



**SUMMARIES OF  
THE MAIN TEXTS**

**Social Doctrine of the  
Catholic Church**

**The Discovery Of This  
Treasure Of Wisdom  
Within Your Reach...**

# Table of Contents

## [Table of Contents](#)

[Rerum Novarum, Pope Leo XIII 1891 -The Condition of Labor -  
DIGNITY OF THE WORKER](#)

[Quadragesimo Anno, Pope Pius XI 1931 - The Reconstruction of the  
Social Order](#)

[Mater et Magistra, Pope John XXIII 1961 - Christianity and Social  
Progress](#)

[Pacem in Terris, Pope John XXIII 1963 - Peace on Earth](#)

[Gaudium et Spes, Second Vatican Council, 1965 - The Church in the  
Modern World](#)

[Populorum Progressio, Paul VI 1967](#)

[Octogesima Adveniens, Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI, 1971 - A  
Call to Action](#)

[Justicia in Mundo, Justice in the World Statement of the Synod of  
Bishops, 1971](#)

[Laborem Exercens, Pope John Paul II 1981 - On Human Work](#)

[Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, Pope John Paul II 1987 - The Social  
Concerns of the Church](#)

[Centesimus Annus, Pope John Paul II 1991 - One Hundred Years -  
DIGNITY OF THE WORKER](#)

[Outline and Reflections on Deus Caritas Est \(God is Love\) Pope  
Benedict XVI 2006](#)

[CARITAS in VERITATE Pope Benedict XVI 2009](#)

[LAUDATO SI 2015 Pope Francis 2015 - The safeguarding of the  
common house](#)

# **Rerum Novarum, Pope Leo XIII 1891 -The Condition of Labor -DIGNITY OF THE WORKER**

**Pope Leo XIII, May 15, 1891**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source: Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

In Rerum Novarum Pope Leo XIII examines the situation of the poor people and workers in industrialized countries. He states several important principles that should guide the response to these people. He then articulates the role of the Church, workers and employers, and the law and public authorities in working together to build a just society.

Employers are given the major role as agents for change.

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

The terrible exploitation and poverty of European and North American workers at the end of the nineteenth century prompted the writing of Rerum Novarum. The document was inspired by the work of the Fribourg Union, a Catholic Social Action movement in Germany, and by request from the hierarchy in England, Ireland, and the United States.

## DOCUMENT OUTLINE

### The Situation of the Poor and Workers

- Destitution of the masses and the wealth of a few (#1).
- Decline of public morality (#2).
- Workers exploited by greedy employers (#6).
- Public authorities not protecting the rights of the poor (#6).

### Guiding Principles

- All have been created by, strive toward, and have been redeemed by God; divine grace and the goods of nature belong equally to all (#'s 11, 12, 38).
- Natural inequalities in talents exist among people, but God has gifted all with equal dignity (#26).
- Ability to reason is part of human nature; humans rule themselves by reason (#'s 11-12).
- Common good is the end of civil society; all have the right to participate in society (#71).
- True dignity resides in moral living; people of virtue will have eternal happiness (#'s 37, 42). "Laws are to be obeyed only insofar as they conform with right reason and the eternal law of God" (#72).
- National wealth originates from the labor of workers (#51).
- All have the right to own private property (Leo criticized socialism as inherently unjust for violating this right); private property must serve the common good (#'s 2, 9, 10, 15, 23, 36, 55).
- People have the right to the fruits of their labor but should use them to benefit all (#14).
- Labor is necessary and there will be hardships in life (#62).
- Wealth is a hindrance to eternal life (#34).
- Just ownership is distinct from just use of property (#35).

### Role of the Church

- The Church has the right to speak out; social matters affect religion and

morality (#24).

- Through use of Gospel principles the Church can help reconcile and unify classes (#'s 25, 33, 41).
- The Church can educate people to act justly (#'s 40, 42).

## **DIGNITY OF THE WORKER**

Rights and Duties of Workers/Poor and Employers/Wealthy of Society (#'s 30-32)

· Workers/Poor

· Rights: private property, poor must be cared for, possess fruits of their labor, rights of families, freedom of action, right to work, just wage (enough to support a family), join workers associations (which uphold religious values) (#'s 5, 9, 48, 55, 62, 63, 69).

· Duties: to work well, not to harm property of employer, to refrain from violence and rioting, to be thrifty (#30).

· Employers/Wealthy

· Rights: private property, no crushing taxes, private societies (#'s 8, 9, 36, 72).

· Duties: not to treat workers as slaves, uphold dignity of workers, let workers attend to their religious and family obligations, not to impose more work than a person's strength can endure, pay a just wage, not to tamper with worker's savings, to give to the poor after needs have been met (#'s 31-32).

Role of Public Authority and Law in Society

· Defend and foster the rights of families (#21).

· Support the common good (#4).

· Safeguard well-being and rights of non-owning workers (#49).

· Intervene when necessary to prevent harm to individuals or the common good (#52).

· Give special consideration to the rights of the poor (#'s 51, 54).

· Uphold rights of private property and enable all to possess private property (#'s 55, 65).

- Uphold the rights of associations and the religious rights of people (#69).
- Safeguard well-being and rights of non-owning workers (#49).
- Intervene when necessary to prevent harm to individuals or the common good (#52).
- Give special consideration to the rights of the poor (#'s 51, 54).
- Uphold rights of private property and enable all to possess private property (#'s 55, 65).
- Uphold the rights of associations and the religious rights of people (#69).

## **Discussion Questions**

The working conditions that inspired this document reflected the images of Charles Dickens's British factories where workers toiled in horrible conditions. From your experience or knowledge, do similar conditions still exist? What principles of this encyclical still apply?

What is the condition of workers and their unions in your own country?

Are their basic rights upheld? What are conditions of workers in other parts of the world?

How does the concept of human dignity relate to the rights of workers and those in poverty?

What is the Church and your government doing to improve the situation of workers and the poor? How can you or your group contribute to efforts to change unjust structures?

# Quadragesimo Anno, Pope Pius XI 1931 - The Reconstruction of the Social Order

**Pope Pius XI, May 15, 1931**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

Pope Pius XI covers three major areas in his encyclical. First, he describes the impact of Leo XIII's *The Condition of Labor* on the Church, civil authorities, and other concerned parties. Secondly, Pius clarifies and develops the social and economic doctrine contained in *The Condition of Labor*. He articulates a positive role for the Church in economic and social affairs and affirms the social responsibility of ownership. He advocates a unity between capital and labor and urges the uplifting of the poor and a reform of the social order based on a reestablishment of vocational groups. Finally, Pius treats the abuses of capitalism and socialism and calls for the moral renovation of society coupled with action for justice based on love.

## **DOCUMENT OUTLINE**

**Part I: Impact of *The Condition of Labor***

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

The Reconstruction of the Social Order commemorates the fortieth anniversary of The Condition of Labor. Pius wrote and issued this encyclical during a time when major depression was shaking the economic and social foundations in society worldwide. He strongly criticized the abuses of both capitalism and communism and attempted to update Catholic social teaching to reflect changed conditions. He broadened the Church's concern for poor workers to encompass the structures which oppress them.

### On the Church

- Doctrine
- Encouraged adaptability to changing conditions (#18).
- Committed many priests and lay people to the Church's social teaching (#19).
- Inspired a truly Christian social science (#20).
- Taught in seminars and universities (#20).
- Has influence outside the Church (#21).
- Practical Application
- Effort to help lower classes (#23).
- Influenced education and culture (#23).
- Works of charity multiplied (#24).
- Inspired institutions for mutual support (#24).

### On Civil Authority

- Defined positive role: to protect law and order and to promote public well-being (#25).
- Government must have a special regard for the infirm and needy (#25).
- Leaders became more conscious of their obligations to promote social policy (#26).
- Laws and programs for the poor were begun (#28).

### On Other Concerned Parties



- Unions
- Confirmed their mission (#31).
- Clergy and laity helped create them (#33).
- Unions have flourished (#33).
- Leo XIII's counsels should be adapted to different situations (#34).
- Other
- Associations of employers did not meet with much success (#38).
- Leo drew his inspiration from the Gospel (#39).

## **Part Two: Social and Economic Doctrine**

### Role of the Church (#41)

- Church has a right and duty to deal with these issues.
- It is a "God given task."
- Church must pass judgment on social and economic questions as they affect moral issues.

### Property Rights

- Two-fold aspect of ownership: individual and social (concerns for the common good) (#45).
- Double danger: individualism and collectivism (#46).
- Right of property must be distinguished from its use (#47).
- To destroy the individual character of ownership is a grievous error (#48).
- Right of ownership is not absolute (#49).
- Function of government: to define in detail the duties of ownership (#49).
- Two uses of superfluous income:
  - charity (#50);
  - to create employment (#51).

## Capital and Labor

- Only by the labor of working people does the state grow rich (#53).
- Labor and capital need each other (#53).
- In history, capital claimed all the products and profits and left the barest minimum to labor (#54).
- Unjust claim of labor: all products and profit belong to working people (#55).
- Advocates a just distribution of wealth to serve the common good (#56).

## Uplifting the Proletariat

- Uplifting the proletariat is the main objective (#59).
- The situation of workers has improved in Western nations (#59).
- But the situation has deteriorated in other parts of the world (#60).
- Condition of rural laborers is extremely depressed (#60).
- Working people should be sufficiently supplied with fruits of productions (#61).
- A just wage should be paid so people can acquire moderate ownership (#63).
- The idea of a wage contract is not necessarily unjust (#64).
- Wage contract should be modified by a contract of partnerships (#65).
- Demand of social justice: wages should support families (#71).
- Women and children should not be abused in the work world (#71).
- Public authorities can help businesses pay a just wage (#73).
- Opportunities must be provided to those willing to work (#74).

## Reform of Social Order

- This is primarily the State's responsibility (#78).
- Principles of subsidiarity: activity that can be performed by a more decentralized entity should be (#s79-80).
- Primary duty of the State: to abolish conflict and promote harmony between classes (#81).

- Importance of vocational groups: common effort for the common good (#84).
- Proper ordering of economic affairs cannot be left to free enterprise alone (#88).
- Economic supremacy has replaced free competition (#88).
- Economic institutions must be imbued with a spirit of justice (#89).
- Calls for international economic cooperation (#89).
- Supports public intervention in labor-management disputes (#93).

### Part Three: Socialism

#### Changes in Capitalism

- Economic concentration has led to a struggle for domination (#105).
- Free competition has ended (#109).
- State has become a “slave” serving greed (#109).
- Economic imperialism thrives (#109).

#### Changes in Socialism

- Divided into two camps (#111).
- Communism supports violence and the abolition of private ownership (#112).
- Socialism condemns the resort to physical force and moderates the prohibition on private property (#113).

#### Remedies

- No possibility of a compromise between Christianity and Socialism (#116).
- Socialism perceives humans in a way alien to Christian truth (#118).
- Social reconstruction needs a return to Christian spirit and Gospel principles (#36).
- Love and charity must reinforce justice (#137).

### **Discussion Questions**

Why does the Church have a right and a duty to speak on social issues? Discuss

the weaknesses of capitalism and socialism in light of Catholic social teaching.

# **Mater et Magistra, Pope John XXIII 1961 - Christianity and Social Progress**

**Pope John XXIII, May 15, 1961**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

Pope John XXIII begins this encyclical by reviewing the major points of *The Condition of Labor* and *The Reconstruction of the Social Order*. He notes that new political, social, and economic developments have necessitated Christianity and Social Progress. He confirms previous papal teaching on the value of private initiative, just remuneration for work, and the social function of private property. John XXIII then treats the questions of agriculture and aid to developing countries. He urges a reconstruction of social relationships according to the principles of Catholic social teaching and states the responsibility of individual Christians to work for a more just world.

## **DOCUMENT OUTLINE**

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Pope John XXIII issued *Christianity and Social Progress* in response to the severe imbalances between the rich and the poor which exist in the world. The encyclical commemorates the seventieth anniversary of Leo XIII's *The Condition of Labor*. John XXIII "internationalizes" the Catholic social teaching

by treating, for the first time, the situation of countries which are not fully industrialized. He articulates an important role for the laity in applying the Church's social teachings in the world.

### **New Developments**

- Economic and Scientific (#47)
- Discovery of atomic energy.
- Synthetic products and automation.
- Conquest of outer space.
- New speed of transportation.
- Improvements in communications.
- Social (#48)
- Insurance and social security.
- Improvements in education.
- Increased social mobility.
- Pronounced imbalances between more developed and less developed areas.
- Political (#49)
- Increased participation.
- Less colonization.
- More public intervention.

### **Development of Social Teaching**

- Private Initiative
- First priority to private initiative (#51).
- Supports principle of "subsidiarity" (#53).
- Public authorities can intervene to reduce economic imbalances (#54).
- Balance between public and private initiative (#55).
- "Socialization": interdependent social relationships with positive and negative

consequences created by new developments (#s 59-67).

- Just Remuneration for Work
- Families need appropriate wage to live in dignity (#68).
- World imbalance: too much money spent on national prestige and armaments (#69).
- Economic development must correspond to social development (#73).
- Economic prosperity: the just and proper distribution of goods (#74).
- Workers should share in running of companies (management, profits, ownership) (#75).
- Requirements for common good for nations (#79):
  - create employment;
  - care for less privileged;
  - provide for the future.
- Justice and Productive Institutions
- Foster small and intermediary holdings (#84).
- Encourage family-type ownership (#85).
- Alleviate imbalances (#84).
- All should work for the common good (#96).
- Private Property
  - Confirms rights to private property (#109).
  - Encourages widespread ownership (#115).
  - State can own means of production (but affirms subsidiarity) (#117).
  - Social responsibility: a function of private property (#119).

### New Aspects of the Social Question

- Agriculture
  - Agriculture is a depressed sector; imbalances between it and industry exist (#123).

- Church calls for services for rural areas and orderly economic development (#127).
- Appropriate economic policy includes capital at suitable prices, price protection, social security, and strengthening farm income (#s 131-143).
- Principal agent for improvement should be rural workers, who have dignity from God (#144).
- Aid to Less Developed Areas
- Need for competent administration and economic policies (#150).
- Citizens in less developed areas are chiefly responsible for their own development and need to respect dignity and subsidiarity (#151)
- Justice between Nations Differing in Development
- Peace is more difficult as imbalances persist (#157).
- Duty of countries to help the poor and unfortunate (#157).
- Need to establish an effective program of emergency assistance (#161).
- Private enterprises and societies need to be more generous in cooperation (#165).
- Industrial countries need to respect the culture of developing countries; aid should be offered without the intent to dominate (#s 170, 172).
- Role of the Church
- Individual Christians must advance civil institutions and human dignity and foster a unity between peoples (#179).
- Many Catholics are already involved in these efforts (#182).
- Population Increase and Development
- Humankind has an inexhaustible productive capacity (#189).
- Humans should not resort to means of population control beneath human dignity (#199).
- International Cooperation
- Relationships are interdependent; cooperation and mutual assistance are needed (#200).
- Cause of distrust is failure to agree on laws of justice; armaments are a



symptom of this distrust (#203).

## Reconstruction of Social Relationships

- Incomplete Philosophies of Life
- Many philosophies do not encompass the entire human person or respect human dignity (#s 213-214).
- It is folly to establish a temporal order without God as a foundation (#217).
- Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
- Individuals are the foundation, cause, and end of all social institutions (#219).
- CST cannot be separated from Church teachings on life and should be taught at all levels and in the media (#s 222-223).
- Catholics should be reared on CST and conform their social and economic behavior to CST principles (#228).
- Applying CST in the world is difficult (#229).
- How to apply CST (task for laity) (#s 236-241):
  - examine situation (observe);
  - evaluate it with respect to CST (judge);
  - decide how to act (act).
- Conclusion
- Industrial life can deform values and depart from human dignity (#242).
- Church needs to renew its dedication in seeking to establish the Kingdom in temporal affairs (#254).

## Discussion Questions

This document notes the new developments between 1931 and 1961.

What, in your view, are the significant developments that have occurred in the world since then? Name ways in

which these new developments affect your life and the life of our community.

How do you define your role as a Christian in the world?

# **Pacem in Terris, Pope John XXIII 1963 - Peace on Earth**

**Pope John XXIII, April 11, 1963**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

In Peace on Earth, Pope John XXIII contends that peace can be established only if the social order set down by God is fully observed.

Relying extensively on reason and the natural law tradition, John XXIII sketches a list of rights and duties to be followed by individuals, public authorities, national governments, and the world community. Peace needs to be based on an order “founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom.”

## **DOCUMENT OUTLINE**

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Written during the first year of Vatican II, Peace on Earth was the first encyclical addressed to “all people of good will.” Issued shortly after the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and the erection of the Berlin Wall, this document spoke to a world aware of the dangers of nuclear war. Its optimistic tone and development of a philosophy of rights made a significant impression on Catholics and non-Catholics alike.

## Order Between people

Every human is a person, endowed with intelligence and free will, who has universal and inviolable rights and duties (#9).

## Rights

- Rights to life and worthy standard of living, including rights to proper development of life and to basic security (#11).
- Rights of cultural and moral values, including freedom to search for and express opinions, freedom of information, and right to education (#s 12-13).
- Rights to religion and conscience (#14).
- Rights to choose one's state in life, including rights to establish a family and pursue a religious vocation (#s 15-16).
- Economic rights, including right to work, to a just and sufficient wage, and to hold private property (#s 18-22).
- Rights of meeting and association (#23).
- Right to emigrate and immigrate (#25).
- Political rights, including right to participate in public affairs and juridical protection of rights (#s 26-27).

## Duties

- To acknowledge and respect rights of others (#30).
- To collaborate mutually (#31).
- To act for others responsibly (#39).
- To preserve life and live it becomingly (#42).

## Signs of the Times

- Working classes have gradually gained ground in economic and social affairs (#40).
- Women are participating in public life (#41).
- All nations are becoming independent (#42).

## II. Relations between Individuals and Public Authorities in a Single State Nature of Authority

- Authority is necessary for the proper functioning of society (#46).
- It derives its force from the moral order which has God for its end (#47).
- A state which uses, as its chief means, punishments and rewards cannot effectively promote the common good (#48).
- A state cannot oblige in matters of conscience (#49).
- A command contrary to God's will is not binding (#51).

### Characteristics of Common Good

- Human person must be considered (#55).
- All members of the state share in common good (#56).
- More attention must be given to the less fortunate members of society (#56).
- State must promote material and spiritual welfare of citizens (#57).

### Civil Authority

- Chief concern should be to ensure the common good (#59).
- Coordinates social relations in a way that allows people to exercise their rights and duties peacefully (#60).
- A three-fold division of powers—legislative, executive, and judicial—  
is recommended for public authorities (#68).
- Often a prudent and thoughtful juridical system seems inadequate for society's needs (#71).
- Three requisites for good government:
  - charter of human rights (#75);
  - written constitution (#76);
  - relations between governed and government in terms of rights and duties (#77).

## III. Relations Between States

### In Truth

- Elimination of racism (#86).
- Right to self-development (#86).
- Obligation of mutual assistance (#87).
- Objective use of media (#90).

#### In Justice

- Recognition of mutual rights and duties (#91).
- Improvement of the situation of ethnic minorities (#96).

#### Active Solidarity

- Promote by civil authority the common good of the entire human family (#98).
- Fostering of friendly relations in all fields (#100).
- Reduction in imbalances of goods and capital in the world (#101).
- Right of political refugees to migrate (#106).
- Arms race:
  - deprives less developed countries of social and economic progress (#109);
  - creates a climate of fear (#111);
  - “Justice, then, right reason, and consideration for human dignity and life demand that the arms race cease” (#112);
  - peace consists in mutual trust (#114).

#### In Liberty

- Relations based on freedom; responsibility and enterprise encouraged (#120).
- Respect by the wealthy nations of the value in giving aid without seeking dominance (#125).

### III. Relations of People and of Political Communities with the World Community

- Individual countries cannot seek their own interests and develop in isolation given modern conditions of interdependence (#131).
- Under present circumstances, the structures and forms of national governments are inadequate to promote the universal common good (#135).

- Public authority must have the means to promote the common good (#136).
- Need public authority to operate in an effective matter on a worldwide matter (#137).
- The United Nations should be fostered (#145).

## V. Pastoral Exhortations

- People should take an active role in public life and organizations and influence them from within (#147).
- Humans should carry on temporal activities “as acts within the moral order” (#150).
- A unity between faith and action is needed; solid Christian education will help achieve this unity (#s 152-153).
- Distinguish between false philosophical ideas and movements deriving from them (#159).
- Christians need prudence in determining when to collaborate with non-Christians in social and economic affairs (#160).
- “Peace will be but an empty sounding word unless it is founded on the order which the present document has outlined in confident hope: an order founded on truth, built according to justice, vivified and integrated by charity, and put into practice in freedom” (#167).

## Discussion Questions

In 1963, Pope John XXIII listed significant “signs of the times.”

Which others would you add to (or subtract from) that list today?

In 2003 the Vatican decided to republish Peace on Earth. Why do you think the Vatican thought this document was relevant to today’s world issues?

For you and your community, what are the most important rights which Pope John XXIII listed? Explain.

Analyze the peace efforts of your community from the perspective of this encyclical.



# **Gaudium et Spes, Second Vatican Council, 1965 - The Church in the Modern World**

**Second Vatican Council, 1965**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)

## **OVERVIEW**

Gaudium et Spes, Second Vatican Council, 1965

Vatican II's *The Church in the Modern World* is seen by many to be the most important document in the Church's social tradition. It announces the duty of the People of God to scrutinize the "signs of the times" in light of the Gospel. In doing so, it finds that change characterizes the world.

These technological and social changes provide both wonderful opportunities and worrisome difficulties for the spread of the Gospel. The Church's duty in the world is to work for the enhancement of human dignity and the common good.

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

This document represents the opinion of the overwhelming majority of the world's Bishops. Originally, the material contained here was not scheduled to be considered separately by the Council. Cardinal Joseph Suenens of Belgium, however, intervened at the end of the first session to urge consideration of issues more "external" to the Church than the role of Bishops or the use of vernacular



in the liturgy. The document is the product of a commission and was altered by a 2,300 member deliberative assembly. In final form, it represents a significant break from the rigid traditionalism of the Council's preparatory commission.

## **Introduction**

- The “joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties” of the people of the world are the concerns of the People of God (#1).
- Church's duty: to scrutinize the “signs of the times” (#4).
- Technological changes have caused social changes (#5).
- These changes have affected everybody—individuals, families, communities, and nations— with both good and bad results (#'s 6-7).
- Conflicting forces have ensued: tremendous wealth and abject poverty, great freedom and psychological slavery (#9).
- Conviction has grown that humanity can establish a political order that will serve human dignity (#9).

## **Part One: The Church and Humanity's Calling Human Dignity**

- Nature of Human
- Created in God's image (free and intelligent), and as a social being (#12).
- Split within self: inclination toward good and evil (#13).
- Dignity depends on freedom to obey one's conscience (#16).
- Christianity and Atheism
- Atheism: a serious concern, impeding the liberation of the complete person and antagonistic toward religion (#19).
- But recognition of God is in no way hostile to human dignity (#21).
- A living faith, activating people to justice and love, is needed to overcome suspicion of religion (#21).
- Church calls all to work to better the world; this work corresponds to the work of the human heart (#21).

- Human Community
- Technological changes have created interdependence without fostering interpersonal relationships (#23).
- Advancement of individuals and society depends on everyone (#25).
- All must work for the common good (#26).
- Everything necessary for a truly human life must be made available for us (#26).
- Scripture mandates love of neighbor; every person is our neighbor; active love is necessary (#28).
- Jesus calls us God's children so we should treat each other as sisters and brothers (#32).
- The Church in the Modern World
- The Church and humanity experience the same earthly situation (#40).
- History, science, and culture reveal the true nature of the human person (#41).
- The Church is not bound to any particular political, economic, or social system (#42).
- The Church needs to purify itself continually (#43).
- Individual Christians need to penetrate the world with a Christian spirit and witness to Jesus in the midst of human society (#43).
- The Church can be helped by the world in preparing the ground for the Gospel (#44).
- The Church's mission, part saving and part eschatological, begins in this world; Jesus is Lord of history (#45).

## **Part Two: Special Areas of Concern**

- Marriage and the Family
- Families are the foundation of society (#47).
- Destructive to marriage are: divorce, free love, excessive self-love, polygamy, worship of pleasure, certain modern economic-social-political conditions, overpopulation (#47).

- Marriage is intended for the procreation and education of children and a whole manner and communion of life (#50).
- Responsible parenthood is advocated (#50).
- From the moment of conception, life must be regarded with sacred care (#51).
- The healthy condition of individuals and society depends on stable families (#52).
- The Development of Culture
- Circumstances of Culture
- Changes in technology have created fresh avenues for the diffusion of culture (#54).
- A new humanism has dawned and an individual is defined by his/her responsibilities to the world (#55).
- Culture must evolve so as to foster the development of the whole person (#56).
- Principles of Cultural Development
- The quest for heaven should inspire Christians to build a more human world on earth (#57).
- Danger exists that humans may rely on modern discoveries and stop searching for higher realities (#57).
- God speaks to the various cultures (#58).
- Church, in ways that respect its own tradition, should use modes of culture to spread the Gospel (#58).
- The Good News renews and advances culture (#58).
- Culture needs freedom in which to develop (#59).
- Cultural Duties of Christians
- Strenuous work is needed in economic and political fields to liberate people from ignorance (#60).
- Everyone has a right to culture, thought, and expression (#60).
- Women should participate in cultural life (#60).
- Development of the whole person should be fostered (#61).

- Christian thinking should be expressed in ways consistent with culture (#62).
- Socio-Economic Life
- Basic Principles
- Human beings are “the source, the center, and the purpose of all socio-economic life” (#63).
- Fundamental imbalances between wealth and poverty exist in today’s world (#63).
- Economic Development
- Technological progress which serves the whole person must be fostered (#64).
- Progress must be controlled by humanity (#65).
- Justice necessitates a quick removal of economic inequities (#66).
- Economic Life
- Human labor is superior to other elements of economic life; economic activity detrimental to the worker is wrong and inhuman (#67).
- Workers should participate in running an enterprise (#67).
- God intended the earth for everyone; private property should benefit all (#67).
- All have a right to goods sufficient for themselves and their families (#69).
- Distribution of goods should be directed toward employment (#70).
- Public authorities can guard against those misuses of private property which hurt the common good (#71).
- Genuine sharing of goods is called for (#71).
- Political Community
- Modern changes have increased the awareness of human dignity and the desire to establish a just political-juridical order (#73).
- Public authorities (and individual citizens) should work for the common good (#74).
- Church and political community (#76):
- both serve the vocation of humans;

- Church has the right to pass moral judgments when human rights are at stake;
- Church should use the means of the Gospel to fulfill its mission.
- Peace
- Basic Principles
- With modern weapons, humanity is in a crisis situation (#77).
- Most noble meaning of “peace”—based on love, harmony, trust, and justice—should be fostered (#78).
- Avoidance of War
- Non-violence and conscientious objection are legitimate (#79).
- Just defense is permissible, but not wars of subjugation (#79).
- Participation in armed services is allowed, but not blind obedience to orders (#79).
- With new weapons, a new evaluation of war is needed (#80).
- Arms race is not the way to build peace; it can actually foster wars and it injures the poor (#81).
- No act of war at population centers is permissible (#81).
- Deterrence “is not a safe way to preserve steady peace” (#81).
- Everyone has responsibility to work for disarmament (#82).
- Building Up the International Community
- Causes of dissension, especially injustices, need to be eliminated (#83).
- Greater international cooperation demands the establishment of an international organization corresponding to modern obligations (#’s 84-85).
- Development of whole person is to be fostered (#86).
- Ecumenical cooperation is needed to achieve justice (#88).
- Church must be present to injustice (#89).

## **Discussion Questions**

What are the most important “joys and hopes, sorrows and anxieties” of our contemporary world? Which ones affect you and your church community the most?

Freud referred to religion’s function as “illusion”; Marx as “ideology.” In what way do you think religion should function in the human community?

Should the Church respond to the agenda of the world? What does this mean in practical terms?

List what you believe are the major things that people need in order to realize their dignity. What factors in your community contribute to, or hinder, the achievement of this dignity?

# Populorum Progressio, Paul VI 1967

## Paul VI (March 1967)

by Gerald Darring

### OVERVIEW

Paul VI notes that today the social question has become global (a. 3) and that social conflicts have taken on global dimensions (a. 9). Its international concerns are multiple. It is disturbed by the capitalist system that accompanies industrialization, a system that contains abuses such as profit being the principal motive for economic progress, competition the supreme law of the economy, and private ownership of the means of production an absolute and unlimited right (s. 26). He fears that the destitution of entire populations will tempt people to resort to violence (s. 30), although a revolutionary uprising will produce new injustices unless an established tyranny violates human rights and the common good (s. 31). He notes with disapproval that with so many hungry and destitute people without education and health care, money is wasted on national or personal ostentation and the arms race (s. 53).

### HISTORICAL NOTE

The Pope had had direct experience of the problem of development during his travels to Latin America, Africa, the Middle East and Asia (a.

4), and he seeks to convey the seriousness of the problem.

What we must aim for is complete humanism: the integral development of the whole person and of all men. It must be a humanism open to the values of the spirit and to God who is its source (s. 42). The wise are in search of a new humanism (s. 20), and the supreme goal of personal development is a transcendent humanism realized through union with Christ (s. 16).

The development of which Paul speaks requires the simultaneous development of all humanity in a spirit of solidarity (s. 43).

He says that the world is sick, his disease consisting in the absence of family ties between individuals and peoples (s. 66).

Countless people on entire continents suffer from hunger, child mortality, retarded mental development and depressing discouragement (a. 45). He insists that no one can remain indifferent to the fate of those who are still buried in poverty, victims of insecurity and slaves of ignorance (s. 74).

People must grasp their serious problem in all its dimensions (a. 1). The present situation must be faced with courage and the injustices associated with it must be fought and overcome (s. 32). The present moment is crucial, and the work is urgent (s. 80). We must hurry: too

many people are suffering (s. 29).

After identifying the negative and positive aspects of the world problem of underdevelopment, the Pope challenges rich people and rich countries, stressing that people who suffer from hunger make a dramatic appeal to people who are lucky enough to live in abundance (a. 3). The rich should realize that the poor are standing outside their doors waiting to receive remains of their banquets (s. 83).

## **DOCUMENT PRESENTATION**

Paul VI notes that today the social question has become world-wide (a.

3), and social conflicts have taken on world dimensions (a. 9). His international concerns are several. He is disturbed by the capitalist system accompanying industrialization, a system which contains such abuses as profit being the key motive for economic progress, competition the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production an absolute and unlimited right (a. 26). He worries that the destitution of whole populations tempts people to have recourse to violence (a. 30), although a revolutionary uprising produces new injustices unless there is an established tyranny damaging human rights and harming the common good (a. 31). He notes with disapproval that with so many people hungry and destitute, lacking education and health care, money is squandered on national or personal ostentation and the arms race (a. 53).

One of his major concerns is the gap between the rich and the poor: glaring inequalities exist not only in possessions but also in power (a. 9).

The hard reality of modern economics works to widen differences: rich peoples enjoy rapid growth while the poor develop slowly (a. 8). The distance is growing



that separates the progress of some and the stagnation and regression of others (a. 29), and as a result of uneven trade relations, the poor nations remain ever poor while the rich ones become still richer (a. 57). The pope warns that in promoting development, we must avoid the risk of adding to the wealth of the rich, the misery of the poor, and the servitude of the oppressed (a. 33), and he insists that programs to increase production should reduce inequalities (a. 34 ).

There exists in this the traditional Christian concern for the poor, and Paul reminds us that Christ cited the preaching of the Gospel to the poor as a sign of his mission (a. 12). He teaches that our goal is not just to eliminate hunger or reduce poverty: the goal is to build a world in which the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich person (a. 47). But there is in addition a strong concern for problems in developing countries. The pope worries that industrialization is breaking down traditional structures which do not adapt themselves to the new conditions (a. 10). He notes that there is some evidence of a neo-colonialism, in the form of political and economic pressures aimed at

complete dominance (a. 52). Within the underdeveloped countries, he calls attention to two problems: nationalism and racism. Asserting that the Church offers people what is her characteristic attribute: a global vision of humanity (a. 13), he says that legitimate feelings of concern for national unity and pride in cultural heritage should not be demeaned by an isolating nationalism (a. 62), and that racism is an obstacle to collaboration among disadvantaged nations and a cause of division and hatred within countries (a. 63).

The pope had experienced first-hand the problem of development during travels to Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, and Asia (a. 4), and he seeks to convey a sense of the seriousness of the problem. He says that the world is sick, its illness consisting of the lack of kinship among individuals and peoples (a. 66). More and more people seek to do more, know more and have more in order to be more, but their living conditions prevent them (a. 6). In whole continents countless people experience hunger, infant mortality, retarded mental development, and depressing despondency (a. 45). He insists that no one can remain indifferent to the lot of those still buried in wretchedness, the victims of insecurity and the slaves of ignorance (a. 74). People need to grasp their serious problem in all its dimensions (a. 1). The present situation must be faced with courage and the injustices linked with it must be fought against and overcome (a. 32). The present moment is crucial, and the work to be done is urgent (a. 80). We must make haste: too many are suffering (a.

29).

Paul's response to the demands of this crucial moment is contained in the concept of development, and he says that his encyclical is a solemn appeal for concrete action towards people's complete development and the development of all people (a. 5). He notes that the Church's interest in development focuses primarily on the hungry and miserable, the diseased and ignorant, those who share less in the benefits of civilization (a. 1). He teaches that development must

be integral, promoting the good of every person and of the whole person (a. 14), and that authentic development involves a transition from less human to more human conditions (a. 20), from the less human conditions of poverty, selfishness, oppression and exploitation to the more human conditions of faith and unity in the love of Christ (a. 21). Development should mean social progress as well as economic growth (a. 34), and in fact economic growth depends in the first place on social progress, such as education (a. 35). He asserts that development is not assured by private initiative and competition (a. 33), and that it calls for more technical work as well as more reflection on higher values (a. 20).

The pope makes sure we understand that the solution is not merely economic, but human development (a. 73), and a major theme of his encyclical is the fully human, the truly human. He speaks of the construction of a more human world (a. 54), of being on the road towards a greater humanity (a. 79). Time and again he returns to this theme: the Church fosters the human progress of nations (a. 12); through the use of

intellect and will a person can grow in humanity (a. 15); newly independent nations seek to assure their citizens a full human enhancement (a. 6); technology alone cannot render the world a more human place in which to live (a. 34); people are truly human only when they are the authors of their own advancement (a. 34); better-off nations should work to bring about a world that is more human towards everyone (a. 44); the goal is not just to eliminate hunger or reduce poverty: the goal is to build a world in which everyone can live a fully human life (a. 47).

The pope translates this into a call for humanism: what must be aimed at is complete humanism: the fully-rounded development of the whole person and of all people. It must be a humanism open to the values of the spirit and to God who is their source (a. 42). Wise people are in search of a new humanism (a. 20), and the highest goal of personal development is a transcendent humanism achieved through union with Christ (a. 16).

The development of which Paul speaks demands the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity (a. 43), and the encyclical refers to the formation of a world which is better organized toward a universal solidarity (a. 62) and the desire to build a civilization founded on world solidarity (a. 73). The reality of human solidarity means that we have obligations towards everyone, even those who will come after us (a. 17), and better-off nations have obligations that reflect the duty of human solidarity (a. 44).

The sign of human solidarity is peace, and it is no wonder that Pope Paul VI, writing at the height of both the Cold War and the Vietnam War, would have peace in the forefront of his thoughts. The pope notes that in the struggle for development, civil peace in developing countries and world peace itself are at stake (a. 55). Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among peoples arouse tensions and conflicts, and are a danger to peace (a. 76). Paul

expresses the hope that the violence which often characterized international relationships will be replaced with mutual respect and friendship as well as interdependence in collaboration (a. 65). He teaches that peace is not the mere absence of war: it is built up day after day in pursuit of a more just order among people (a. 76), an international morality based on justice and equity (a. 81). He expresses his conviction that the way to peace lies in the area of development (a. 83); that the new name for peace is development (a. 87); and that the person who struggles against underdevelopment is a creator of peace (a.

75).

In the course of presenting his thoughts on development, solidarity, and peace, Paul VI touches on several economic issues which impact on the pursuit of development. Aid. Human solidarity obligates the better-off nations to aid the developing countries (a. 44). There needs to be a dialogue between the donor nations and the receiving countries to insure proper terms of loans without political strings attached (a. 54).

Trade. Unfavorable trade relations between rich and poor countries cannot be allowed to nullify any aid that might be given (a. 56). The

industrialized nations have an advantage, because their exports--for the most part manufactured goods--have steadily rising prices, while the under-developed countries' exports--mostly food and raw materials--are under-priced and subject to wild fluctuations (a. 57). Social justice obligates the better-off nations to rectify inequitable trade relations (a.

44). The rule of free trade, taken by itself, is no longer able to govern international relations because economic conditions differ too much from country to country (a. 58); freedom of trade is fair only if it is subject to the demands of social justice (a. 59). Without abolishing the international competitive market, it should be kept within the limits which make it just and moral, and therefore human (a. 61).

Property. The desire for necessities is legitimate, but acquiring property can lead to greed (a. 18), which is the most evident form of moral underdevelopment (a. 19). Everyone has the right to obtain what is necessary, and all other rights are subordinate to this right, including the rights of property and free trade (a. 22). In other words, private property is not an absolute and unconditioned right, and one is not justified in keeping for oneself what one does not need, when others lack necessities (a. 23). Sometimes the common good may even demand the expropriation of landed estates (a. 24).

Work. Work is willed and blessed by God, but it can be given exaggerated significance (a. 27). Everyone who works is a creator, and work with others unites people as brothers and sisters (a. 27). Work is human only if it remains intelligent and free, and sometimes it produces undesirable effects in people (a.

28).

Unions. All social action involves an ideology (a. 39). Many professional organizations and trade unions are acceptable, but only those whose ideology is not materialistic and atheistic (a. 39).

Immigrants, migrant workers. Human solidarity and Christian charity oblige us to welcome immigrants (a. 67), and this same welcome should be extended to migrant workers (a. 69).

Family. Rigid family frameworks are gradually relaxing their hold on the people in developing nations, but it is important that the natural family remain as willed by God: monogamous and stable (a. 36). Population increases can create problems, but parents should be free to decide on the number of children they will have, following their consciences enlightened by God's law authentically interpreted (a. 37).

Earlier we noted the negative international indicators which caused Paul VI to be so concerned. There were also some positive international circumstances and activities which seemed to please the pope and give him some hope. Among these positive indicators: private individuals, public authorities, and international organizations are doing good work in promoting literacy (a. 35); the Food and Agriculture Organization is being supported, and Caritas Internationalis is at work everywhere (a. 46); experts are being sent on development missions by institutions and private organizations (a. 71); young people are undertaking social service in developing nations (a. 74). Buoyed by these activities, Paul VI

concludes that in spite of its ignorance, its mistakes and even its sins, its relapses into barbarism and its wanderings from the road of salvation, the world is taking slow but sure steps towards its Creator (a. 79).

Having identified the negative and positive aspects of the world problem of underdevelopment, the pope issues some challenges to rich people and rich countries, pointing out that peoples in hunger are making a dramatic appeal to peoples blessed with abundance (a. 3). The wealthy should come to realize that the poor stand outside their doors waiting to receive some left-overs from their banquets (a. 83). Those with education, position and opportunities for action should respond with generosity and give of their own possessions (a. 32). Let all examine their consciences: are they ready to pay, through charitable donations, higher taxes, and higher tariffs in order to help the destitute (a. 47)?

Better-off nations have obligations that reflect the duties of human solidarity, social justice, and universal charity (a. 44). A developed nation should devote a part of its production to meet the needs of underdeveloped nations (a. 48); the superfluous wealth of rich countries should be placed at the service of poor nations (a. 49). Industrialists entering less developed countries should display the same social sensitivity in those countries as they do in their own country (a. 70).

Paul VI also issues challenges to developing countries. He says that developing nations must know how to assess critically and eliminate those things which would lower the human ideal, and to accept those values that are sound and beneficial (a. 41). People in these countries must be helped and persuaded to work for their own betterment (a. 55).

They should organize among themselves areas for concerted development (a. 64), establishing regional agreements among themselves for mutual support (a. 77)

In the end, the pope tells everyone that the world situation demands action based on a clear vision of all economic, social, cultural, and spiritual aspects (a. 13). The present situation calls for concerted planning (a. 50), especially in the form of a worldwide collaboration in the establishment of a development fund (a. 51) and in the establishment of equality in discussions and negotiations between rich and poor countries (a. 61). The goal is not just to eliminate hunger or reduce poverty: the goal is to build a world in which everyone can live a fully human life, in which freedom is not an empty word and the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich person (a. 47).

## QUOTATIONS

Private property does not constitute for anyone an absolute or unconditioned right. No one is justified in keeping for his exclusive use what he does not need, when others lack necessities....The right to property must never be exercised to the detriment of the common good.

(#23)

“If someone who has the riches of this world sees his brother in need and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 Jn 3:17). It is well known how strong were the words used by the Fathers of the Church to describe the proper attitude of persons who possess anything towards persons in need. To quote Saint Ambrose:

“You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to him what is his. For what has been given in common for the use of all, you have arrogated to yourself. The world is given to all, and not only to the rich.” (#23)

It is unfortunate that on these new conditions of society a system has been constructed which considers profit as the key motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligation.

This unchecked liberalism leads to dictatorship rightly denounced by Pius XI as producing “the international imperialism of money”. One cannot condemn such abuses too strongly by solemnly recalling once again that the economy is at the service of man. (#26)

The struggle against destitution, though urgent and necessary, is not enough. It is a question, rather, of building a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control; a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich man. This demands great generosity, much sacrifice and unceasing effort on the part of the rich man.

Let each one examine his conscience, a conscience that conveys a new message for our times. Is he prepared to support out of his own pocket works and undertakings organized in favor of the most destitute? Is he ready to pay higher taxes so that the public authorities can intensify their efforts in favor of development? Is he ready to pay a higher price for imported goods so that the producer may be more justly rewarded? (#47) Both for nations and for individual men, avarice is the most evident form of moral underdevelopment. (#19)

Today the principal fact that we must all recognize is that the social question has become world-wide. (#3)

The present situation must be faced with courage and the injustices linked with it must be fought against and overcome. Development demands bold transformations, innovations that go deep. Urgent reforms should be undertaken without delay. It is for each one to take his share in them with generosity, particularly those whose education, position and opportunities afford them wide scope for action. (#32) Increased possession is not the ultimate goal of nations nor of individuals. All growth is ambivalent. It is essential if people are to

develop as human beings, but in a way it imprisons them if they considers it the supreme good, and it restricts their vision. (#19) Individual initiative alone and the mere free play of competition could never assure successful development. One must avoid the risk of increasing still more the wealth of the rich and the dominion of the strong, whilst leaving the poor in their misery and adding to the servitude of the oppressed. (#33)

To seek to do more, know more and have more in order to be more: that is what people aspire to now when a greater number of them are condemned to live in conditions that make this lawful desire illusory (#6) The superfluous wealth of rich countries should be placed at the service of poor nations. The rule which up to now held good for the benefit of those nearest to us, must today be applied to all the needy of this world.

Besides, the rich will be the first to benefit as a result. Otherwise their continued greed will certainly call down upon them the judgement of God and the wrath of the poor, with consequences no one can foretell. (#49) Economics and technology have no meaning except from the human person whom they should serve. And the human person is only truly human in as far as, master of one's own acts and judge of their worth, one is author of one's own advancement, in keeping with the nature which was given to human beings by the Creator. (#34) The desire for necessities is legitimate, and work undertaken to obtain them is a duty: If people will not work, neither let them eat. But the acquiring of temporal goods can lead to greed, to the insatiable desire for more, and can make increased power a tempting objective. Individuals, families, and nations can be overcome by avarice, be they poor or rich,

and all can fall victim to a stifling materialism. (#19) Peace cannot be limited to a mere absence of war, the result of an ever precarious balance of forces. No, peace is something that is built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice among people. (#76) Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every person and of all humanity. (#14)

Individual initiative alone and the mere free play of competition could never assure successful development. One must avoid the risk of increasing still more the wealth of the rich and the dominion of the strong, whilst leaving the poor in their misery and adding to the servitude of the oppressed. (#33)

No one can remain indifferent to the lot of his brothers and sisters who are still buried in wretchedness, and victims of insecurity, slaves of ignorance. Like the heart of Christ, the heart of the Christian must sympathize with this misery: “I have pity on this multitude”. (#74) We have inherited from past generations, and we have benefited from the work of our contemporaries: for this reason we have obligations towards all, and we cannot refuse to interest ourselves in those who will come after us to enlarge the human family. The reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a duty. (#17) If certain landed estates impede the, general prosperity because they are extensive, unused or poorly used, or because they bring hardship to peoples or are detrimental to the interests of the country, the common good sometimes demands their expropriation. (#24) Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among peoples arouse tensions and conflicts, and are a danger to peace. (#76) Every program made to increase production has, in the last analysis, no other raison d’être than the service of humanity. Such programs should reduce inequalities, fight discriminations, free people from various types

of servitude and enable them to be the instrument of their own material betterment, of their moral progress and of their spiritual growth. (#34) There can be no progress towards the complete development of individuals without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity. (#43)

Experienced in human affairs, the Church ... “seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ Himself under the lead of the befriending Spirit.” ... But, since the Church lives in history, she ought to “scrutinize the signs of the times and interpret them in the light of the Gospel.”

Sharing the noblest aspirations of men and women and suffering when she sees them not satisfied, she wishes to help them attain their full flowering, and that is why she offers all people what she possesses as her characteristic attribute: a global vision of man and of the human race.

(#13)





# Octogesima Adveniens, Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI, 1971 - A Call to Action

**Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI, 1971**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## OVERVIEW

Pope Paul VI begins this letter by urging greater efforts for justice and noting the duties of local churches to respond to specific situations. The Pope then discusses a wide variety of new social problems which stem from urbanization. These issues include women, youth, and the “new poor.” Paul VI next treats modern aspirations and ideas, especially liberalism and Marxism. He stresses the need to ensure equality and the right of all to participate in society. He concludes this letter by encouraging all Christians to reflect on their contemporary situations, apply Gospel principles, and take political action when appropriate.

## DOCUMENT OUTLINE

## HISTORICAL NOTE

A Call to Action is an open, apostolic letter from Pope Paul VI to Cardinal Maurice Roy, president of the Pontifical Commission on Justice and Peace, to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the publication of Pope Leo XIII’s The Condition of Labor. It breaks new ground by developing a theory of the role of individual Christians and local churches in responding to situations of

injustices.

## **Introduction**

- Greater efforts for justice are needed (#2).
- Given the wide diversity of situations in the world, each local church has responsibility to discern and act (#4).
- A great variety of changes are taking place in the world (#7).

## **New Social Problems**

- Urbanization creates a new loneliness and the possibility that humans may become slaves to their own creation (#10).
- Youth find dialogue increasingly difficult (#13).
- Women possess an equal right to participate in social, cultural, economic, and political life (#13).
- Workers have the right to form unions (#14).
- The “New Poor,” created by urbanization, include the handicapped, elderly, and the marginalized (#15).
- Discrimination along lines of race, origin, color, culture, sex, and religion still exists (#17).
- Emigration is a right (#17).
- There is great need to create employment through effective policies of investment, education, and organization of means of production (#18).
- The media have both positive and negative potential (#20).
- People have a responsibility to protect the environment (#21).

## **Fundamental Aspirations and Ideas**

- Equality and participation need to be ensured (#22).
- Legislation for justice is necessary but not enough; love sparking action for the poor is needed (#23).
- Preferential respect for the poor is important (#23)

- Political activity for a democratic society is consistent with the total vocation of humankind; humans can no longer rely only on economic activity (#25)
- Both Marxist and liberal ideologies alienate human beings (#26).
- Historical movements contain positive elements which must be discerned (#30).
- Certain features of socialism are attractive but Christians must critique its appeal (#31).
- A variety of interpretations of Marxism exist but historically it has led to totalitarianism and violence (#'s 32-34).
- Liberalism promotes economic efficiency but distorts human nature (#35).
- Christians need to discern carefully the options between different ideologies (#36).
- Utopias are generally ineffective but they provoke the imagination and activity for a better world (#37).
- Humans have become the object of science; science lacks a total picture of humanity (#39).
- Nature of progress is ambiguous; quality of human relations and degree of participation and responsibility are just as important as amount of goods produced (#41).

### Christians Face New Problems

- Catholic social teaching states the importance of reflecting on the changing situation of the world and applying Gospel principles to it (#42).
- Nations need to revise their relationships to work for greater justice (#43).
- Liberation requires changed attitudes and structures (#45).
- The task of Christians is to create conditions for the complete good of humanity (#46).
- Christians need to concentrate more on political rather than economic activity as a solution for contemporary problems (#46).
- Involvement in building human solidarity is an end of freedom (#47).

### Call to Action

- Each Christian has a personal responsibility for building up the temporal order

(#48).

- The Lord working with us is a great reason for Christian hope (#48).
- A plurality of options for action exists (#49).
- Christians have the task of inspiring and innovating in working for justice (#50).

## **Discussion Questions**

A Call to Action was written to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of the publication of Pope Leo XIII's *The Condition of Labor*. What new issues was Pope Paul VI dealing with in 1971 that may not have existed when *The Condition of Labor* was written? How did Paul VI address these new concerns?

What does Pope Paul VI mean when he says that liberalism (e.g. free trade), though economically efficient, distorts human nature? Consider free trade agreements, liberalizing social services and natural resources such as water, lessening restrictions on pollution, etc. How might these examples illustrate what Paul VI is saying?

Pope Paul VI says in this document that each Christian has a personal responsibility for building up the temporal order, or renewing the world to one of justice and peace. As an individual, how are you working to renew the earth? What more could you be doing?

# Justicia in Mundo, Justice in the World Statement of the Synod of Bishops, 1971

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)

## OVERVIEW

The 1971 Synod of Bishops, in their reflection on “the mission of the People of God to further justice in the world,” affirms the right to a culturally-sensitive, personal-ized development. The Bishops teach that Gospel principles mandate justice for the liberation of all humanity as an essential expression of Christian love. The Church must witness for justice through its own lifestyle, educational activities, and international action. Structural sin is dis-cussed.

## HISTORICAL NOTE

This document illustrates the powerful influence of native leadership of the Churches of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. It is the first major example of post-Vatican II episcopal collegiality and reflects a forceful, concrete, and realistic refinement of previous papal pronouncements.

## Introduction

- Structural injustices oppress humanity and stifle freedom to operate in the world (#3).

- The dynamism of the Gospel and the hopes of the people of today are together (#5).

- “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or in other words, of the Church’s mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation” (#6).

### Justice and World Society

- A modern paradox:

- forces for achieving human dignity seem strong (#7);

- but so do forces of division (arms race, economic injustices, lack of participation) (#9).

- Affirms the right to development as a basic human right (#15).

- Calls for personalization and a culturally-sensitive modernization (#’s 17-19).

- Many who suffer injustice are voiceless; the Church should speak on their behalf (#20).

- Injustices listed: those to migrants, refugees; religious persecution; human rights violations; torture; political prisoners; anti-life; war; dishonest media; anti-family activity (#’s 21-26).

- Dialogue with the participation of all, especially youth, is needed to correct these injustices (#28).

### Gospel Message and Mission of Christ

- Scriptural Sources

- People need to listen to the Word of God to respond effectively to injustices (#29).

- Old Testament views God as a “liberator of the oppressed and the defender of the poor” (#30).

- Jesus gave himself for the salvation and liberation of all and associated himself with the “least” (#31).

- St. Paul: Christian life is the faith which sparks love and service of neighbors (#33).

- Justice and Love

- “Christian love of neighbor and justice cannot be separated” (#34).

- Preaching the Gospel requires a dedication to the liberation of humanity in this world (#35).

- Role of the Church

- The Gospel message gives the Church the right and duty to proclaim justice on all levels and to denounce instances of injustice (#36).

- The role of the hierarchical Church is not to offer concrete solutions to specific problems, but to promote the dignity and rights of each human being (#37).

Practice of Justice

- Witness of the Church

- Anyone who ventures to preach justice should be perceived as being just (#40).

- Rights within the Church must be respected for all, especially women and lay people (#43).

- Rights include: decent wage, security, promotion, freedom of thought and expression, proper judicial procedures, participation in decision-making process (#'s 45-46).

- The lifestyle of the institutional Church and all its members must allow it to preach the good news to the poor (#48).

- Education to Justice

- In developing countries, the aim is to awaken awareness of the concrete situation and strategies and alternatives for change (#51).

- Family is the principal agent for this education, a continuing one (#54).

- Catholic social teaching, the basic principles of the Gospels applied, is the major source for justice education (#56).

- Liturgy and the sacraments can serve justice education (#58).

- Cooperation between Churches in Rich and Poor Nations Is Essential for Economic and Spiritual Progress (#59).

- Ecumenical Collaboration for Justice Is Strongly Supported (#61).

- International Action

- Call for the UN Declaration of Human Rights to be ratified by all nations (#64).

- Support UN efforts to halt arms race, weapons trade, and reach peaceful



conflict resolution (#65).

- Foster aims of the Second Development Decade, including fair prices for raw materials, opening of markets, taxation on worldwide basis (#66).
- Concentration of power should be changed; more participation is needed (#67).
- Emphasizes the importance of UN specialized agencies in promoting justice (#68).
- Calls for funding for responsible development (#69).
- Wealthy nations need to be less materialistic and consume less (#70).
- Right to development and respectful cooperation with wealthy nations are urged (#71).

### A Word of Hope

- Christians will find the Kingdom as the fruit of their nature and efforts; God is now preparing the Kingdom (#75).

### **Discussion Questions**

Name the major reasons that prompt you to work for justice.

List factors in your country that foster work for justice and factors that hinder it.

Discuss how your faith in Jesus encourages you to do more for justice and peace.

# Laborem Exercens, Pope John Paul II 1981 - On Human Work

**Pope John Paul II, September 14, 1981**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## OVERVIEW

Laborem Exercens, Pope John Paul II's encyclical, commemorates the ninetieth anniversary of Pope Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum. John Paul II affirms the dignity of work and places work at the center of the social question. The encyclical states that human beings are the proper subject of work. Work expresses and increases human dignity. The Pope stresses the priority of labor over things while criticizing systems which do not embody these principles. He supports the rights of workers and unions. John Paul II concludes by outlining a spirituality of work.

## DOCUMENT OUTLINE

## HISTORICAL NOTE

Laborem Exercens represents a clear and succinct statement of John Paul II's thoughts on the social question. Written almost entirely by the Pope himself, the encyclical reflects statements made while he was a Polish prelate and those made during the first years of his pontificate.

Laborem Exercens develops and refines the Church's teachings on property and its criticism of capitalism and Marxism.

## Introduction

- Humans derive dignity from work even though it involves suffering and toil (#1).
- Recent changes in the realm of work (#1):
  - automation;
  - increase in price of energy and raw materials;
  - environmental awareness and respect;
  - people claiming right to participate.
- Role of the Church (#1):
  - call attention to dignity of workers;
  - condemn violations of dignity;
  - guide changes to ensure progress.
- Work is at the center of the social question, the key to making life more human (#2).
- Catholic social teaching has evolved and now considers the "world" as well as the "class" perspective; the Church calls for structural transformation on a more universal scale (#2).

## Work and Human Beings

- Perspective on Work
- Genesis states God's command to subdue the earth; work is the means to do so (#4).
- Human beings are the proper subject of work (#5).
- Aspects of technology (#5):
  - positive: facilitates work;
  - negative: can supplant or control humans.

- Work must serve an individual's humanity (#6).
  
- Materialism and Economism
- Materialistic thought treats humans as instruments of production rather than as subjects of work (#7).
- Workers are considered as merchandise (#7).
- Justice and Work
- Leo XIII's call to solidarity was a reaction against the degradation of people as subjects of work (#8).
- Within unemployment of intellectuals, a new "proletarianization" of workers is occurring (#8).
- Church is committed to justice for workers; it wants to be a "Church of the poor" (#8).
- Nature of Work
- People achieve dominion over the earth and fulfillment as human beings (#9).
- Work and family life (#10):
- work makes family life possible;
- work makes possible the achievement of purposes of the family;
- it increases common good of human family
- Conflict Between Labor and Capital
- The Conflict
- Conflict has changed from one between capital and labor to an ideological struggle and now to a political struggle (#11).
- Fundamental principles (#12):
- priority of labor over capital;
- primacy of people over things.
- Humanity has two inheritances: nature, and the resources people have developed (#12).
- Need to develop a system that will reconcile capital and labor (#13).

- Property
- On ownership, Catholic social teaching differs from both Marxism (collectivism) and capitalism (#13).
- Right of private property is subordinated to the right of common use (#14).
- Property is acquired through work to serve labor (#14).
- Socialization of certain means of production cannot be excluded (#14).
- Church favors a joint-ownership of means of production (#14).

#### Rights of Workers - Work is an obligation/duty (#16)

- Indirect Employers
- Indirect employers (persons, institutions, sets of principles, states, socio-economic systems) determine one or more facets of the labor relationship (#17).
- Policies need to respect the objective rights of workers—the criterion for shaping the world economy (#17).
- Employment
- Suitable employment for all is needed (#18).
- Indirect employers need to act against unemployment through (#18):
- unemployment benefits (springing from principle of common use of goods);
- a system of overall planning on economic and cultural levels;
- international collaboration to lessen imbalances in the standard of living.
- Resources must be used to create employment (#18).
- Workers
- Just remunerations of workers is the key (#19).
- Wages are a practical means whereby people can have access to goods intended for the common use (#19).

- Church calls for (#19):
- wages sufficient to support a family;
- allowances to mothers raising a family;
- reevaluation of the mother's role to ensure proper love for children and fair opportunities for women.
- Other social benefits for workers are needed, including health care, right to leisure, pension and accident insurance, and a decent work environment (#19).
- Right to Form Unions
- Indispensable element of social life (#20).
- Originated with struggles of workers (#20).
- Mouthpiece of the struggle for justice (#20).
- Constructive factor of social order (#20).
- Can enter political order to secure rights and the common good (#20).
- Strikes are legitimate but extraordinary (#20).
- Two cautions (#20):
- demands can become "class egoism";
- can stray from specific roles.
- Other
- Agricultural work is the basis of healthy economies(#21).
- Disabled people should participate in work (#22).
- People have a right to leave their native countries in search of better conditions (#23).
- Elements of a Spirituality of Work
- Humans share in the activity of their God (#25).
- Work imitates God's activity and gives dignity (#25).
- Jesus was a person of work (#26).
- There are many references to work in the Bible (#26).

- Vatican II: work allows people to fulfill their total vocation (#26).
- Work is sharing in the Cross and Resurrection (#27).
- Work is necessary for earthly progress and the development of the Kingdom (#27).

## **Discussion Questions**

Illustrate, by way of examples from your own work situation or others, what the “priority of labor over capital” means to you.

In what ways does your own work give you a sense of dignity?

What aspects of your daily work affirm your dignity? Which are dehumanizing?

The complexity of today’s world inhibits some people from social involvement. How do you deal with such complexity?

How do others you know, or know of, deal with it?

# **Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, Pope John Paul II 1987 - The Social Concerns of the Church**

**Pope John Paul II, December 30, 1987**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

Pope John Paul II paints a somber picture of the state of global development in *The Social Concerns of the Church*. He cites the originality of Pope Paul VI's *The Development of Peoples* and emphasizes the moral/ ethical dimension of development. After surveying the difficult state of the poor countries, the Pope lays strong blame on the confrontation between the two global blocs, liberal capitalism of the West, and Marxist collectivism of the East. He refers to the obstacles hindering development as the "structures of sin" and calls for conversion toward solidarity and the option for the poor. While he does speak of the responsibilities of the poor countries, by far his strongest challenge is to the affluent world.

## **DOCUMENT OUTLINE**

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Twenty years after *The Development of Peoples*, Pope John Paul II celebrates that encyclical of Paul VI with a strong statement updating the Church's teaching on international development. The document reflects the severity of



global economies at the end of the 1980s, with debt, unemployment, and recession seriously affecting the lives of millions not only in the developing countries but also in the more affluent countries. It echoes several of the justice-related themes addressed by the Pope in his worldwide travels.

## **Introduction**

- Social doctrine seeks to lead people to respond to their vocation as responsible builders of earthly society (#1).
- It is marked by continuity and renewal (#3).
- Current encyclical celebrates twentieth anniversary of The Development of Peoples, and emphasizes need for fuller concept of development (#4).

### Originality of The Development of Peoples

- Application of Vatican II
- It responded to call of The Church in the Modern World (#6).
- It applied Council's teachings to specific problems of development and underdevelopment (#7).
- Originality of Message
- It emphasized ethical and cultural character of problems connected with development, and the legitimacy and necessity of Church's intervention in this field (#8).
- It affirmed worldwide dimension of social question, and hence the duty of solidarity between rich and poor (#9).
- It asserted that "development is the new name for peace," challenging the arms race and linking peace and justice (#10).

## **Survey of Contemporary World**

- Unfulfilled Hopes for Development
- Twenty years ago there was widespread optimism about possibility of overcoming poverty and promoting development (#12).

- But in general the present situation is negative (#13):
- innumerable multitudes suffer intolerable burden of poverty;
- many millions have lost hope, seeing their situation worsened.
- Widened Gap between North and South
- Developing countries are falling behind developed in terms of production and distribution of basics (#14).
- Unity of world is compromised, with division into First, Second, Third, Fourth Worlds (#14).
- Cultural underdevelopment shown in: illiteracy, lack of participation, exploitation, religious oppression, racial discrimination, etc. (#15).
- Right of economic initiative, for service of the common good, is often suppressed, frustrating people's creativity (#15).
- Totalitarianism makes people "objects" (#15).
- Other forms of poverty exist, e.g., denial of human rights such as right to religious freedom (#15).
- Causes of worsened situation include (#16):
- omissions on part of developing countries;
- lack of response by affluent world;
- mechanisms (economic, political, social) manipulated to benefit some at the expense of others.
- Interdependence separated from ethical requirements is disastrous for both rich and poor countries (#17).
- Specific Signs of Underdevelopment
- Housing crisis, experienced universally, is due largely to increasing urbanization (#17).
- Unemployment and underemployment grow, raising serious questions about the type of development pursued (#18).
- Global debt, forcing debtor nations to export capital, is aggravating underdevelopment (#19).
- Political Reasons for Underdevelopment

- Existence of two opposing blocs, East and West, has considerable impact on development of people (#20).
- Political opposition rests on deeper ideological opposition (#20):
  - liberal capitalism of the West;
  - Marxist collectivism of the East.
- Military opposition results, with tensions of “cold war,” “wars by proxy” (#21).
- Church’s social doctrine is critical toward both liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism (#21).
- Recently independent countries become involved in, sometimes overwhelmed by, ideological conflict, as two blocs tend toward imperialism and neo-colonialism (#’s 21-22).
- Exaggerated concern for security blocks cooperation (#22).
- Competition between two blocs prevents leadership and solidarity (#23).
- West abandons self to growing and selfish isolation(#23).
- East ignores duty to alleviate human misery (#23).
- Arms trade flourishes, refugees are created, and terrorism increases (#24).
- Demographic problem is often met without respect for persons (#25).
- Positive Aspects of Contemporary World
  - Awareness grows of dignity and human rights, as expressed in UN’s Declaration of Human Rights (#26).
  - Conviction increases regarding radical interdependence and solidarity (#26).
  - Peace is seen as indivisible; it is for all, and demands justice (#26).
  - Ecological concern grows, with recognition of limited resources and need to respect nature (#26).
  - Generous persons sacrifice for peace, and international organizations contribute to more effective action (#26).
  - Some Third World countries have reached food self-sufficiency (#26).

## Authentic Human Development

- Challenges to Development

- Development is not straightforward “progress” in Enlightenment sense (#27).
- After world wars and with atomic peril, “naive mechanistic optimism” has been replaced by “well-founded anxiety” (#27).
- Narrow economic emphasis is questioned (#28).
- Side-by-side with miseries of underdevelopment is inadmissible superdevelopment which involves consumerism and waste (#28).
- “Having” does not contribute to human perfection unless it contributes to maturing and enriching of “being” (#28).
- One of the greatest injustices in contemporary world: “poor distribution of the goods and services originally intended for all” (#28).
- “Having” can detract from “being” if one disregards the quality and ordered hierarchy of the goods one has (#28).
- Development and Human Nature
- True development calls for recognition of spiritual, transcendent nature of human beings (#29).
- Biblical story shows humans developing (#30):
- having dominion over creation but obedient to Creator;
- falling into sin but responding to divine call.
- Faith in Christ reveals plan for reconciliation of all to him (#31).
- Church therefore has pastoral duty to concern itself with problems of development (#31).
- Early teachers of Church had optimistic vision of history and work (#31).
- Church cannot ignore needs of the poor in favor of “superfluous church ornaments and costly furnishings for divine worship” (#31).
- Cooperation for Development
- This task is not individualistic; there is an obligation to collaborate with all others in this field (#32).
- People and nations have a right to their own development (#32).
- Moral character of development requires recognition of rights (#33):

- at internal level, respecting life, family, employment, political community, religion;
- at international level, respecting peoples, culture, equality of all;
- within framework of solidarity and freedom.
- Respect for Natural World
- There is growing awareness of the “cosmos”—the natural order of all beings, living and inanimate (#34).
- Natural resources are limited and cannot be used with absolute dominion (#34).
- Pollution of the environment threatens the health of all (#34).

### Theological Reading of Modern Problems

- Situation of Sin
- In years since The Development of Peoples, “there has been no development— or very little, irregular, or even contradictory development” (#35).
- Main obstacle to development is not political but moral (#35).
- World divided into blocs, sustained by ideologies, and dominated by imperialism is a world “subject to structures of sin” (#36).
- Individual actions against neighbor introduce into world influences and obstacles that go beyond individuals, interfering with the development of peoples (#36).
- Two typical structures of sin are (#37):
- all-consuming desire for profit;
- thirst for power, imposing one’s will on others.
- Path of Conversion
- Profound attitudes which define relationships with self, neighbor, and nature must be changed (#38).
- “Conversion” is needed, toward interdependency, solidarity, commitment to common good (#38).
- Solidarity requires (#39):

- on part of influential, a responsibility and willingness to share;
- on part of weaker, an active claiming of rights.
- Church has evangelical duty to stand by the poor (#39).
- Solidarity helps us see the “other” as “neighbor,” “helper,” and is the path to peace and development (#39).
- As Christian virtue, solidarity is rooted in vision of human beings in relationship to Trinity (#40).

### Some Particular Guidelines

- Church’s Social Doctrine
- Church offers not technical solutions but “set of principles for reflection, criteria for judgment, and directives for action” (#41).
- It is not a “third way” between liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism (#42):
  - not an ideology but a theological interpretation;
  - a condemnation / proclamation as part of prophetic role.
  - Today especially it must be open to international outlook (#42).
- Option for the Poor
  - Whole tradition of Church bears witness to “love of preference for the poor,” a special form of primacy in exercise of Christian charity (#42).
  - This affects individual action and applies equally to social responsibilities (#42).
  - Growing numbers of poor, in desperate situations, must be a priority in all development plans (#42).
  - The goods of the world are originally meant for all, and hence private property has a “social mortgage” (#42).
  - Special form of poverty includes being deprived of rights, particularly right to religious free dom and right to freedom of economic initiative (#42).
- Imbalance of International System
  - International trade system discriminates against developing countries, and international division of labor exploits workers for profit (#43).

- World monetary and financial system compounds poorer countries' problems of balance of payments and debt (#43).
- Technology transfer is unfair to poorer countries (#43).
- International organizations need reform, without being manipulated by political rivalries (#43).
- Responsibilities of Developing Countries
- Developing countries must take up their own responsibilities (#44).
- They should promote self-affirmation of their own citizens through programs of literacy and basic education (#44).
- They need to set priorities (#44):
  - food production;
  - reform of political structures;
  - promotion of human rights.
- Solidarity among developing countries will call for greater cooperation and establishment of effective regional organizations (#45).

## Conclusion

- True Liberation
- There is an intimate connection between liberation and development, overcoming obstacles to a "more human life" (#46).
- Church affirms possibility of overcoming the obstacles, with confidence in the goodness of humans (#47).
- Urgent Appeal
- Everyone must be convinced of seriousness of moment and of responsibility to take steps "inspired by solidarity and love of preference for the poor" (#47).
- As agents of peace and justice, laity have preeminent role in animating temporal realities with Christian commitment (#47).
- Special cooperation urged with other Christians, with Jews, and with followers of world's great religions (#47).

- The fact that the Kingdom of God is not identified with any temporal achievement cannot excuse us from lack of concern for concrete situations of today (#48).
- Eucharist is special call to commitment to development and peace (#48).
- In Marian Year, we ask Mary's intercession in this difficult moment of the modern world (#49).

## **Discussion Questions**

Why is Pope John Paul II critical of both liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism?

Has the socio-economic life of people in the rich countries of the world improved in the past twenty years? Of people in the poor countries?

Why is "development" more than simply economic progress? What is "authentic human development"?

What "structures of sin" could you name in the present global situation?



# **Centesimus Annus, Pope John Paul II 1991 - One Hundred Years - DIGNITY OF THE WORKER**

**Pope John Paul II, May 1, 1991**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

Centesimus Annus begins with a restatement and a current application of the major principles of Rerum Novarum. Pope John Paul II then addresses the relationship of the Church's social teaching to major trends and events in the past one hundred years with a special emphasis on the events in Eastern Europe in 1989. He misses no opportunity to affirm human dignity and human rights. The encyclical notes the fall of

“Real Socialism,” but cautions against thinking that this fall signifies a victory for capitalism.

## **DOCUMENT OUTLINE**

## **HISTORICAL NOTE**

Centesimus Annus was promulgated in May 1991, after the collapse of socialism in most of Eastern Europe and the conclusion of the Persian Gulf War, but before the collapse of the Communist Party in the Soviet Union. The encyclical, the ninth of John Paul II's pontificate, commemorates the one hundredth

anniversary of Rerum Novarum.

## **Introduction**

- Rerum Novarum is of “great importance” for the Church; the “vital energies” it unleashed continue to increase (#1).
- Rerum Novarum can be used to help look back at fundamental principles, “look around” at new events, and look to the future (#3).
- An analysis of history and current events is essential to the Church’s mission of evangelization (#3).

## **Characteristics of Rerum Novarum**

- Rerum Novarum attempted to respond to the conflict between capital and labor (#5).
- Leo XIII gave the Church a paradigm and a corpus to analyze, judge, and indicate directions for social realities (#5).
- To teach and spread her social doctrine is an essential part of the Church’s evangelizing mission (#5).
- There can be no genuine solution to the “social question” apart from the Gospel (#5).
- Rerum Novarum strongly affirms the dignity of work and the rights to private property, private associations, a just wage, and to discharge freely religious duties (#6-9).
- Rerum Novarum’s criticism of socialism and liberalism is still relevant today (#10).
- Rerum Novarum’s emphasis on the rights of the poor and the defenseless gives testimony to the continuity of the option for the poor (#11).
- The guiding light of Rerum Novarum is its view of human dignity (#11).

## **Toward the “New Things” of Today**

- The fundamental error of socialism is its misunderstanding of the human person as simply an element (#13).
- This error springs from atheism and results in a distortion of law and human

freedom (#13).

- Atheism and contempt for the human person cause class struggle and militarism (#14)
- The State, respectful of the principle of subsidiarity, has a positive role to play in determining the juridical framework of economic affairs (#15).
- The role of the workers' movement in economic reform has been an important one (#16).
- Rerum Novarum opposed ideologies of hatred and showed how violence could be overcome by justice (#17).
- Since 1945, in Europe, there has been a situation of non-war but not genuine peace:
  - many people lost the ability to control their own destiny;
  - an “insane” arms race swallowed up vital resources;
  - violent extremist groups found ready support;
  - the atomic threat oppressed the world (#18).
- After World War II, decolonization occurred. Genuine independence of developing nations is impeded by foreign economic and political control and the lack of a competent professional class (#20).
- Since 1945, the awareness of human rights—with the United Nations as a focal point—has grown (#21).
- The UN has not yet succeeded in establishing a continuously favorable development aid policy or an effective system of conflict resolution as an alternative to war (#21).

The Year 1989

- In 1989:
  - in Eastern Europe, oppressive regimes fell;
  - some Third World countries began a transition to more just and participatory structures (#22).
- The Church's commitment to defend and promote human rights was an important contribution to the events of 1989 (#22).
- Factors that contributed to the fall of oppressive regimes:

- violation of workers' rights (#23);
- inefficiency of the economic system (#24);
- spiritual void brought about by atheism (#24).
- Non-violent, peaceful protest accomplished almost all of the changes in Eastern Europe (#23).
- The events of 1989 would be unthinkable without prayer and trust in God (#25).
- The events of 1989 illustrate opportunities for human freedom to cooperate with the plan of God who acts in history (#26).
- In some countries, the events of 1989 resulted from an encounter between the Church and the workers' movement (#26).
- The events of 1989 illustrated that the Church's social doctrine of (as well as concrete commitment to) integral human liberation does not necessitate an "impossible" compromise between Christianity and Marxism (#26).
- International structures that can help rebuild, economically and morally, the countries that have abandoned communism are needed (#27).
- Marxism's fall has highlighted human interdependence (#27).
- Peace and prosperity are goods that belong to the whole human race (#27).
- Aid for Eastern Europe, without a slackening of aid for the Third World, is needed (#28).
- There must be a change in priorities and values on which economic and political choices are made (#28).
- The advancement of the poor is an opportunity for the moral, cultural, and economic growth of all humanity (#28).
- Development must be seen in fully human, and not merely economic, terms (#29).

### **Private Property and the Universality of Material Goods**

- Catholic social teaching affirms a right to private property that is limited by the common purpose of goods (#30).
- Work, which is in our day work with and for others, is the human response to God's gifts (#31).

· The possession of know-how, technology, and skill is surpassing land as the decisive factor of production (#32).

· The majority of people today do not have the means or the possibility of acquiring the basic knowledge to enter the world of technology and intercommunication. They are thus exploited or marginalized (#33).

· The human inadequacies of capitalism are far from disappearing (#33).

· Many human needs are not satisfied in a free market economy

(#34).

· It is a “strict duty of justice and truth” and a requirement of dignity to help needy people acquire expertise and develop the skill to enter the modern economy (#34).

· The State needs to control the market to guarantee that the basic needs of society are satisfied (#35).

· A business firm is a community of persons, endeavoring to meet their basic needs, who form a group at the service of society (#35).

· Human and moral factors are just as important as profit to the life of a business (#35).

· The defeat of “Real Socialism” does not leave capitalism as the only model of economic organization (#35).

· Stronger nations must offer weaker nations the opportunity to take their place in the international order (#35).

· The foreign debt of poorer countries needs to be handled in a way that respects the rights of peoples to subsistence and progress (#35).

· Consumerism has created attitudes and lifestyles which damage the physical and spiritual health of human beings (#36).

· It is necessary to create lifestyles in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness, and the common good determine choices (#36).

· The mass media has a special role to play in fostering a sense of general responsibility (#36).

· The ecological question emphasizes human responsibility to future generations (#37).

· Social structures can create environments conducive to sin which impede full human realization (#38).

- The family, founded on marriage, is the sanctuary of life (#39).
- True human alienation happens when a person refuses to transcend the self and live a self-giving life in an authentic human community that is oriented toward God (#41).
- The Marxist solution has failed, but marginalization, exploitation, and alienation still exist in the Third World (#42).
- The Church's social teaching should serve as an orientation, rather than as a model, toward solving problems (#43).

### State and Culture

- The root of modern totalitarianism is found in its denial of the transcendental dignity of the human person (#44).
- In defending her own freedom, the Church defends the dignity of the human person (#45).
- The Church values any democratic system that ensures its citizens' ability to participate in it (#46).
- Democratic systems need to solidify their foundations by explicitly recognizing certain rights, especially the rights to life, to work, and to establish a family (#47).
- Some democracies have lost the ability to make decisions for the common good (#48).
- States, respecting subsidiarity, need to guarantee freedom, security, and human rights (#48).
- The "Social Assistance" State leads to a loss of human energies; an inordinate increase in bureaucratic public agencies is not the best way to solve these problems (#48).
- The Church—through charity, solidarity, and volunteer work—has always been among the needy (#49).
- A culture achieves its character through the search for truth (#50).
- The Church's contribution to culture is to form human hearts for peace and justice (#51).
- A culture of peace needs to promote development and provide the poor with realistic opportunities (#52).

- This task may necessitate changes in lifestyle that reduce the waste of resources (#52).

### Humans as the Way of the Church

- The Church's purpose is the care and responsibility not only for humankind, but also for each individual (#53).

- The Church's social teaching is an instrument of evangelization for salvation (#54).

- The Church receives the "meaning of humankind" from Divine Revelation (#55).

- The Western countries run the risk of seeing the collapse of "Real Socialism" as a victory for their own systems and may fail to make necessary changes in those systems (#56).

- The social basis of the Gospel must function as a basis and motivation for action because witnessing for justice and peace is more credible than logical arguments (#57).

- The option for the poor is not limited to material poverty but encompasses cultural and material poverty as well (#57).

- Love is made concrete in the promotion of justice which requires changes in lifestyles, models of production and consumption, and structures of power (#58).

- Grace is needed for the demands of justice to be met (#59).

- The Church's social teaching enters into dialogue with the other disciplines concerned with humankind (#59).

- People who profess no religious beliefs can contribute to providing the social question an ethical foundation (#60).

- The Church feels obliged to denounce poverty and injustice although her call will not find favor with all (#61).

### Discussion Questions

Why did Pope John Paul II think that the fall of Marxism in Eastern Europe was not a victory for the market economies?

What are some of the responsibilities the Pope believes the richer nations have

toward the poorer ones?

What are some ways your nation can deal with economic injustices in other countries?

What are some things your parish or school could do to help form human minds and hearts for justice and peace?



# Outline and Reflections on Deus Caritas Est (God is Love) Pope Benedict XVI 2006

January, 2006, Encyclical by Pope Benedict XVI

Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)

## OVERVIEW

Christianity embraced, then deepened and broadened the Jewish faith.

Seek people of faith for renewed energy and commitment in response to God's love.

The doctrine is a set of fundamental guidelines offering approaches that are valid "even beyond the limits of the church.

They should be addressed in a dialogue with all those seriously concerned about the world.

The role of the Church is to teach natural law, to form consciences, to stimulate a better understanding of the demands of justice and the will to act accordingly - helping people to understand and engage in political struggle. He cannot remain on the margins, but it is not his role to make this teaching prevail.

Love is a unique reality with different dimensions[eros and agape]; either without the other is a caricature.

Love is a unique reality with different dimensions[eros and agape]; either without the other is a caricature.

This sacramental mysticism is social - Christ is one with all communicants; worship must lead to love.

Love of neighbor is the path to God's love.

In today's complex situation, particularly because of the growth of a globalized economy, the Church's social doctrine has become a set of fundamental guidelines offering valid approaches even beyond the limits of the Church: in the face of continuous development, these guidelines must be approached in the context of dialogue with all those seriously concerned for humanity and for the world in which we live.

## **Introduction: God is love.**

1. Christianity embraced, and then deepened and expanded Jewish faith. Looking to people of faith for renewed energy and commitment in response to God's love.

Part I: The Unity of Love in Creation and in Salvation History 2. Review of different popular uses of the term "love." Love between man and woman is the epitome of love.

3. Eros/Agape: Christian love new and distinct. A disciplining and purification of Eros, leading to Agape, a new vision of unifying love.

4. Pre-Christian world: promoted an eros that was not "divine madness" but degradation.

5. Love promises eternity, infinity, but needs discipline: integrating sexuality into overall existential freedom.

6. Song of Songs reflects two types of love – one insecure and searching; the other involving a real discovery of the other, seeking the good of the beloved, exclusive and forever.

7. Eros and Agape are connected, stages on a developmental path.

8. Love is a single reality with different dimensions [eros and agape]; either without the other is a caricature.

### The Newness of Biblical Faith

9. Image of God: One, Source of all creation who loves humans with a personal love that elects some for the healing of all; gives Torah to understand human nature and how to live.

10. God's eros for humanity is totally agape – gratuitous and forgiving: God turns against Self, God's love against God's justice; reconciles love and justice through Christ's death.

11. Image of humans: seeking wholeness in the other, complementarity. Only in communion with the opposite sex can he become complete: Eros seeking marriage. This monogamous love is icon of relation between God and the people.

### Jesus Christ – the incarnate love of God

12. Starting point: contemplation of pierced side of Christ, God's love seeking us out.

13. Enduring presence of this sacrificial offering in Eucharist: Logos gives self

as food.

14. This sacramental mysticism is social – Christ is one with all communicants; worship must lead to love.

15. Anyone who needs me, whom I can help is my neighbor: neighbor is universalized. Love of God and of humans is one.

Love of God and Love of Neighbor

16. Love of neighbor is the path to love of God.

17. Love of God grows to commitment of thought and sentiment.

18. Give every other person the love they crave. Only readiness to encounter the neighbor and show love makes one sensitive to God too.

Renew that capacity to love at the Eucharist, which leads to love of neighbor.

Part II: Caritas: The Practice of Love by the Church as a “Community of Love”

19. Church’s charitable activity: Trinitarian love; Christ’s Spirit moves us to love one another, become one human family.

20. Acts 2 & 4: no room in the faith community for a poverty that denies anything essential for a dignified life.

21. Diaconate is first organized structure in church for carrying out ministry of charity.

22. Essential activities of the Church: charity, sacraments, proclaiming the Word.

23. Diaconia: Lawrence declared the poor as the real treasure of the church.

24. Julian the Apostate declared charity as distinguishing feature of the Christian community.

25. Two essential facts: a. Church’s deepest nature: proclaim Word, sacraments, charity.

b. Church is God’s family in world so no one should go without the necessities of life. We have a

special responsibility to those within the church, but to all people also.

**Justice and Charity**

26. Rejects Marxist critique of charity as sustaining unjust system; pursuit of justice must be a fundamental norm of the State and the aim of a just social order is to guarantee to each person according to the principle of subsidiarity, his share of the community's goods.

27. CST is a set of fundamental guidelines offering approaches that are valid "even beyond the confines of the church." They should be addressed in dialogue with all who are seriously concerned with the world. This section states: "In 1891, the papal magisterium intervened with the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* of Leo XIII. This was followed in 1931 by Pius XI's Encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. In 1961 Blessed John XXIII published the Encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, while Paul VI, in the Encyclical *Populorum Progressio* (1967) and in the Apostolic Letter *Octogesima Adveniens* (1971), insistently addressed the social problem, which had meanwhile become especially acute in Latin America. My great predecessor John Paul II left us a trilogy of social Encyclicals: *Laborem Exercens* (1981), *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (1987) and finally *Centesimus Annus* (1991). Faced with new situations and issues, Catholic social teaching thus gradually developed, and has now found a comprehensive presentation in the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* published in 2004 by the Pontifical Council *Iustitia et Pax*. . .

In today's complex situation, not least because of the growth of a globalized economy, the Church's social doctrine has become a set of fundamental guidelines offering approaches that are valid even beyond the confines of the Church: in the face of ongoing development these guidelines need to be addressed in the context of dialogue with all those seriously concerned for humanity and for the world in which we live."

28. Relation between commitment to justice and charity a. Just ordering of society and state is a central responsibility of politics (autonomy of the temporal sphere; render to Caesar, etc.; religious freedom and harmony); State must recognize the Church as the social expression of the Christian faith. Justice is the aim and intrinsic criterion of all politics.

Faith purifies practical reason from blindnesses caused by power and special interests (Faith as an encounter with the living God that opens us and purifies our reason).

The role of the church is to teach natural law, form consciences, stimulate greater insight into the requirements of justice and readiness to act accordingly – helping people understand and take on the political battle. It can't stay on the sidelines, but it is not its role to make this teaching prevail.

b. Love, *caritas*, will always be needed; no society can be so just that it doesn't need it. Close loving personal concern vs. bureaucracy.

29. Formation of just structures not directly the duty of the Church, but of politics – the sphere of the autonomous use of reason. The indirect duty of the

Church is to contribute to purification of reason and reawakening of moral forces leading to establishment of just structures.

While the Church guides society in this way, “The direct duty to work for a just ordering of society, on the other hand, is proper to the lay faithful. As citizens of the State, they are called to take part in public life in a personal capacity. So they cannot relinquish their participation “in the many different economic, social, legislative, administrative and cultural areas, which are intended to promote organically and institutionally the common good.” The mission of the lay faithful is therefore to configure social life correctly, respecting its legitimate autonomy and cooperating with other citizens according to their respective competences and fulfilling their own responsibility. Even if the specific expressions of ecclesial charity can never be confused with the activity of the State, it still remains true that charity must animate the entire lives of the lay faithful and therefore also their political activity, lived as “social charity.”

The multiple structures of charitable service in the social context today 30.  
Struggle for justice and love today:

a. Instant global communications create a type of global solidarity – a sign of our times. States respond mainly through subsidies or tax relief; humanitarian associations through resources. The solidarity of civil society surpasses that of individuals.

b. They cooperate fruitfully and the church agencies bringing transparency and witness to love. Volunteer pro-grams provide formation in self-giving. Church cooperates with other faith communities with same goals.

Distinctiveness of the church’s charitable activity 31. Church’s character as a witness to all with the spark of love within.

Essential elements of Christian charity:

a. Simple response to immediate needs and specific situations; requires professional training and loving concern, formation of the heart.

b. Independent of parties and ideologies: not a means of changing the world ideologically; rejection of Marxist theory that charity supports the status quo of unjust systems. By making love present; we contribute to a better world only by personally doing good now with full commitment wherever opportunity arises, independent of partisan strategies and programs: we should cultivate a heart that sees where love is needed and acts accordingly.

c. Charity must not be used for converting others.

Those responsible for the church’s charitable activity 32. The Church at all levels from parishes to universal church is subject of charity. Bishops have primary responsibility as successors to apostles.

33. Personnel carrying out charity must not be inspired by ideologies aimed at improving the world, but must be grounded by faith working through love: people with a real relationship with Christ. Whoever loves Christ loves the church and wants it to be an ever better instrument and image of Christ's love.

34. Summary message: Love vs. clanging symbol: We must give of ourselves in the service.

35. With humility: the helper is not better than the one being helped. It is God's world and God's work; we are not personally responsible for it all.

34. Do not give into temptations to ideology or inertia or resignation; prayer needed as source of energy for service.

37. Reaffirm prayer rather than judging God or fanaticism or terrorism.

38. Job – faith keeps us going even when God is silent.

39. Faith, hope and charity go together: Faith: God gave us Son; God loves us and is love – see God's love in pierced heart of Christ on the cross: that love is God's light for the world. Hope: patience and humility.

#### Conclusion

40. Saints: Martin of Tours – irreplaceable value of individual testimony to charity; monastic witness, active orders.

41. Mary: visitation as service of charity/ magnificat as humility.

42. Mary is the Mother of all believers, and to "her we entrust the Church and her mission in the service of love."

#### **Prayer of Benedict XVI**

Holy Mary, Mother of God,

you have given the world its true light,

Jesus, your Son – the Son of God.

You abandoned yourself completely

to God's call and thus became a wellspring

of the goodness which flows forth from him.

Show us Jesus. Lead us to him.

Teach us to know and love him,  
so that we too can become capable of true love  
and be fountains of living water in the midst of a thirsting world. Amen.

**Reflection Questions:**

Why, at this time in history, is Benedict XVI stressing that our God is a God of love?

Why are we called to respond with both love and justice to human needs?

What is the role of lay people in the Church in promoting social justice?

(See section 29.)

The Pope declares that, without spiritual energy justice cannot prevail and prosper. How does the practice of love and openness generate spiritual energy?

# **CARITAS in VERITATE Pope Benedict XVI 2009**

**Caritas in Veritate, Charity in Truth Pope Benedict XVI, June 29, 2009**

The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

**Source : Education for Justice [www.educationforjustice.org](http://www.educationforjustice.org)**

## **OVERVIEW**

Caritas in Veritate addresses the social themes vital to the well-being of humanity and reminds us that authentic renewal of both individuals and society requires living by Christ's truth in love. Truth in love is the heart of the Church's social teaching. In this encyclical, Pope Benedict does not offer technical solutions to social problems, but rather focuses on the principles indispensable for authentic human development. The document draws on the past tradition of Catholic social thought and provides an ethical foundation that must both include and transcend politics in addressing the current crises and emerging signs of the times.

### **Introduction: [The basic theological framework]**

1. Charity in truth is the principle driving force behind the authentic development of every person and of all humanity.
  - a. Love moves people to engage in justice and peace
  - b. It has its origin in God, Eternal Love, Absolute Truth
  - c. God has a plan for each person; in it we find our own truth and good
  - d. The impulse for truth and love in each person is our vocation;
  - e. The search



for love and truth are purified and liberated by Jesus Christ (revelation)

2. Charity is at the heart of the Church's social doctrine: a. Every responsibility in personal and social relationships flows from it

b. God is Love; Love is God's greatest gift to us c. Charity/Love must give direction to moral responsibility in all areas; i. Our charity/love gives credibility to our truth in a social and cultural context which

relativizes truth.

3. Charity/love closely linked with truth is the authentic expression of humanity in all relations private and

public.

a. Without truth, charity/love becomes sentimentality.

4. Truth (logos) enables dia-logue, communication, communion.

a. "In the present social and cultural context where there is a widespread tendency to relativize truth, practicing charity in truth helps people to understand that adhering to the values of Christianity is not merely useful but essential for building a good society and for true integral human development."

[NB. It is the "values" – it doesn't say the Christian/Catholic faith is necessary.]

5. "Charity is love received and given." Received from God, given to others in networks of charity.

a. The church's social teaching and tradition: the truth of faith and of reason loved and demonstrated in the ever changing events of history –

in search of solutions to the grave socio-economic problems besetting humanity in this globalized society.

6. Caritas in veritate is the principle that takes practical form in criteria that govern moral action

a. E.g. Justice – Justice is "inseparable from charity," "intrinsic to it."

Justice is "the primary way of charity," "the minimum measure of it" - but charity goes "beyond justice and completes it in the logic of giving and forgiving."

7. E.g. Common Good – the good linked to living in society, the complex of institutions that structure the life of society juridically, civilly, politically and culturally, making it possible for people to effectively pursue their good within it.

- a. Striving to secure a common good corresponding to the real needs of our neighbors is the vocation of all according to their degree of influence.
- b. This is the political path of charity, no less excellent and effective than the kind of charity which encounters the neighbor directly.
- c. In an increasingly globalized society, the common good we work for must be global, the community of peoples and nations in unity and peace.

8. Paul VI in *Populorum Progressio* urged us to work for development with the ardor of charity and the wisdom of truth: the gift of God's love enables us to hope for development for all.

a. Following John Paul II in *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, this encyclical commemorates and revisits those teachings on integral human development and applies them to today.

9. The risk of our time: the interdependence of people and nations is not matched by ethical interaction of consciences and minds that could give rise to truly human development.

a. Technical progress and relationships of utility can't achieve that.

b. The church's mission is to search for truth from all sources, integrate it and mediate it within the constantly changing life-patterns of peoples and nations – a service to the truth that sets us free and makes

authentic human development possible.

Chapter One: The Message of *Populorum Progressio* 10. We will look at *Populorum Progressio* in the full context of Paul's teaching and the church's social doctrine.

11. Paul taught 2 important truths:

a. The whole church in all it is and does is promoting integral human development.

b. Authentic human development concerns the whole of the person in every single dimension (including the transcendent).

i. Progress mustn't be reduced to merely material accumulation.

ii. Nor is the creation of institutions sufficient to guarantee the right to development.

iii. "integral human development is primarily a vocation, and therefore it involves a free assumption of responsibility in solidarity on the part of everyone."

iv. Receiving God's love enables us to see others as images of God and motivate concern and care.

12. The church's social teaching is one integral, coherent body that remains open to changing times and gives us guidance for responding to our times.

13. Paul's social teaching focused on building a society according to freedom and justice, a civilization animated by love.

a. He understood the social question had become worldwide and saw Christian charity as a driving force in service of development.

14. In *Octogesima Adveniens*, he spoke out against idealizing technology or technical progress – and against a return to nature.

15. In *Humanae Vitae*, he forcefully maintains the link between life ethics and social ethics.

a. In *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, he highlighted the links between evangelization and development: that work

for justice, peace and development proclaim Christ's love for the whole person.

16. In *Populorum Progressio*, he teaches that every person is called to develop and fulfill himself/herself – it is a vocation from God; so progress in development must be open to the transcendent.

17. Integral human development presupposes responsible freedom.

a. He recognized the importance of economic structures and institutions,

b. but saw them as instruments of human freedom. Each one is the principal agent of his/her own development.

18. Besides freedom, integral human development demands respect for its truth. It must promote the development of each and all – development of the whole person. Christ is the revelation of that authentic development.

19. The causes of underdevelopment are not primarily material. They are a lack of solidarity and sense of community.

a. Recognizing God loved us and calls us to love enables us to see the interdependence of peoples as a call to community in one family.

20. That love creates a sense of urgency in creating a global community of love.

Chapter Two: Human Development in our Time

21. Benedict embraces Paul VI's vision of development: a. Goal: rescuing

peoples from hunger, deprivation, endemic diseases, illiteracy

i. Economically: their active participation as equals in the international economy

ii. Socially: their evolution into educated societies marked by solidarity iii.

Politically: the consolidation of democratic regimes capable of ensuring freedom, peace.

iv. Result: real growth, of benefit to everyone, genuinely sustainable.

b. The model of development in recent decades: i. A technological approach driven by profit ii. Growth, but problematic:

1. financial speculation damaging the real economy in the current crisis

2. migration

3. unregulated exploitation of earth's resources c. We need a new holistic understanding and humanistic synthesis; profound cultural renewal.

d. The crisis is an opportunity for discernment.

22. Development today has many overlapping layers with many different causes:

a. Wealth increasing, but glaring inequalities are growing in poor and wealthy nations

b. Corruption and illegality

c. Failure to respect the rights of workers d. Aid diverted through irresponsible actions of donors/recipients e. Same patterns in immaterial or cultural causes of development/underdevelopment:

i. Rich nations: excessive protection of intellectual property (especially in Health)

ii. Poor nations: cultural patterns which hinder development 23. Some nations have made technological and economic progress and become global powers, but that isn't enough.

a. John Paul II called for a comprehensive new plan of development in 1991; but that has been achieved only in part and is still needed.

24. The world is much more integrated today economically and politically.

a. National sovereignty is limited by trade and finance agreements b. We need to reevaluate and remodel the roles and powers of public officials to enable them to deal with today's challenges.

c. Once their roles are more clearly defined, we could foresee a greater role for

civil society.

25. Systems of social protection and welfare are weakened a. Outsourcing has led to a new competition among states to attract

investment with tax breaks and labor restrictions, leading to a downsizing of social security systems.

b. Social cutbacks often demanded by international financial institutions

c. Danger for the rights of workers and the economic security of the people

d. Aggravated by the weakening of trade unions.

e. There is an urgent need for new forms of cooperation at international and local levels.

f. The mobility of labor plus deregulation can stimulate wealth production and cultural exchange, but tends to create psychological instability, waste social resources, create new forms of economic marginalization.

g. Remember: the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is the human person.

26. Culturally, the change is even greater. Increased commercialization leads to 2 dangers:

a. Cultural eclecticism – leading to relativism b. Cultural leveling – leading to loss of cultural identity 27. Insecurity due to food shortages.

a. Ending hunger is essential for safeguarding peace and stability b. Needed:

i. A network of economic institutions to guarantee regular access to sufficient food and water

ii. Structural causes of food insecurity need to be addressed with the involvement of local communities

1. Rural infrastructures

2. Irrigation systems

3. Transport

4. Organization of markets

5. Development and dissemination of agricultural technology iii. Equitable agrarian reform

iv. Recognition of the rights to food and water v. Solidarity with poor countries

financially so they can help their citizens satisfy these needs. This can help protect the productive capacities of rich countries.

28. Respect for life is an important development question today: a. Poverty provokes high infant mortality rates b. Demographic control and laws that promote abortion, birth control, contraception, sterilization, euthanasia

c. Openness to life is important to motivate the drive to development; it is essential to promoting production that is “morally sound and marked by solidarity, respecting the fundamental right to life of every people and every individual.”

29. Denial of the right to religious freedom (killing, terrorism motivated by fundamentalism, etc.) and the promotion of religious indifference or practical atheism both undermine the moral and spiritual strength needed

for attaining integral human development.

30. Authentic human development requires dialogue and engagement at all levels of human knowledge; it isn't enough to just work together on practical implementation. Anyone animated by true charity/love works skillfully to discover the causes of misery, find the means to combat it and overcome it. Charity/love engages various disciplines of knowledge.

31. Moral evaluation and scientific research must go hand in hand with charity animating both.

a. Excessive segmentation of knowledge, the rejection of metaphysics by the sciences, difficulties in dialogue between science and theology damage development by making it harder to see the integral good of persons.

b. The broadening of our concept of reason and its application is indispensable.

32. The new challenges to development today demand new solutions: a. Found together

b. Through respectful dialogue

c. Contemplated through a lens purified by charity.

d. The dignity of the individual and the demands of justice today (as well as economic logic and civil coexistence) require: i. that economic choices do not cause disparities in wealth to increase excessively

ii. that we prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone.

e. Economic science and moral evaluation converge on this judgment.

f. Reduction of cultures to the technological dimension with its focus on the

short term impedes long-term cooperation and enrichment.

i. Reducing protection of the rights of workers or abandoning methods of wealth redistribution to compete internationally for investment hinders lasting development.

ii. The current model of development's tendencies toward short-term economy must be rethought and revised. It is demanded by the state of the ecology and by the cultural and moral crisis of humanity.

33. The current economic and financial crises make the theme of progress more acute and urgent.

a. Some nations have emerged from poverty, but some remain as in Paul VI's day or have deteriorated.

b. Causes:

i. High tariffs imposed by developed countries ii. The difficulties of the transition from decolonization c. The principal new feature: Globalization, the explosion of worldwide interdependence.

i. It is a new challenge to charity in truth: broadening the scope of reason to know and direct the forces of globalization toward creating the civilization of love whose seeds God planted in every people and culture.

Chapter Three: Fraternity, Economic Development and Civil Society 34. "Gift" is the key experience of our lives; it reveals our transcendent

dimension.

a. Those who think they are self-made are selfishly turned in on themselves because of original sin.

i. Original sin is seen in social conditions and the structures of society, including the economy.

ii. The sense of human self sufficiency leads to identifying happiness and salvation with material prosperity and social action.

iii. This leads to trying to keep questions of morality out of the economy.

iv. The loss of the sense of transcendence means the loss of Christian hope, a powerful social resource serving integral human development.

v. Hope, truth, love are all gifts; they are received by all and so are a gift that builds universal community.

b. The principle of gratuity – of gift given that inspires giving – has an important

place in economic, social and political development that is authentically human.

35. The market is the economic institution for exchange of goods and services.

a. It is governed by commutative (contract) justice.

b. CST also highlights the importance of distributive justice and social justice because

i. the market belongs within a larger social and political context ii. and operates within a wider network of relations c. "Without internal forms of solidarity and mutual trust, the market cannot completely fulfill its proper economic function. And today it is this trust which has ceased to exist. . . ."

d. It is not true the market system requires a quota of poverty and underdevelopment.

i. It is in the interests of the market to promote emancipation.

ii. To do that it needs the moral energies it cannot provide itself.

36. The political community must direct economic activity towards the common good.

a. Economic action seen merely as an engine for wealth creation produces grave injustices.

b. Political action must pursue justice through redistribution.

c. Economic activity is not intrinsically evil; i. how it is shaped by culture and used by individuals makes it good or evil

ii. it must be structured and governed in an ethical manner, integrating authentically human social relationships of friendship, solidarity and reciprocity.

iii. This means not merely traditional ethical principles like transparency, honesty and responsibility, but also the principle of gratuitousness and the logic of gift as an expression of community have their place within normal economic activity.

37. Justice must be applied to every phase of economic activity.

a. It is wrong to say economic activity is just to create wealth, which can then be distributed later.

b. Space must be created in the market for economic activity not directed primarily toward profit.

c. In the global era, competitive models in different cultures differ.



i. Commutative justice will be the main form of regulating exchanges between them.

ii. But just forms of redistribution and the spirit of gift are also needed.

38. John Paul II saw civil society as the natural setting for an economy of gratuitousness and community.

a. "In the global era, economic activity cannot prescind from gratuitousness, which fosters and disseminates solidarity and responsibility for justice and the common good among the different economic players."

i. Solidarity is first and foremost a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone, and it cannot therefore be merely delegated to the State.

ii. Today it is clear that without gratuitousness, there can be no justice in the first place.

b. We need a market with room for commercial entities based on mutualist principles and pursuing social ends to take root. Then hybrid forms of commercialization could emerge.

i. Shape and structure must be given to those types of economic initiative which, without rejecting profit, aim at a higher goal than profit as an end in itself.

39. Paul VI called for creation of a model of market economy capable of including all peoples and not just the better off.

a. When the market and government are kept in separate realms, solidarity in relations between citizens, participation, and actions of gratuitousness are lost.

b. To defeat underdevelopment, we need not only just exchange-based transactions (commutative justice) and public welfare structures (distributive justice), but also increasing openness world-wide to forms of economic activity marked by gratuitousness and communion.

40. Today's international economic scene requires a profoundly new way of understanding business enterprise.

a. It is a danger to be responsible only to investors: i. the need for capital drives short-term thinking ii. outsourcing production weakens the sense of responsibility to local regions and stakeholders

b. Awareness is growing that management must assume responsibility for all stakeholders who

contribute to the life of the business: workers, clients, suppliers, community of reference.

c. Investors also need to look at the moral significance of their investments – the impact on the stakeholders

i. Speculative financial investment seeking only short-term profit without concern for long-term sustainability must be avoided.

ii. Outsourcing production and jobs simply to gain economic advantage or to exploit without making a real contribution to local society by helping to bring about a robust productive and social system is wrong.

41. Business enterprise involves a wide and widening range of values because it is a human activity in response to the needs and dignity of the worker and the needs of society.

a. There needs to be cross fertilization between for-profit and non-profit, etc. if we are to construct an economy that will serve the national and global common good.

b. Political authority also involves a wide range of values that need to be noted in constructing a new order of socially responsible, human economic productivity.

c. The State is not obsolete in the global age. It must collaborate with other States more.

i. The focus of international aid within a solidarity-based plan for the global economy should consolidate constitutional, juridical and administrative systems where needed.

ii. The articulation (diversification) of political authority at the local, national and international levels is one of the best ways of directing the process of economic globalization.

42. Globalization is not a deterministic socio-economic process with no way to evaluate or direct it.

a. Humanity is increasingly interconnected; there is an encounter of cultures.

b. It is the product of diverse cultural tendencies which must be discerned.

c. The truth of globalization is given in the unity of the human family developing toward the good.

d. We need a sustained commitment to “promote a person-based and community-oriented cultural process of world-wide integration that is open to transcendence.”

i. We shouldn't be simply anti-globalization; we should be protagonists.

ii. Suitably understood and directed, globalization could open up unprecedented large-scale redistribution of wealth on a world-wide scale.

iii. Badly directed, it can lead to increased poverty, inequality and global crisis.

iv. We must appropriate the ethical spirit that drives globalization toward solidarity if

we are to avoid the risks and dangers.

#### Chapter Four: The Development of People, Rights and Duties, the Environment

##### 43. Human solidarity imposes duties.

a. Too much focus on rights can lead to the claim of arbitrary and non-essential rights in wealthy countries.

b. The unrealized fundamental rights to food, water etc. among people

in poverty globally imply duties in solidarity in the developed world that set a limit to questionable rights claims.

c. Rights are grounded in human nature, not constitutions; this is the guarantor of authority at all levels.

##### 44. Population Growth

a. It is not the cause of underdevelopment

i. Developed nations have less infant mortality ii. Serious Decline in birth rates brings signs of crisis b. Responsible procreation does not reduce sexuality to pleasure or entertainment; nor does it regulate it through mandatory birth control.

c. The family should be the primary competence in dealing with procreation.

d. Morally responsible openness to life represents a rich social and economic resource.

i. States are called to enact policies promoting the centrality and integrity of the family.

##### 45. The economy needs people-centered ethics to function correctly.

a. “ethical” is used in many ways and needs to be discerned.

b. CST is based on the creation of the person “in the image of God”

which implies

i. The inviolable dignity of the human person ii. The transcendence of natural moral norms.

c. We don't just need ethical sectors of the economy; we need to ensure that the whole economy is ethical.

46. With all business required to be ethical, the traditional distinction between for-profit and non-profit organizations no longer does full justice to reality; nor can it direct the future.

a. This is a broad new sector which doesn't exclude profit but considers it a means for achieving

human and social ends, a more humane market and society i. They assume more completely the duties of economic subjects to all stakeholders.

b. These need to find juridical and fiscal structures to support and protect them in all countries.

47. The strengthening of these different types of business is important in poor nations as well.

a. Development programs must stay focused on the centrality of the human person, promote subsidiarity and responsibility, involve the people they will affect in planning them, be flexible and fit their circumstances, and benefit their daily lives.

b. International cooperation requires the solidarity of presence, supervision, training and respect.

i. They must evaluate their bureaucratic structures ii. And commit themselves to transparency.

48. Duties arising from our relationship to the natural environment a. The environment is a gift of God to all; in using it we have a responsibility to all humanity through time.

b. God gave it an in-built order from which we can draw principles for use/care of it and for guiding us in shaping culture and interacting.

c. It is not more important than people; nor may we aim at total technical domination of it.

d. Projects for integral human development need to be marked by solidarity and intergenerational justice while taking into account many contexts: ecological, juridical, economic, political and cultural.

49. The energy problem

- a. Some hoard energy resources.
- b. Poor nations cannot afford access to available non-renewable energy sources or to finance research into alternatives.
- c. These give rise to exploitation and conflicts.
- d. The international community has an urgent duty to find institutional ways to regulate the exploitation of non-renewable resources, working with the poor countries to plan together for the future.
- e. There is a pressing need for renewed solidarity
  - i. Technologically advanced societies can and must lower their energy consumption.
  - ii. A world-wide redistribution of energy resources is needed;
  - iii. Everyone must responsibly recognize their impact on future generations.

50. This responsibility is global.

- a. Responsible stewardship using advanced technologies will enable the earth to accommodate and feed the world's population.
- b. Authorities must ensure that the economic and social costs of using up shared environmental resources are recognized with transparency and borne fully by those who incur them, not others or future generations.

51. The way humanity treats the environment influences the way it treats itself and vice-versa.

a. This calls for review and renewal of life-styles so "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."

b. Violations of solidarity and civic friendship harm the environment and vice versa.

i. Wars squander resources; peace provides them greater protection.

ii. Hoarding of resources (especially water) can generate serious conflicts.

c. The church has a responsibility to creation and must assert it.

i. The deterioration of nature is closely connected to the culture that shapes human life.

ii. Respect for life and respect for environment go hand in hand.

52. Truth and love can only be received as a gift from God.

a. The vocation given us is intrinsic to a plan prior to us which constitutes a

duty: it shows us the  
road to true development.

## Chapter Five: The Cooperation of the Human Family

53. One of the deepest forms of poverty is isolation; as a spiritual being, the human creature is defined through interpersonal relations. Identity matures by living these relations authentically.

a. The unity of the human family doesn't submerge the identities of individuals, peoples, and cultures, but relates and links them more transparently in their diversity.

54. Development: the inclusion-in-relation of all individuals and peoples within one community of the human family, built in solidarity on the basis of justice and peace.

a. Like life in the Trinity or the sacramental love of spouses.

55. Christianity teaches relationality is essential.

a. Other faiths that promote it are valuable for authentic human development.

b. Faiths which divide or ossify society in rigid social groupings impede it.

c. Discernment by those with political power is needed to promote emancipation and inclusivity in the context of truly universal human community.

56. Faiths can offer their contribution to development only if God and religion have a place in the public square.

a. Exclusion of religion and religious fundamentalism both hinder an encounter between persons and their collaboration for the progress of humanity.

b. Reason always needs purification by faith and religion always needs to be purified by reason.

57. For believers, the world derives from God's plan, giving rise to the duty to unite with all of good will of whatever faith to make the world correspond to God's plan: living as one family before God.

a. Subsidiarity is the guiding criterion for cooperation: i. It is assistance to human persons to help them accomplish what they can't on their own through autonomous intermediate bodies.

1. It is institutional assistance that frees people to assume responsibility.

2. It protects against an all-encompassing welfare state.

3. It helps to coordinate manifold plans.

b. The governance of globalization must be marked by subsidiarity, articulated into several layers, helping different levels work together.

58. The principles of Subsidiarity and Solidarity must remain closely linked to resist social privatism or paternalistic social assistance.

a. Concerning international development aid:

i. Must not lock people in dependence or pursue secondary objectives ii. Must be distributed with the involvement of governments and local economic agents and bearers of culture in civil society in the receiving countries

iii. Must involve participation of the local people b. The principal need for assistance may be the opening of markets for their products.

i. International trade regulations and finance for development to support this are needed.

59. Cooperation for development is not simply economic; it involves an encounter of cultures.

a. Technologically advanced societies should not presume cultural superiority

b. In all cultures there are signs of ethical convergence as an expression of the one human nature – natural law.

c. Grounded in the common quest for truth and love, this universal moral law is the foundation of all dialogue.

60. Development aid is a valid means of creating wealth for all.

a. Greater percentages of GDP of economically developed nations should go to international development aid.

i. They can find domestic savings by applying the principle of subsidiarity to create better integrated domestic welfare systems with the active participation of private citizens and civil society.

ii. One approach could be fiscal subsidiarity or donor designation of a portion of their taxes (but be careful against the promotion of special interests).

61. Greater international solidarity is seen in promoting greater access to education.

a. It must be based on the nature of the human person and not promote relativism.

b. International tourism must be designed to promote genuine mutual understanding in a context of rest and health recreation – avoiding the evils of sex tourism or consumerist and hedonistic patterns.

62. Migration is massive and requires bold policies of international cooperation.

a. They should begin from close collaboration between the countries of origin and destination.

b. They require international norms to coordinate different legislative systems to safeguard the rights and needs of migrants and their families and those of the host countries.

c. Foreign workers make significant contributions to the economic development of the host country and of their home country (through remittances).

i. They cannot be considered just a commodity, a factor of production.

ii. Each is a human person with fundamental inalienable rights that must be respected by all.

63. Poverty and unemployment are directly linked a. The dignity of human work is violated when work opportunities are limited or a low value is put on it and the related right to a just wage and personal security for the worker and family.

b. John Paul II supported the ILO strategy of a global coalition in favor of “decent work”

i. Work that expresses the essential dignity of the worker in their society

ii. Work that is freely chosen, effectively associating workers with the development of their community

iii. Work that enables the worker to be respected and free from discrimination

iv. Work that makes it possible for families to meet their needs and educate their children without child labor

v. Work that permits workers to organize freely and make their voices heard

vi. Work that leaves room for rediscovering one’s personal, familial and spiritual roots

vii. Work that guarantees retirement with a decent standard of living 64. Labor unions must be open to the new perspectives opening in work: a. Conflict between worker and consumer



b. The needs of workers outside their membership, especially in developing countries where social rights are often violated.

c. Civil society is the proper setting for unions to defend and promote labor, especially the exploited and unrepresented workers.

65. Finance must go back to being an instrument directed toward improved wealth creation and development.

a. The entire financial system has to be aimed at sustaining true development.

b. This is the ethical foundation of finance; right intention, transparency and the search for positive results must not be separated.

E.g. credit unions

c. Regulation of the financial sector to protect the weak and new forms of finance to support development should be encouraged, highlighting the responsibility of the investor.

d. Micro-finance should be strengthened and fine-tuned.

66. Global interconnectedness has led to the emergence of the new political power of consumers and their associations.

a. Purchasing is always a moral act; consumers have a social responsibility.

b. In difficult economic times, it is necessary to explore forms of cooperative purchasing like the consumer coops.

c. Fair trade practices to guarantee producers from deprived areas of more just returns are helpful; they must be transparent, provide formation of producers.

67. With the unrelenting growth of global interdependence, there is an urgent need for reform of the UN and the economic institutions and international finance.

a. There is also urgent need to implement the principle of the responsibility to protect.

b. And giving poorer nations an effective voice in shared decision-making c. There is urgent need of a true world political authority, regulated by law, observing the principles of subsidiarity and solidarity to seek to

establish the common good, to commit to securing authentic integral human development inspired by the values of charity in truth, to:

i. Manage the global economy,

- ii. Revive economies hit by the crisis,
  - iii. Avoid any deterioration of the present crisis and the greater imbalances that would occur,
  - iv. Bring about integral and timely disarmament, food security and peace,
  - v. Guarantee the protection of the environment and regulate migration.
- d. It must be universally recognized and vested with effective power to ensure security for all, regard for justice, and respect for rights e. The integral development of peoples and international cooperation require the establishment of a greater degree of international ordering, marked by subsidiarity, for the management of globaliza-tion.

Chapter Six: The Development of Peoples and Technology 68. Development involves the person and human freedom; it cannot be achieved simply through technology.

69. Technology is an expression of human freedom.

- a. It can be used to give dominion over matter, reduce risks, save labor, improve conditions of life.
- b. Technology reveals the human aspiration toward development, the drive to overcome limitations.
- c. So it must reinforce the covenant between human beings and the environment mirroring God's creative love.

70. We need to avoid fascination with technology becoming an ideological mindset that limits our sense of truth and reality to the technologically possible and useful.

- a. Technology must be seen as a human creation to be used in service of responsible freedom which is a response to the call of being.

71. This mindset is present when development is considered a purely technical matter – economic, financial, etc.

- a. Development can never be fully guaranteed by impersonal economic or political forces.
- b. It requires upright people whose consciences are finely attuned to the common good.

72. Peace-building is not simply a technical process either. The voices of the people affected must be heard and attended to; they must be brought together and their development served on the basis of love and mutual understanding.

73. The means of social communication are pervasive and influential in engineering changes in attitude toward reality and the human person.

a. When the strictly technical nature of the media is stressed, people tend to overlook its use to promote economic interests and ideological efforts to impose cultural models.

b. Their technological advances can have a civilizing effect when they are geared toward a vision of the person and the common good that reflects truly universal values.

c. Their most important contribution is to contribute to growth in the communion of the human family and the ethos of society by promoting universal participation in the common search for what is just.

74. Bioethics is so advanced today that it faces the temptation of deciding science explains everything, God is not necessary. That is in the end irrational.

75. As it comes to understand more of the mysteries of life, we face the danger of:

a. Systematic eugenic programming of births on one extreme and a pro-euthanasia mindset on the other

b. These imply a cultural mindset that denies human dignity; they foster a materialistic and mechanistic understanding of human life.

i. This leads to indifference to situations of human degradation, arbitrary and selective determination of what is worthy of respect

1. Insignificant matters are considered shocking.

2. The poor of the world and their great needs are ignored.

76. Development must include spiritual growth as well as material growth

- a. Spiritual growth must not be reduced to psychological growth.

b. "A prosperous society, highly developed in material terms but weighing heavily on the soul, is not of itself conducive to authentic development."

c. "There cannot be holistic development and universal common good unless people's spiritual and moral welfare is taken into account, considered in their totality as body and soul."

77. There is always a 'something more' beyond empirical data or the love we receive that calls us to know and love more.

- a. They are experienced as gift.

b. Glimpsing a development beyond what technology can give invites pursuing the integral human development that takes its direction from the driving force of charity in truth.

## Conclusion

78. “Openness to God makes us open towards our brothers and sisters and towards an understanding of life as a joyful task to be accomplished in solidarity.”

a. Only a humanism open to the Absolute can guide us in promoting and building structures, institutions, culture and ethos in service of the universal common good.

b. It gives us the courage to keep working for the benefit of all even when it can't be achieved immediately or completely.

79. Development needs Christians moved by the knowledge that truth-filled love from which authentic development proceeds is not produced by us but is given as gift.

a. Christians long for the entire human family to be one in God, to glorify God by living according to God's will, “to receive the daily bread we need,

to be understanding and generous towards our debtors, not to be tempted beyond our limits, and to be delivered from evil.”

# LAUDATO SI 2015 Pope Francis 2015 - The safeguarding of the common house

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The original full document is available on:

[www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH](http://www.bit.ly/SOCIALDOCTRINEOFCATHOLICCHURCH)

## OVERVIEW

WHAT PASSES IN OUR HOUSE: water, destruction of biodiversity, social degradation, inequality, weak reactions THE Gospel of Creation: The light of faith, the wisdom of the Bible, the common destination of goods, the gaze of Jesus THE HUMAN ROOT OF ECOLOGICAL CRISIS: Technology (creativity and power), globalization of the technocratic paradigm, crisis and consequences

AN INTEGRAL ECOLOGY: economic and social, cultural, of daily life, including the common good and justice between generations GUIDELINES AND ACTION: Other Lifestyle, Education, Ecological Conversion, Joy and Peace, Civil and Political Love, Sacraments, Trinity and Creature Relationship, Queen of Creation

## Summary

**Pope Francis' Encyclical Laudato Si ("Praise be to you") is a worldwide wake up call to help humanity** understand the destruction that man is rendering to the environment and his fellow man. While addressing the environment directly, the document's scope is broader in many ways as it looks at not only man's effect on the environment, but also the many philosophical, theological, and cultural causes that threaten the relationships of man to nature and man to each other in various circumstances. This document is in many ways the epitome of Pope Francis. It is an unexpected topic. **It presents Gospel truths. And, it provides a challenge for every believer (and non-believers too).** From the outset, Pope Francis states the goal of the document: "In this Encyclical, I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home" (#3).

Normally, papal documents are addressed to the bishops of the Church or the lay faithful. But, similar to Pope Saint John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*, Pope Francis address his message to all people.

**The goal of the dialogue: “I urgently appeal, then, for a new dialogue about how we are shaping the future of our planet. We need a conversation that includes everyone, since the environment challenge we are undergoing, and its human roots, concern and affect us all” (#14).** The above is at the heart of the document, but **Pope Francis also has a very striking call to conversion for those in the Church as well.**

“The ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion.

It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and thus become inconsistent. So what they all need is an ‘ecological conversion’, whereby the effects of their encounter with Jesus Christ become evident in their relationship with the world around them. **Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience” (#217)** Chapter Summaries and Quotes

## **CHAPTER ONE – WHAT IS HAPPENING TO OUR COMMON HOME**

**Goal:** “Theological and philosophical reflections on the situation of humanity and the world can sound tiresome and abstract, unless they are grounded in a **fresh analysis of our present situation, which is in many ways unprecedented in the history of humanity.** So, before considering how faith brings new incentives and requirements with regard to the world of which we are a part, I will briefly turn to what is happening to our common home” (#17).

**Message:** “But a sober look at our world shows that the degree of human intervention, often in the service of **business interests and consumerism, is actually making our earth less rich and beautiful,**

**ever more limited and grey, even as technological advances and consumer goods continue to abound limitlessly. We seem to think that we can substitute an irreplaceable and irretrievable beauty with something which we have created ourselves” (#34).**

## **CHAPTER TWO – THE GOSPEL OF CREATION**

**Goal:** “Why should this document, addressed to all people of good will, include a chapter dealing with the convictions of believers? I am well aware that in the areas of politics and philosophy there are those who firmly reject the idea of a Creator, or consider it irrelevant... Nonetheless, science and religion, with their distinctive approaches to understanding reality, can enter into an intense

dialogue fruitful for both” (#62).

**Message:** “**We are not God. The earth was here before us and it has been given to us....** Although it is true that we Christians have at times incorrectly interpreted the Scriptures, nowadays **we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over the earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures.**”

**The biblical texts** are to be read in their context, with an appropriate hermeneutic, recognizing that they **tell us to ‘till and keep’ the garden of the world (cf. Gen 2:15).** ‘Tilling’ refers to cultivating, ploughing or working, while ‘keeping’ means caring, protecting, overseeing and preserving. This implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature. Each community can take from the bounty of the earth whatever it needs for subsistence, but it also has the duty to protect the earth and to ensure its fruitfulness for coming generations” (#67)

### ***CHAPTER THREE – THE HUMAN ROOTS OF THE ECOLOGICAL CRISIS***

**Goal:** “It would hardly be helpful to describe symptoms without **acknowledging the human origins of the ecological crisis. A certain way of understanding human life and activity has gone awry, to the serious detriment of the world around us.** Should we not pause and consider this? At this stage, I propose that we focus on the dominant technocratic (efficiency, production, and wealth accumulation) paradigm and the place of human beings and of human action in the world” (#101).

**Message:** “It can be said that many problems of today’s world stem from the tendency, at times unconscious, to make the method and aims of science and technology an epistemological paradigm which shapes the lives of individuals and the workings of society. The effects of imposing this model on reality as a whole, human and social, are seen in **the deterioration of the environment, but this is just one sign of a reductionism which affects every aspect of human and social life.**”

We have to accept that technological products are not neutral, for they create a **framework which ends up conditioning lifestyles and shaping social possibilities along the lines dictated by the interests**

**of certain powerful groups” (#107).**

### ***CHAPTER FOUR – INTEGRAL ECOLOGY***

**Goal:** “Since everything is closely interrelated, and today’s problems call for a vision capable of taking into account every aspect of the global crisis, I suggest that we now consider some elements of an integral ecology, one

which clearly respects its human and social dimensions” (#137).

**Message:** “We urgently need a humanism capable of bringing together the different fields of knowledge, including economics, in the service of a more integral and integrating vision. Today, the analysis of environmental problems cannot be separated from the analysis of human, family, work related and urban contexts, nor from how individuals relate to themselves, which leads in turn to how they relate to others and to the environment” (#141).

## ***CHAPTER FIVE – LINES OF APPROACH AND***

### ***ACTION***

**Goal:** “So far I have attempted to take stock of our present situation, pointing to the cracks in the planet that we inhabit as well as to the profoundly human causes of environmental degradation. Although the contemplation of this reality in itself has already shown **the need for a change of direction and other courses of action, now we shall try to outline the major paths of dialogue which can help us escape the spiral of self-destruction which currently engulfs us**” (#163).

**Message:** “Interdependence obliges us to think of one world with a common plan. Yet the same ingenuity which has brought about enormous technological progress has so far proved incapable of finding effective ways of dealing with grave environmental and social problems worldwide. A global consensus is essential for confronting the deeper problems, which cannot be resolved by unilateral actions on the part of individual countries.” (#164)

## ***CHAPTER SIX – ECOLOGICAL EDUCATION AND***

### ***SPIRITUALITY***

**Goal:** “Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. We lack an awareness of our common origin, of our mutual belonging, and of a future to be shared with everyone. This basic awareness would enable the development of new convictions, attitudes and forms of life. A great cultural, spiritual and educational challenge stands before us, and it will demand that we set out on the long path of renewal” (#202).

**Message:** “In calling to mind the figure of Saint Francis of Assisi, we come to realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion, which entails the recognition of our errors, sins, faults and failures, and leads to heartfelt repentance

and desire to change” (#218).