise Government so to direct the laws and administration that a moderate well-being may be shared by as many as possible. The civil power cannot reach this end by taking away from the rich in order to give to the poor, for "this would be at bottom a denial of privateproperty"; but by regulating the titles of income in strict accordance with the demands of public welfare.

Thus far we have spoken of the necessity of private property and the right to acquire it. It remains only to discuss the title of acquisition by which one becomes the proprietor of a certain concrete thing: a piece of land, a house, a tool etc. As explained above, the primitive title is occupation. The first who took possession of a piece of land became its proprietor. After a whole country has thus been turned into property, occupation loses its significance as conferring a title to real estate. But for movable goods it still remains important. It is sufficient to recall fishing andhunting on unclaimed ground, searching and digging for gold or diamonds in regions which have not yet passed over into private ownership. Many regard labour as the primitive title of acquisition, that is, labour which is different from mere occupation. But in this they are wrong. If one works at an object, then the product belongs to him only when he is proprietor of the object, the material; if not, then the product belongs to another, though the workman has theright to demand his reward in money or other goods. Now the question again recurs: How did this other man obtainpossession of these goods? Finally we shall arrive at a primitive title different from labour, and this is occupation. Besides occupation there are other titles of acquisition, which are called subordinate or derived titles, as, for instance, accession, fructification, conveyance by various kinds of contracts, prescription, and especially the right of inheritance. By occupation an ownerless thing passes into the possession of a person, by accession it is extended, by the other derivative titles it passes from one possessor to another. Though all the titles mentioned, with the exception of prescription, are valid by the law of nature, and hence cannot be abolished by human laws still they are not precisely and universally applied by natural law. To define them in individual cases in accordance with the demands of the public weal and with due regard to all concrete circumstances is the task of legislation.

Chapter 11

Catholic Social Teaching on Capitalism and Communism

The social doctrine of the Church stands above existing economic systems, since it confines itself to the level of principles. An economic system is good only to the extent that it applies the principles of justice taught by the Church.

Capitalism must be corrected

As Pope John Paul II wrote in 1987, in his encyclical letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis:" The tension between East and West is an opposition... between two concepts of the development of individuals and peoples, both concepts being imperfect and in need of radical correction... This is one of the reasons why the Church's social doctrine adopts a critical attitude towards both liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism." We may understand why the Church condemns Communism or Marxist collectivism which, as Pope Pius XI wrote, is "intrinsically evil" and anti-Christian, with its avowed goal being the complete destruction of private property, family and religion. But why would the Church condemn capitalism?

In his encyclical letter Centesimus Annus (n. 34), John Paul II recognizes the merits of free enterprise, private initiative and profit: "It would appear that, on the level of individual nations and of international relations, the free market is the most efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs. But this is true only for those needs which are 'solvent', insofar as they are endowed with purchasing power, and for those resources which are 'marketable', insofar as they are capable of obtaining a satisfactory price. But there are many human needs which find no place on the market. It is a strict duty of justice and truth not to allow fundamental human needs to remain unsatisfied and not to allow those burdened by such needs to perish." A little further in the same encyclical (n. 42), the Pope explains what is acceptable and what is not, in capitalism:

Returning now to the initial question: can it perhaps be said that, after the failure of Communism, capitalism is the victorious social system and that capitalism should be the goal of the countries now making efforts to rebuild their economy and society? Is this the model which ought to be proposed to the countries of the Third World which are searching for the path to true economic and civil progress?

"The answer is obviously complex. If by 'capitalism' is meant an economic system which recognizes the fundamental and positive role of business, the market, private property and the resulting responsibility for the means of production, as well as free human creativity in the economic sector, then the answer is certainly in the affirmative, even though it would perhaps be more appropriate to speak of a "business economy", "market economy" or simply "free economy". But if by "capitalism" is meant a system in which freedom in the economic sector is not circumscribed within a strong juridical framework which places it at the service of human freedom in its totality, and which sees it as a particular aspect of that freedom, the core of which is ethical and religious, then the reply is certainly negative."

Even if Marxism has collapsed, this does not mean the triumph of capitalism. Even after the fall of Communism there are still millions of poor people and situations of injustice in the world:

"The Marxist solution has failed, but the realities of marginalization and exploitation remain in the world, especially the Third World, as does the reality of human alienation, especially in the more advanced

countries. Against these phenomena the Church strongly raises her voice. Vast multitudes are still living in conditions of great material and moral poverty. The collapse of the Communist system in so many countries certainly removes an obstacle to facing these problems in an appropriate and realistic way, but it is not enough to bring about their solution. Indeed, there is a risk that a radical capitalistic ideology could spread which refuses even to consider these problems, in the a priori belief that any attempt to solve them is doomed to failure and which blindly entrusts their solution to the free development of market forces." (Centesimus Annus, 42.)

The fault that the Church finds with present capitalism is thus neither private property nor free enterprise. Far from wishing the disappearance of private property, the Church rather wishes its widespread availability so that all may become real owners of capital and be real "capitalists":

"The dignity of the human person necessarily requires the right of using external goods in order to live according to the right norm of nature. And to this right corresponds a most serious obligation, which requires that, so far as possible, there be given to all an opportunity of possessing private property... Therefore, it is necessary to modify economic and social life so that the way is made easier for widespread private possession of such things as durable goods, homes, gardens, tools requisite for artisan enterprises and family-type farms, investments in enterprises of medium or large size." (Pope John XXIII, encyclical letterMater et Magistra, May 15, 1961, nn. 114-115.)

Social Credit, with its dividend to every individual, would acknowledge every human being as a capitalist, a co-heir of the natural resources and progress, some of which are human inventions and technology.

Capitalism has been vitiated by the financial system

The fault that the Church finds with the capitalist system is the fact that each and every human being living on the planet does not have access to a minimum of material goods. So they are not allowed to have a decent life and even in the most advanced countries there are thousands of people who do not eat their fill. It is the principle of the destination of human goods that is not fulfilled: there is plenty of production, it is the distribution that is defective.

And in the present system the instrument that makes possible the distribution of goods and services, the symbol that allows people to get products, is money. It is therefore the money system, the financial system that is at fault in capitalism.

Pope Pius XI wrote in Quadragesimo Anno in 1931: "Capitalism itself is not to be condemned. And surely it is not vicious of its very nature, but it has been vitiated."

What the Church condemns is not capitalism as a producing system, but, according to the words of Pope Paul VI, "the calamitous system that accompanies it," which is the financial system:

"This unchecked liberalism led to dictatorship rightly denounced by Pope Pius XI as producing 'the international imperialism of money'. One cannot condemn such abuses too strongly, because - let us again recall solemnly - the economy should be at the service of man. But if it is true that a type of capitalism has been the source of excessive suffering, injustices and fratricidal conflicts whose effects still persist, it would be wrong to attribute to industrialization itself evils that belong to the calamitous system that accompanied it. On the contrary, one must recognize in all justice the irreplaceable contribution made by the organization and the growth of industry to the task of development." (Paul VI, encyclical letterPopulorum Progressio, on the development of peoples, March 26, 1967, n. 26.)

The defect of the system: "It is the financial system that does not accomplish its purpose; it has been diverted from its end that is to allow the goods to meet the needs. Money should be nothing but an instrument of distribution and a symbol that gives a claim, in other words, a simple accounting system.

Money should be a servant, but the bankers in appropriating the control over its creation, have made it an instrument of domination. Since people cannot live without money, everyone: this includes governments, corporations and individuals; must submit to the conditions imposed upon them by the bankers to obtain money. Money means having the right to live in today's society. This establishes a real dictatorship over economic life and so the bankers have become the masters of our lives. Pope Pius XI was quite right when he said in Quadragesimo Anno (n. 106):

"This power becomes particularly irresistible when exercised by those who, because they hold and control money, are able also to govern credit and determine its allotment, for that reason supplying, so to speak, the lifeblood to the entire economic body, and grasping, as it were, in their hands the very soul of production, so that no one dare breathe against their will."

There is no way any country can get out of debt in the present system, since all money is created as a debt: all the money that exists comes into circulation only when it is lent by the banks with interest. And when the loan is paid back to the bank, the money being withdrawn from circulation ceases to exist. In other words new money is created every time banks make a loan and this same money is destroyed every time loans are paid back.

The fundamental flaw in this system is that when banks create new money in the form of loans, they ask the borrowers to pay back more money than what was created. The banks create the principal, but not the interest. And since it is impossible to pay back money that does not exist, debts pile up or you must also borrow the amount to pay the interest. This does not solve your problem because you fall even deeper into debt.

This creation of money as debt by the international bankers is the means of imposing their will upon individuals and of controlling the world: "Among the actions and attitudes opposed to the will of God, the good of neighbour and the 'structures' created by them, two are very typical: on the one hand, the all-consuming desire for profit, and on the other, the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing one's will upon others." (John Paul II, encyclical letter Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, n. 37.)

Since money is an instrument that is basically social, the Social Credit doctrine proposes that money be issued by society and not by private bankers for their own profit. Pope Pius XI stated in Quadragesimo Anno: "There are certain categories of goods for which one can maintain with reason that they must be reserved to the community when they come to confer such an economic power that it cannot, without danger to the common good, be left to the care of private individuals.

Chapter 12

For a Civilization of Love

In modern society, people are increasingly experiencing a new need for meaning. "Man will always yearn to know, at least in an obscure way, what is the meaning of his life, of his activity, of his death" [1206]. It is difficult to meet the demands of building the future in a new context of an even more complex and interdependent international relations that are also less and less ordered and peaceful. Life and death seem to be solely in the hands of a scientific and technological progress that is moving faster than man's ability to establish its ultimate goals and evaluate its costs. Many phenomena indicate instead that "the increasing sense of dissatisfaction with worldly goods which is making itself felt among citizens of the wealthier nations is rapidly destroying the treasured illusion of an earthly paradise. People are also becoming more and more conscious of their rights as human beings, rights that are universal and inviolable, and they are aspiring to more just and more human relations" [1207].

To these basic questions about the meaning and purpose of human life the Church responds with the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, which liberates the dignity of the human person from changing opinions and ensures the freedom of men and women as no human law can do. The Second Vatican Council indicated that the mission of the Church in the contemporary world consists in helping every human being to discover in God the ultimate meaning of his existence. The Church knows well that "God alone, whom she serves, can satisfy the deepest cravings of the human heart, for the world and what it has to offer can never fully satisfy it" [1208]. Only God, who created man in his image and redeemed him from sin, can offer a fully adequate answer through the Revelation wrought in his Son made man. The Gospel, in fact, "announces and proclaims the freedom of the sons of God, it rejects all bondage resulting from sin; it scrupulously respects the dignity of conscience and its freedom of choice; it never ceases to encourage the employment of human talents in the service of God and of man, and finally, it commends everyone to the charitable love of all" [1209].

1. Starting afresh from faith in Christ

Faith in God and in Jesus Christ sheds light on the moral principles that are "the sole and irreplaceable foundation of that stability and tranquillity, of that internal and external order, private and public, that alone can generate and safeguard the prosperity of States" [1210]. Life in society must be based on the divine plan because "the theological dimension is needed both for interpreting and solving present-day problems in human society" [1211]. In the presence of serious forms of exploitation and social injustice, there is "an ever more widespread and acute sense of *the need for a radical* personal and social *renewal* capable of ensuring justice, solidarity, honesty and openness. Certainly, there is a long and difficult road ahead; bringing about such a renewal will require enormous effort, especially on account of the number and gravity of the causes giving rise to and aggravating the situations of injustice present in the world today. But, as history and personal experience show, it is not difficult to discover at the bottom of these situations causes which are properly 'cultural', linked to particular ways of looking at man, society and the

world. Indeed, at the heart of the *issue of culture* we find the *moral sense*, which is in turn rooted and fulfilled in the religious sense" [1212]. As for "the social question", we must not be seduced by "the naive expectation that, faced with the great challenges of our time, we shall find some magic formula. No, we shall not be saved by a formula but by a Person and the assurance that he gives us:*I am with you!* It is not therefore a matter of inventing a 'new programme'. The programme already exists: it is the plan found in the Gospel and in the living Tradition, it is the same as ever. Ultimately, it has its centre in Christ himself, who is to be known loved and imitated, so that in him we may live the life of the Trinity, and with him transform history until its fulfilment in the heavenly Jerusalem" [1213].

2. A solid hope

The Church teaches men and women that God offers them the real possibility of overcoming evil and attaining good. The Lord has redeemed mankind "bought with a price" (1 *Cor* 6:20). The meaning and basis of the Christian commitment in the world are founded on this certainty, which gives rise to hope despite the sin that deeply marks human history. The divine promise guarantees that the world does not remain closed in upon itself but is open to the Kingdom of God. The Church knows the effects of "the mystery of lawlessness" (2 *Thes* 2:7), but she also knows that "there exist in the human person sufficient qualities and energies, a fundamental 'goodness' (cf. *Gen* 1:31), because he is the image of the Creator, placed under the redemptive influence of Christ, who 'united himself in some fashion with every man', and because the efficacious action of the Holy Spirit 'fills the earth' (*Wis* 1:7)" [1214].

Christian hope lends great energy to commitment in the social field, because it generates confidence in the possibility of building a better world, even if there will never exist "a paradise of earth" [1215]. Christians, particularly the laity, are urged to act in such a way that "the power of the Gospel might shine forth in their daily social and family life. They conduct themselves as children of the promise and thus strong in faith and hope they make the most of the present (cf. *Eph* 5:16; *Col* 4:5), and with patience await the glory that is to come (cf. *Rom* 8:25). Let them not, then, hide this hope in the

depths of their hearts, but let them express it by a continual conversion and by wrestling 'against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness' (*Eph* 6:12)" [1216]. The religious motivation behind such a commitment may not be shared by all, but the moral convictions that arise from it represent a point of encounter between Christians and all people of good will.

3. Building the "civilization of love"

The immediate purpose of the Church's social doctrine is to propose the principles and values that can sustain a society worthy of the human person. Among these principles, solidarity includes all the others in a certain way. It represents "one of the fundamental principles of the Christian view of social and political organization" [1217].

Light is shed on this principle by the primacy of love, "the distinguishing mark of Christ's disciples (cf. *Jn* 13:35)" [1218]. Jesus teaches us that "the fundamental law of human perfection, and consequently of the transformation of the world, is the new commandment of love" (cf. *Mt* 22:40, *Jn* 15:12; *Col* 3:14; *Jas* 2:8) [1219]. Personal behaviour is fully human when it is born of love, manifests love and is ordered to love. This truth also applies in the social sphere; Christians must be deeply convinced witnesses of this, and they are to show by their lives how love is the only force (cf. *1 Cor* 12:31-14:1) that can lead to personal and social perfection, allowing society to make progress towards the good.

Love must be present in and permeate every social relationship [1220]. This holds true especially for those who are responsible for the good of peoples. They "must earnestly cherish in themselves, and try to rouse in others, charity, the mistress and the queen of virtues. For, the happy results we all long for must be chiefly brought about by the plenteous outpouring of charity; of that true Christian charity which is the fulfilling of the whole Gospel law, which is always ready to sacrifice itself for the sake of others, and is man's surest antidote against worldly pride and immoderate love of self" [1221]. This love may be called "social charity" [1222] or "political charity" [1223] and must embrace the entire human race [1224].

"Social love" [1225] is the antithesis of egoism and individualism. Without absolutizing social life, as happens with short-sighted perspectives limiting themselves to sociological interpretations, it must not be forgotten that the integral development of the person and social growth mutually influence each other. Selfishness, therefore, is the most insidious enemy of an ordered society. History shows how hearts are devastated when men and women are incapable of recognizing other values or other effective realities apart from material goods, the obsessive quest for which suffocates and blocks their ability to give of themselves.

In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, love in social life - political, economic and cultural - must be given renewed value, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity. "If justice is in itself suitable for 'arbitration' between people concerning the reciprocal distribution of objective goods in an equitable manner, love and only love (including that kindly love we call 'mercy') is capable of restoring man to himself" [1226]. Human relationships cannot be governed solely according to the measure of justice. "Christians know that love is the reason for God's entering into relationship with man. And it is love which he awaits as man's response. Consequently, love is also *the loftiest and most noble form of relationship possible* between human beings. Love must thus enliven every sector of human life and extend to the international order. Only a humanity in which there reigns the 'civilization of love' will be able to enjoy authentic and lasting peace" [1227]. In this regard, the Magisterium highly recommends solidarity because it is capable of guaranteeing the common good and fostering integral human development: love "makes one see in neighbour another self" [1228].

Only love can completely transform the human person [1229]. Such a transformation does not mean eliminating the earthly dimension in a disembodied spirituality [1230]. Those who think they can live the supernatural virtue of love without taking into account its corresponding natural foundations, which include duties of justice, deceive themselves. "Charity is the greatest social commandment. It respects others and their rights. It requires the practice of justice and it alone makes us capable of it. Charity inspires a life of self-giving:

'Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it' (*Lk* 17:33)" [1231]. Nor can love find its full expression solely in the earthly dimension of human relationships and social relations, because it is in relation to God that it finds its full effectiveness. "In the evening of this life, I shall appear before you with empty hands, for I do not ask you, Lord, to count my works. All our justice is blemished in your eyes. I wish, then, to be clothed in your own *justice* and to receive from your *love* the eternal possession of *yourself*" [1232].