



Seven Principles of Catholic Social Teaching



DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON: (*If we follow this, everything else falls into place.*) Every human person is created in the image and likeness of God; therefore, each person's life and dignity must be respected. People do not lose dignity because of age, disability, lack of success, immigration status, race, or even sin.

Whether a person is an innocent unborn child in a mother's womb or a convicted criminal on death row, that human life is sacred from conception to natural death. Furthermore, the dignity of every human person requires we work toward the common good of all people.

OPTION FOR THE POOR AND VULNERABLE:

Scripture teaches that God has a special concern for the poor and vulnerable. The Church calls each of us to embrace this preferential option for the poor and vulnerable, to embody that option in our own lives by addressing our own consumerism, and to look at public policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.



FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND COMMON GOOD:

The human person is both sacred and social. We realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in family and in community. "We are one Body." We are brothers and sisters to one another.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES: Every person has a fundamental right to life and to the conditions for living a decent life—with ample food, shelter, education, employment, health care, and housing. We have a duty to secure and respect these rights not only for ourselves, but also for others. Each of us has a responsibility to use our rights in ways that fulfill our responsibilities to our families, to each other, and to the larger society.



DIGNITY OF WORK: Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a way to participate in God’s act of creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, the basic rights of workers, owners, and others must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to economic initiative, etc. The economy must serve people, not the other way around.

SOLIDARITY: We are one human family. We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. The Gospel calls us to be “peacemakers” in a world wounded by violence and conflict.



CARING FOR GOD’S CREATION: The world God created has been entrusted to us. Our stewardship of the Earth is a form of participation in God’s act of creating and sustaining the world, guided by a concern for generations to come. We show our respect for the Creator by our care for creation.