

Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching is also called Catholic Social Doctrine, Social Doctrine of the Church, Catholic Social Thinking

See: ["Caritas in Veritate" - Benedict XVI's social encyclical \(published 7 July 2009\)](#)

15 Major Themes of Catholic Social Teaching (by Kevin Ahern)

1. The Dignity of the Human Person

Every person from "conception to natural death" is sacred and made in the image and likeness of God (Gen. 1: 27). Human Rights are an important recognition of this.

2. Common Good

We are called to work together to promote and protect the Common Good which ensures the dignity of all people in our local, national, and international communities.

3. Solidarity

As human beings we are interdependent with one another, both near and far. Solidarity helps us to recognize that what touches one of us, affects us all.

4. The Central Role of the Family

Although, diverse in form and traditions, families around the world play an important role as the "the basic unit of society" and they must be protected and supported.

5. Preferential Option for the Poor and the Marginalized

Whatever we do (or not do for) to the poorest of our society, we do to Jesus. Every public policy decision and personal choice must be seen in how they affect the poor.

6. Rights and Responsibilities

Our inherent dignity gives us basic human rights but also places on us corresponding responsibilities (duties) to ourselves and others to ensure that their rights are also protected.

7. The Proper Role of Government and Subsidiarity

Structures of society (local and national government, the UN) have an important role to play when local levels cannot solve problems, but they should be mindful of the limits and responsibilities to their power. Such institutions are not ends in themselves. They must be at the service of persons and the common good.

8. Participation and Citizenship

People have a responsibility to take active roles in our various communities (local, national, and global) and to make moral decisions when we vote.

9. Economic Justice

People must be at the center of the economy and economic structures. People have the right to private property but no one has the right to excessive wealth at the expense of others.

10. Integral Human Development

Development is much more than poverty eradication but must treat the whole person. People must be empowered to be agents in building up their own futures.

11. [Stewardship of God's Creation](#)

God has given to us the gift of creation with the special responsibility to watch over and protect it. This gift has been given for the benefit of all of humanity, present and future.

12. Peace

We are called to be peacemakers and peace is not just absence of war but must also address issues of justice, forgiveness, and reconciliation.

13. Migration

People have the right to migrate and move in search of better lives for them and their families. Christians are called to welcome the “stranger” as if they were Christ.

14. Rights and Dignity of Workers

The right to work is a fundamental human right. To ensure that workers not be exploited, workers may form associations or unions to protect their dignity.

15. Ecumenical and Interfaith Dialogue

We are called to work with all men and women of good will for the betterment of society, including those who have views different than our own.