

THE IMMACULATA

LIFE, PEACE & JUSTICE MINISTRIES

“Love One Another”

Introduction to the Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

Catholic Social Teaching (CST) emerged formally in the 19th century via papal encyclicals and pastoral documents. From the 1891 publication of *Rerum Novarum* by Pope Leo XIII to the encyclicals of Pope Francis today, our Popes have written to the Catholic laity and leaders shepherding us through many major social issues. Such guidance is best understood by reading the original documents. As an alternative, our US Bishops maintain a short list of central CST themes which we share here. The official descriptions are far too lengthy for this short article; therefore, we include short explanations to capture the spirit of each CST theme.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person	Every person is made in the image and likeness of God, thus deserving of equal respect and dignity. The sanctity of the human person at all stages of life is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.
Call to Family, Community, and Participation	We are made in the image of the triune God whose very nature is communal. We are not only sacred but also social. We grow and reach fulfillment in families and community, always seeking the common good.
Rights and Responsibilities	Every person has a fundamental right to life and to those things required to sustain it. We are also responsible to one another, which carries the responsibility to protect the rights of all.
Option for the Poor and Vulnerable	God’s love of the poor takes precedence. If one person is suffering, all are affected and diminished. We shall be judged by how we treat the poor and vulnerable.
Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers	We believe that the economy must serve people, not the other way around. The dignity of work and the basic rights of workers must be respected. These rights protect human life, defend human rights, and advance the well being of all.
Solidarity	We are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers wherever they live. We are one human family. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that “loving our neighbor” has global as well as local dimensions in an interdependent world.
Care for God’s Creation	We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God’s creation. The environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions that cannot be ignored.



Papacy: 3/13/2013 -

Wisdom from Pope Francis

“In the trials of life, you reveal your own heart: how solid it is, how merciful, how big or small.”

Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future. Dec. 2020



[Read now...](#)

WATCH



How can our world become more unified?

In this brief video Pope

Francis and Bishop Mark Seitz invite us to become bridge builders, striving to create a ‘we’ as wide as humanity.

[Watch now...](#)

REFLECT



Read The Judgement of Nations in Holy Gospel according to Matthew,

chapter 25, verses 31 through 46. In this powerful passage Jesus tells us the consequences of our social choices.

[Reflect now...](#)

PRAY



Read and join in the Papal Prayer Intention from July 2021:

“Social Friendship”. We’re encouraged here to extend a hand and listen to others so we can work for the common good.

[Pray now...](#)