

OPTION FOR THE POOR CALL TO CHARITY

If the question be asked: How ought man to use his possessions? the Church replies without hesitation: "as to this point, man ought not regard external goods as his own, but as common so that, in fact, a person should readily share them when he sees others in need. RN # 35-36 --1891

No one, certainly, is obliged to assist others out of what is required for his own necessary use or for that of his family... But when the demands of necessity and property have been met, it is a duty to give to the poor out that, which remains. RN #35-6 ---1891

The economic prosperity of any people is to be assessed not so much from the sum total of goods and wealth possessed as from the distribution of goods according to norms of justice. M&M #74

One may not take as the ultimate criteria in economic life the interests of individuals or organized groups, nor unregulated competition, nor excessive power on the part of the wealthy, not the vain honor of the nation or its desire for domination, nor anything of this sort. Rather it is necessary that economic undertaking be governed by justice and **charity** as the principal laws of social life. M&M #36-39

It has also the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its weaker members, the workers, women, and children. It can never be right for the State to shirk its obligation of working actively for the betterment of the condition of the workingman. M&M # 20

The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the people of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, those are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ. GS #1—1965

The split between the faith which many profess and their daily lives deserves to be counted among the more serious errors of our age. Long since, the Prophets of the Old Testament fought vehemently against this scandal and even more did Jesus Christ himself in the New Testament threaten it with grave punishments GS #43---1965

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

Both for nations and for individual man, avarice is the most evident form of moral underdevelopment. PP#19

No one can remain indifferent to the lot of his brother 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". PP#74

In teaching us charity, the Gospel instructs us in the preferential respect due the poor and the special situation they have in society: the more fortunate should renounce some of their rights so as to place their goods more generously at the service of others. A Call to Action 1971 #23

The church directs her attention to those new poor—the handicapped and the maladjusted, the old, different groups of those on the fringe of society, in order to recognize them, help them, defend their place and dignity in a society hardened by competition and the attraction of success. A Call to Action 1971 #15

For love implies an absolute demand for justice, namely recognition of the dignity and rights of one's neighbor. Justice attains its inner fullness only in love. Because every person is truly a visible image of the invisible God and a sibling of Christ, The Christian finds in every person God himself and God's absolute demand for justice and love. Justice in the world—1971 #34

A Change of mentality is needed, no longer seeing the poor as a burden, or as intruders trying to profit from others, but as people seeking to share the goods of the world so that we can create a just and prosperous world for all CA 1991 #28

The free market appears to be the most efficient tool for utilizing resources and responding to needs. But this is true only if you are able to buy and sell. Justice and truth demand that basic human needs should be met and that none should be left to perish. CA 1991 #34

Love for others, and especially the poor, is made concrete by promoting justice. CA 1991 #58

DIGNITY OF THE WORKER/SOLIDARITY/LIVING WAGE

It must not be supposed that the church so concentrates her energies on caring for souls as to overlook things which pertain to mortal and earthly life.

RN #42—1891

It is shameful and inhuman, however, to use men as things for gain and to put no more value on them than what they are worth in muscle and energy.

RN #31 –1891

The oppressed workers, above all, ought to be liberated from the savagery of greedy men, who inordinately use human beings as things for gain. Assuredly, neither justice nor humanity can countenance the exaction of so much work that the spirit is dulled from excessive toil and that along with it the body sinks crushed from exhaustion. The working energy of a man, like his entire nature, is circumscribed by definite limits beyond which it cannot go. RN #59 ---1891

Every effort must therefore be made that fathers of families receive a wage large enough to meet ordinary family needs adequately. But this cannot always be done under existing circumstances, social justice demands that changes be introduced as soon as possible whereby such a wage will be assured to every adult workingman,

QA 71 ---1931

Individual human beings are the foundation, the cause and the end of every social institution. That is necessarily so, for men are by nature social beings. This fact must be recognized, as also the fact that they are raised in the plan of Providence to an order of reality that is above nature. MM #219 ---1961

It is not enough merely to formulate a social doctrine; it must be translated into reality. And this is particularly true of the Church's social doctrine, the light of which is Truth, Justice its objective, and Love its driving force. MM #226 ---1961

If the organization and structure of economic life be such that the human dignity of workers is compromised, or their sense of responsibility is weakened, or their freedom of action is removed, then we judge such an economic order to be unjust, even though it produces a vast amount of goods, whose distribution conforms to the norms of justice and equity. MM #83 ---1961

Beginning our discussion of the rights of man, we see that every person has the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means which are suitable for the proper development of life, these are primary food, clothing, shelter, rest medical care, and finally the necessary social services. Therefore a human being also has the right to security in

case of sickness, inability to work, widowhood, old age, unemployment, or in any other case in which one is deprived of the means of subsistence through no fault of one's own. PT 11--- 1963

Any human society, if it is to be well-ordered and productive, must lay down as a foundation this principle, namely, that every human being is a person; that is, human nature is endowed with intelligence and free will. Indeed, precisely because one is a person one has rights and obligations flowing directly and simultaneously from one's very nature. And these rights and obligations are universal and inviolable, so they cannot in any way be surrendered. PT # 8-10 --- 1963

It is not enough, for example, to acknowledge and respect every man's right to the means of subsistence if we do not strive to the best of our ability for sufficient supply of what is necessary for his sustenance.

PT #31-32 ---1963

Furthermore—and this must be specially emphasized – the worker has a right to a wage determined according to criteria of justice, and sufficient, therefore, in proportion to the available resource, to give workers and their families a standard of living in keeping with the dignity of the human person. PT #20 ---1963

The dignity of the human person involves the right to take an active part in public affairs and to contribute one's part to the common good of the citizens. For, Our Predecessor of happy memory, Pius XII, pointed out: "The human individual, far from being an object and, as it were, a merely passive element in the social order, is in fact, must be and must continue to be, its subject, its foundation and its end. PT #26 –1963

The government should make similarly effective efforts to see that those who are able to work can find employment in keeping with their aptitudes, and that each worker receives a wage in keeping with the laws of justice and equity. It should be equally the concern of civil authorities to ensure that workers be allowed their proper responsibility in the work undertaken in industrial organization, and to facilitate the establishment of intermediate groups which will make social life richer and more effective.

PT # 64 ---1963

Excessive economic and social disparity between individuals and peoples of the one human race is a source of scandal and militates against social justice, equity, human dignity, as well as social and international peace.

GS #29 ---1965

This council lays stress on reverence for the human person; all people must consider their neighbor without exception as another self,

taking into account, first of all, life and the means necessary to living it with dignity, so as not to imitate the rich man who had no concern for the poor man Lazarus. GS #27 ---1965

The social order and its development must constantly yield to the good of the person, since the order of things must be subordinate to the order of persons and not the other way around. GS ---1965

The social order requires constant improvement; it must be founded in truth, built on justice, and enlivened by love: it should grow in freedom towards a more humane equilibrium. If these objectives are to be attained there will first have to be a renewal of attitudes and far-reaching social changes, GS #26 ---1965

The fundamental purpose of this productivity must not be the mere multiplication of products. It must not be profit or domination, Rather, it must be the service of the human person, and indeed of the whole person, viewed in terms of one's material needs and the demands of one's intellectual, moral spiritual, and religious life. And when we say human person, we mean every person whatsoever and every group of people. of whatever race and from whatever part of the world.

Consequently, economic activity is to be carried out according to its own methods and laws but within the limits of morality, so that God's plan for humanity can be realized. GS #64---1965

Excessive economic, social and cultural inequalities among peoples arouse tensions and conflicts, and are a danger to peace. PP #76 ---1967

There can be no progress towards the complete development of individuals without simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity. PP # 43 ---1967

Unless the Christian message of love and justice shows its effectiveness through action in the cause of justice in the world. It will only with difficulty gain credibility with people of our times. Justice in the World #35 ---1971

For love implies an absolute demand for justice, namely recognition of the dignity and rights of one's neighbor. Justice attains its inner fullness only in love. Because every person is truly a visible image of the invisible God and a sibling of Christ, the Christian finds in every person God himself and God's absolute demand for justice and love. Justice in the World #34 ---1971

But above all we must remember the priority of labor over capital: labor is the cause of production: capital, or the means of production, is its mere instrument or tool. LE #12 ---1981

We must pay more attention to the one who works than to what the worker does. This self-realization of the human person is the measure of what is right and wrong. LE #6---1981

Work is in the first place "for the worker" and not the worker "for work." Work itself can have greater or lesser objective value, but all work should be judged by the measure of dignity given to the person who carries it out. LE #6 ---1981

We must consequently continue to study the situation of the worker. There is a need for solidarity movements among and with the workers. The church is firmly committed to this cause. In fidelity to Christ, and to be truly the "church of the poor." LE #8 ---1981

Yet the workers rights cannot be doomed to be the mere result of economic systems aimed at maximum profits. The thing that must shape the whole economy is respect for the worker's rights within each country and all through the world economy. LE #17 ---1981

Solidarity...is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortune of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all. SRS #38 ---1987

Next to the underdevelopment of the man, there is a superdevelopment for the few. Superdevelopment leads to a throw away society and to enormous waste. Excessive access to all kinds of things,-- sometimes called consumerism—enslaves people and does not make them happy. The more one possesses, the more one wants, while the deeper human hopes remain unsatisfied and even stifled. "Having" more things does not necessarily mean "being" more or being better. "Having" only helps us when it contributes to a more complete "being." SRS #28 ---1987

The social message of the Gospel has always been a basis for action. SRS #39

Solidarity is a Christian virtue. It seeks to go beyond itself to total gratuity, forgiveness, and reconciliation. It leads to a new vision of the unity of humankind, a reflection of God's triune intimate life. SRS #40---1987

One must denounce the economic, financial, and social mechanisms and structures that are manipulated by the rich and powerful for their own benefit at the expense of the poor. SRS #16-1987

The church has no technical solutions to offer, but being an "expert in humanity" the church has something to say about the nature, conditions, requirements, and aims of authentic development and the obstacles that stand in the way. The church's social teaching is not a third way between capitalism and communism. It is not an

ideology. Its aim to guide Christians, it asks for a "commitment to justice."

SRS #41 ---1987

Material goods and the way we are developing the use of them should be seen as God's gift to us. They are meant to bring out in each one of us the image of God. We must never lose sight of how we have been created from the earth and from the breath of God

SRS #29 ---1987

Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the persons they are.

CA #11 --- 1991

To overcome today's individualistic mentality, a concrete commitment to solidarity and charity is needed, beginning in the family. CA #49 ---1991

A change of mentality is needed, no longer seeing the poor as a burden, or as intruders trying to profit from others, but as people seeking to share the goods of the world so that we can create a just and prosperous world for all. CA #28 ---1991

MCA/LAITY

It must not be supposed that the church so concentrates her energies on caring for souls as to overlook things which pertain to mortal and earthly life.

RN #42

It is not enough to merely formulate a social doctrine. It must be translated into reality. And this is particularly true of the Church's social doctrine, the light of which is truth, Justice its objective, and love its driving force. MM #226 --- 1961

There are three stages, which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice.

First, one reviews the concrete situation;

Secondly, one forms a judgment on it in light of these same principles.

Thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles.

These are three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms, observe, judge, act. MM #236 ---1961

Thus the church, at once "a visible organization and a spiritual community," travels the same journey as all of humanity and shares the same earthly lot with the world it is a **leaven** and, as it were, the

soul of human society in its renewal by Christ and transformation into the family of God. GS #40 --- 1965

Christians must be conscious of their specific and proper role in the political community; they should be a shining example by their sense of responsibility and their dedication to the common good; they should show in practice how authority can be reconciled with freedom, personal initiative with solidarity and the needs of the social framework as a whole, and the advantages of unity with the benefits of diversity.

GS # 75 ---1965

Laymen should take up as their own proper task the renewal of the temporal order. If the role of the hierarchy is to teach and interpret authentically the norms of morality to be followed in this matter, it belongs to the laity, without waiting passively for orders and directives, to take the initiatives freely and to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures of the community in which they live. OA #48---1971

The members of the church, as members of society, have the same right and duty to promote the common good, as do other citizens. Christians ought to fulfill their temporal obligations with fidelity and competence. They should act as a **leaven** in the world, in their family, professional, social, cultural and political life. JW #38 --- 1971

Christians specific contribution to justice is the day-to-day life of individual believers acting like the **leaven** of the Gospel in their family, their school, their work and their social and civic life. JW #49 ---1971 Our mission demands that we should courageously denounce injustice, with charity, prudence and firmness, in sincere dialogue with all parties concerned. We know that our denunciations can secure assent to the extent that they are an expression of our lives and are manifested in continuous action. JW#57 ---1971

Love for others, and especially for the poor, is made concrete by promoting justice. CA #58 --- 1991

The first and fundamental structure for a "human ecology" is the family, founded on marriage, in which the mutual gift of self as husband and wife creates an environment in which children can be born and grow up.

CA 39 ---1991

The social message of the Gospel is and always has been a basis for action.

CA # 39 --- 1991

The struggle between good and evil will continue as long as time lasts. The kingdom of God, being "in" the world, without being "of" the world, throws a critical light on society, calling everyone, especially

the laity, to infuse human reality with spirit of the Gospel. CA #25 ---
1991

As far as the church is concerned, the social message of the Gospel must not be considered a theory, but above all a basis and a motivation for action. Today more than ever, the church is aware that her social message will gain credibility more immediately from the witness of actions that as a result of its internal logic and consistency. CA #57 ---1991

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