

# Catholic Social Thought

“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” (*Synod on Justice in the World, 1974*).

- Economic and political decisions must be based on human dignity
- The primacy of persons over things and of human labour over capital
  - Equality of man and woman
  - Preferential option for the poor
  - Right to life and defence of the human person
- Constitutions must be based on the rights and responsibilities of each human person and nation
  - Promote the good of all because we are all responsible for all
- Right of government to intervene for common and individual good
  - The market economy must be governed by justice and oriented to the common good
- Common good is attained through cooperation and mutual assistance
- Rich nations are called to sacrifice income and power for common good
  - Live simply so that others may simply live
- Development must respect nature and the common good: human dominion over the Earth is not absolute
- Everyone has a right to good water and food, the fruits of God’s creation
  - Riches and freedom create a special obligation
  - Aid less-developed countries without thought of domination
  - All nations have equal dignity and right to self-development
    - Every human person and nation is interdependent
    - All individuals and nations should share in development
      - Development is a means to peace
      - Right to work and the dignity of work
    - Right of workers to assemble, to unionize, and to a just wage
- Workers are part owners of the enterprise in which they invest labour
- Resources are not for arms but for the alleviation of human misery
  - Disarm, simplify lifestyles, and eliminate waste in rich nations
    - Christian duty calls for participation in public life
      - Infuse one’s culture with a Christian spirit
- Accept responsibility for one’s share in injustice and for conversion
  - Sinful structures exist and must be overcome
  - Social justice is integral to our faith commitment
- Challenging injustice is an essential part of evangelization

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