

# Topic: Catholic Social Teaching

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IHM

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

# Opening Prayer

In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit, Amen.

“Lord, give bread to those who hunger, and to those who have bread, give a hunger for justice.” Amen.

—Latin American prayer

Justice in the World, 1971 Synod

**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.**

8/24/23

Sandra Foy

# Catholic Social Teaching

- CST is an application of Scripture (particularly the Prophets) and the Gospel values and teachings of Jesus to our modern-day challenges.
- “Beginning” in 1891 with *Rerum Novarum* (The Condition of Labor) and continuing through today.
- Encyclicals, Conciliar Documents, Papal Teachings, Synods & Bishops add to this deposit of teaching.
- <http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/foundational-documents.cfm>

# The Two Feet of Love *in Action*

"The conscience is called by this social teaching to recognize and fulfill the obligations of **justice** and **charity** in society."

*—Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 43*

"**Social justice**. . . concerns the social, political, and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions."

*—Compendium, no. 201*

"The Church cannot neglect the service of **charity** any more than she can neglect the Sacraments and the Word. . . . Those who are able to make offerings in accordance with their means. . . to support orphans, widows, the sick, and those who for other reasons find themselves in need, such as prisoners and foreigners."

*—Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est no. 22*



# 7 Principles of Catholic Social Teaching

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5SVDhKVfrm8>

**Sometimes**

I want to ask God why He allows poverty, famine and injustice in the world when He could do something about it, but I'm afraid He might just ask me the

**same question**

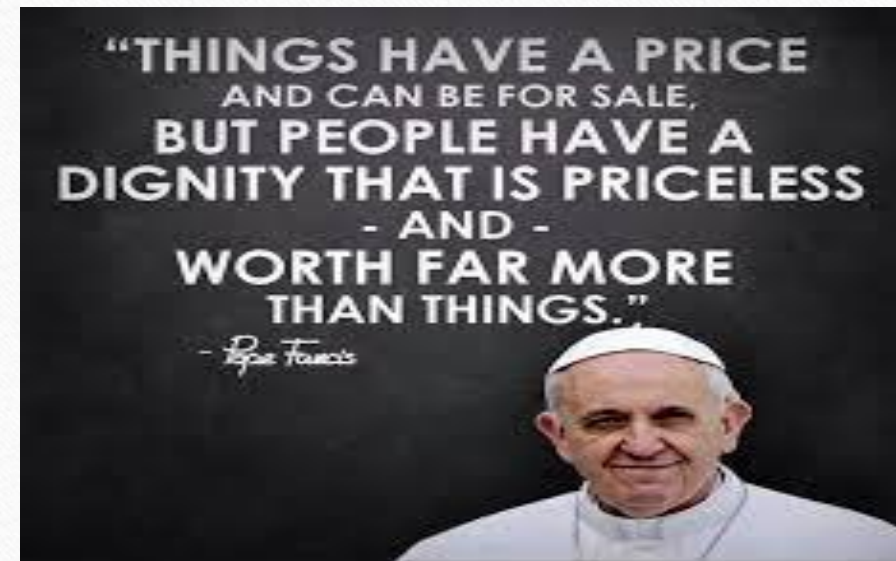
The infographic features a blue background with a large white number '7' inside a dashed circle at the top left. Below it, the title 'Themes of Catholic Social Teaching' is written in a white, elegant script font. At the bottom left, there is a small logo and the website address 'www.norfolkcountycatholics.com'. To the right of the title, seven colored rectangular boxes list the themes: purple, dark blue, green, gold, orange, pink, and red.

- Life & Dignity of the Human Person
- Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Options for the Poor and Vulnerable
- The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- Solidarity
- Care for God's Creation

# Life and Dignity of the Human Person

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- “The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society.” (USCCB)
- “This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.” (USCCB)
- “We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.” (USCCB)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=10&v=ABRl2ZSs58E&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=10&v=ABRl2ZSs58E&feature=emb_logo)



# Call to Family, Community, & Participation

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- “The person is not only sacred but also social.” (USCCB)
  - “How we organize our society -- in economics and politics, in law and policy -- directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community.” (USCCB)
  - “Marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined.” (USCCB)
  - “We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.” (USCCB)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=8&v=giQgWakrgQs&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=8&v=giQgWakrgQs&feature=emb_logo)



# Rights and Responsibilities

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- “The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.” (USCCB)
- “Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency.” (USCCB)
- “Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities--to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.” (USCCB)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=OPB6sXj6Fwo&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=OPB6sXj6Fwo&feature=emb_logo)

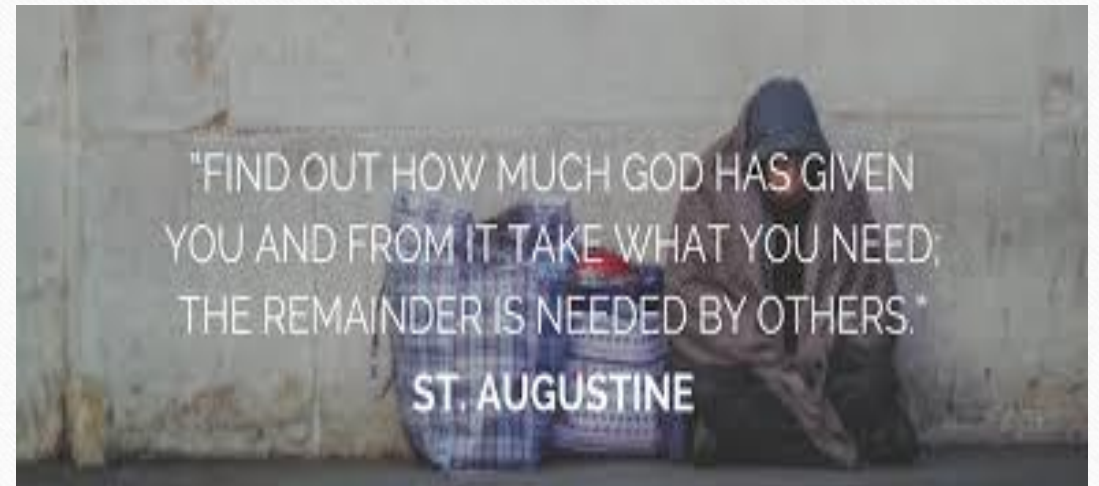




# Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

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- “A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring.” (USCCB)
- “In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.” (USCCB)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?time\\_continue=1&v=c3gxBjtOzNM&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?time_continue=1&v=c3gxBjtOzNM&feature=emb_logo)



# The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

- “The economy must serve people, not the other way around.” (USCCB)
- “Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation.” (USCCB)
- “If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected--the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.” (USCCB)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXH7G1RkD8I&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tXH7G1RkD8I&feature=emb_logo)

Many people would like the poor to always say that it is God's will that they are poor.

**It is not God's will for some people to have everything and others to have nothing.**

This cannot be of God.

ARCHBISHOP ÓSCAR ARNULFO ROMERO



CUSLAR  
COMMITTEE ON U.S.-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS



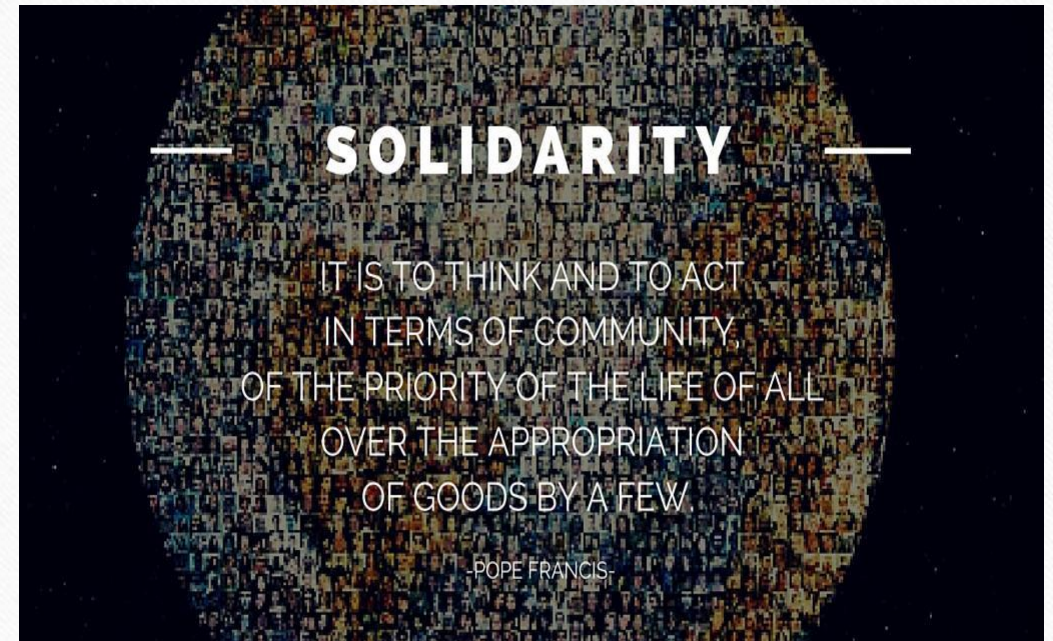
[cuslar.org](http://cuslar.org)

# Solidarity

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- “We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences.” (USCCB)
- “We are our brothers and sisters keepers, wherever they may be.” (USCCB)
- “Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world.” (USCCB)
- “At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace.” (USCCB)
- “Pope Paul VI taught that if you want peace, work for justice.” (USCCB)
- “The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.” (USCCB)

- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cteMjwOBPtW&feature=emb\\_logo](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cteMjwOBPtW&feature=emb_logo)



# Care for God's Creation

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- “We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation.” (USCCB)
- “Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan, it is a requirement of our faith.” (USCCB)
- “We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of Gods creation.” (USCCB)
- “This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.” (USCCB)

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wSnXuCxiHXE>



# Discussion Questions

- Please share:
  - What questions did this topic and readings raise in your heart or mind?
  - What aspects of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) do you find uplifting and encouraging?
  - What aspects of CST do you find difficult or challenging?
  - In what practical ways could you and I live out these teachings more in our lives?
  - What is one concrete action you could take right now in support of CST?

Closing Prayer: The Work of Christmas Begins  
by Michael Dougherty, a variation on Howard Thurman's  
'When the Song of the Angels is Stilled'

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When the carols have been stilled,

When the star-topped tree is taken down,

When family and friends are gone home,

When we are back to our schedules

The work of Christmas begins:

To welcome the refugee,

To heal a broken planet,

To feed the hungry,

To build bridges of trust, not walls of fear,

To share our gifts,

To seek justice and peace for all people,

To bring Christ's light to the world.

Amen.