

Shaping A New World

The Catholic Social Justice Tradition 1891-2006 (Updated to 2014)

1891 – Leo XIII
RERUM NOVARUM
The Condition of Labor

Lays out rights and responsibilities of capital and labor. Describes proper role of government. Condemns atheistic socialism.

1931 – Pius XI
QUADRAGESIMO ANNO
The Reconstruction of the Social Order

Decries the effects of greed and concentrated economic power on working people and society. Proposes a society based on subsidiarity.

1961 – John XXIII
MATER ET MAGISTRA
Christianity and Social Progress

Deplores widening gap between rich and poor nations, arms race and plight of farmers. Calls Christians to work for a more just world.

1963 – John XXIII
PACEM IN TERRIS
Peace on Earth

Affirms full range of human rights as the basis for peace. Calls for disarmament and a world-wide public authority to promote universal common good.

1965 Vatican II
GAUDIUM ET SPES
The Church in the Modern World

Laments growing world poverty and threat of nuclear war. States responsibility of Christians to work for structures to make a more just and peaceful world.

1967 – Paul VI
PROGRAM POPULORUM
The Development of Peoples

Affirms right of poor nations to full human development. Decries economic structures promoting inequality. Calls for new international organizations and agreements

The modern social teaching of the Church is found primarily in papal encyclicals and synod documents. Starting with Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum, the body of thought has evolved through the years, shaped by the social, economic, political and cultural realities of the times. Certain key themes pervade the teaching and are developed in response to the needs of the historical period in which the document was written:

1971 – Paul VI
OCTOGESIMA ADVENIENS
A Call to Action

Calls for political action for economic justice. Develops role of individual Christians and local churches in responding to unjust situations.

1971 – Synod of Bishops
JUSTICE IN THE WORLD

Names action for justice a constituent part of being Christian. Calls the Church to model the justice she preaches.

1975 – Paul VI
EVANGELII NUNTIANDI
Evangelization in the Modern World

Notes the dramatic societal changes and their challenges to the Church. Calls evangelization the transforming of all aspects of life from within.

1979 – John Paul II
REDEMPTOR HOMINIS
Redeemer of Humankind

Describes the threats to human dignity and freedom. States that current economic and political structures are inadequate to remedy injustice.

1987 – John Paul II
SOLLICITUDO REI SOCIALIS
The Social Concerns of the Church

Names East-West blocs and other “structures of sin” which hinder development of poor nations. Calls for solidarity and for an option for the poor by affluent nations.

1991 – John Paul II
CENTESIMUS ANNUS
The 100th Year

Reaffirms principles of Rerum Novarum. Identifies failures of both socialist and market economies. Calls for society of free work, enterprise and participation.

2005 – Benedict XVI
DEUS CARITAS EST
God is Love: The First Encyclical of Pope Benedict XVI signed on 12/25/05; promulgated on 1/25/06

Pope Benedict reflects on the concepts of eros, agape & logos and how they relate to the Teachings of Christ

2007 – Benedict XVI
SPE SALVI
Saved in Hope

Pope Benedict asks about the relationship between hope and redemption. He then proceeds to link these two Christian concepts to the theological virtue of faith.

2009 – Benedict XVI
CARITAS IN VERITATE
Charity in Truth

Concerned with the problems of global development and progress towards the common good, arguing that both Love and Truth are essential elements of an effective response.

2013 – Francis I
Lumen Fidei
The Light of Faith

Pope Francis building upon the draft prepared by Pope Benedict stresses the need today to understand and value the importance of faith. He develops four themes: faith as light; an encounter with God; hearing and seeing; and journey. He tells us Faith can benefit and unite all people in society.

2013 – Pope Francis I
Evangelii Gaudium
The Joy of the Gospel
In this Apostolic Exhortation Pope Francis shares his vision of the Catholic Church dedicated to evangelization focusing on society's poorest and most vulnerable, including the elderly and unborn. The Pope calls for a church which is poor and for the poor. He tells us “the poor have much to teach us; we are called to find Christ in them; we must lend our voices to their causes, be their friends, listen to them, speak for them, and embrace the mysterious wisdom which God wishes to share with us through them.”

- ❑ Primacy of the Person
- ❑ Social Nature of the Human Person
- ❑ Common Good Inseparable from Good Persons
- ❑ Solidarity of the Human Family
- ❑ Subsidiarity as the Rule of Social Organization
- ❑ Participation as a Basic Right
- ❑ Dignity of Work
- ❑ Universal Purpose of Goods
- ❑ Special Claim of the Poor & Vulnerable

This chart and its titled Shaping a New World The Catholic Justice Tradition 1891 – 2006 were prepared by NETWORK Education Program. For printed resources and speakers on social justice principles and issues, contact NETWORK, a National Catholic Social Justice Lobby, 801 Pennsylvania Avenue, S.E., Ste. 460, Washington, DC 20003, Tel. (202) 547-5556, Fax (202) 547-5510.

Revised and updated by Catholic Charities in the Diocese of Paterson, NJ, February, 201

Communities of Salt and Light

(Bishops' statement on parish life as the center of living out Catholic Social Teaching-1993)

Confronting a Culture of Violence (Stand Against Violence 1994)

A Decade after Economic Justice for All

(Bishops' statement in commemoration of the 10th anniversary of their 1986 Pastoral Letter on Economic Justice-1996)

A Catholic Framework for Economic Life

(Bishops' statement listing 10 basic moral principles for economic decision making-1996)

The Common Good and the Catholic Church's Social Teaching
(Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales-1997)

Called To Global Solidarity

(Bishops' statement on global interdependence-1997)

Living the Gospel of Life: A Challenge to American Catholic-1998

Everyday Christianity-1998

LOVE THY NEIGHBOR AS THYSELF – 1998

A Good Friday Appeal to End the Death Penalty-1999

Faithful Citizenship-1999

In All Things Charity-1999

RESPONSIBILITY, REHABILITATION, AND RESTORATION - 2000

A Place at the Table (A Catholic recommitment to overcome poverty and to respect the dignity of all God's children-2002)

Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope (A pastoral letter concerning migration- 2003)

Welcome the Stranger Among Us: Unity in Diversity

(A USCCB statement on the pastoral needs of immigrants in the U.S. and a call for a welcoming posture at the parish level-2003)

STRANGERS NO LONGER: TOGETHER ON THE JOURNEY OF HOPE

A PASTORAL LETTER CONCERNING MIGRATION – 1/22/03

A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death

A USCCB statement calling for an end to the use of the death penalty-2005

Labor Day 2006: A Labor Day Reflection on Immigration and Work Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, September 4, 2006
Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, November 2007 UCCB

Labor Day 2008: An American Catholic Tradition Bishop William F. Murphy, September 1, 2008 Spanish Version/En Español

Respecting The Just Rights Of Workers, JUNE 2009 UCCB

Labor Day 2009: The Value of Work Bishop William Murphy September 7, 2009 Spanish Version/En Español

Labor Day 2010: A New “Social Contract” for Today’s “New Things” Bishop William Murphy, September 6, 2010

Letter to Super Committee: Treatment Of Jobless, Hungry And Homeless Is Moral Measure Of Deficit Reduction Bishop Stephen E. Blaire and Bishop Howard J. Hubbard, August 31, 2011

A Statement on Poverty in New Jersey by the Catholic Bishops of New Jersey November 21, 2011

NOTE

To view a complete document, copy and paste the title of the document with the date, if shown, into the search box on your browser.