

THE SOCIAL TEACHING OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

The Church's Social Teachings

— to build a just society

— to live lives of holiness amidst the challenges of modern society

Life and Dignity of the Human Person, Part I *(RED Table)*

- human life is sacred – people are precious, more important than things
 - attacks
 - abortion – killing of unborn
 - euthanasia – killing of the old, infirm, sick, disabled
 - needs
 - food
 - clothing
 - shelter, housing
 - education
 - work
- protect the right to life by avoiding conflicts and war and find peaceful solutions

Life and Dignity of the Human Person, Part II *(GREEN Table)*

- dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision of society – the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person
 - attacks
 - cloning, embryonic stem cell research
 - death penalty
 - attacks on civilians in war – terrorist attacks
 - subhuman living conditions
 - slavery, prostitution, human trafficking
 - arbitrary imprisonment, deportation
 - disgraceful working conditions
 - needs
 - freedom to choose
 - dignity and acceptance

Call to Family, Community and Participation *(YELLOW Table)*

- each person is sacred and social
- how society is organized (in economics, politics, law and policy) affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community
 - marriage and the family need to be supported and strengthened, not undermined
 - people have the right and duty to seek the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable

Rights and Responsibilities *(BLACK Table)*

- human dignity needs to be protected
- a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met
 - right to life
 - right to things required for human decency: shelter, clothing, medical care
 - responsibilities to one another, family and society

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

(PURPLE Table)

- a basic moral test of society – how are our most vulnerable members faring?
 - see final judgment in Matthew 25:31-46
 - put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first
 - tax money should benefit the poor
 - price of goods should benefit the producers of those goods
 - the rich must give some of their money to charity that helps the poor
- divisions between rich and poor
 - right to the necessities of life
 - independence
 - able to exercise initiative to make a contribution toward their economic prosperity
 - to advance culturally and to share in political and social life
- causes of some conflicts and war
 - real and serious grievances
 - poverty
 - exploitation of desperate people
 - promote peace
 - equality, fairness
 - speak for the voiceless
- assess our lifestyles, policies & social institutions for their impact on the poor
 - reduce debt of poor nations

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

(ORANGE Table)

- the economy must serve people, not the other way around
- work is more than a way to make a living
 - it's a form of continuing participation in God's creation
 - work has dignity and must be respected
 - decent and fair wages
 - organization of membership in unions
 - private property
 - economic initiative

Solidarity

(PINK Table)

- we are one human family, whatever our national, religious, ethnic, economic and ideological differences
- as one family, we seek real connections – giving charity as love, not just money
- we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers
 - loving our neighbor has global dimensions
 - pursuit of justice and peace both locally and globally
- we must promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict

Care for God's Creation

(BLUE Table)

- we show respect for our creator by our stewardship of creation
 - to protect people and the planet
 - to live our faith in relationship to God's creation
- we cannot ignore the moral and ethical dimensions of the environment

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