**A COMPENDIUM OF CATHOIC SOCIAL TEACHING**

**Quadregasimo Anno (After Forty Years) On Reconstruction of the Social Order 1931 – Pope Pius XI**

...the riches that economic-social developments constantly increase ought to be so distributed among individual persons and classes that ... the common good of all society will be kept inviolate. (#57)

The function of the rulers of the State is to watch over the community and its parts; but in protecting private individuals in their rights, chief consideration ought to be given to the weak and the poor. (#25)

 Every effort must therefore be made that fathers of families receive a wage large enough to meet ordinary family needs adequately. But if this cannot always be done under existing circumstances, social justice demands that changes be introduced as soon as possible whereby such a wage will be assured to every adult workingman. (#71)
Twin rocks of shipwreck must be carefully avoided. For, as one is wrecked upon, or comes close to, what is known as “individualism” by denying or minimizing the social and public character of the right of property, so by rejecting or minimizing the private and individual character of this same right, one inevitably runs into “collectivism.” (#46)

 Just as it is gravely wrong to take from individuals what they can accomplish by their own initiative and industry and give it to the community, so also it is an injustice and at the same time a grave evil and disturbance of right order to assign to a greater and higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do. For every social activity ought of its very nature to furnish help to the members of the body social, and never destroy and absorb them. (#79)

 …the right ordering of economic life cannot be left to a free competition of forces. For from this source, as from a poisoned spring, have originated and spread all the errors of individualist economic teaching. … it held that economic life must be considered and treated as altogether free from and independent of public authority, because in the market, i.e., in the free struggle of competitors, it would have a principle of self direction which governs it much more perfectly than would the intervention of any created intellect. But free competition, while justified and certainly useful provided it is kept within certain limits, clearly cannot direct economic life…. (#88)

 …the riches that economic-social developments constantly increase ought to be so distributed among individual persons and classes that … the common good of all society will be kept inviolate. (#57)

It follows from the twofold character of ownership, which we have termed individual and social, that men must take into account in this matter not only their own advantage but also the common good. (#49)

 This concentration of power and might, the characteristic mark of contemporary economic life, is the fruit that the unlimited freedom of struggle among competitors has of its own nature produced, and which lets only the strongest survive; and this is often the same as saying, those who fight the most violently, those who give least heed to their conscience. (#107)

 Unbridled ambition for power has succeeded greed for gain; all economic life has become tragically hard, inexorable, and cruel. (#109)

 How completely deceived, therefore, are those rash reformers who concern themselves with the enforcement of justice alone–and this, commutative justice–and in their pride reject the assistance of charity! Admittedly, no vicarious charity can substitute for justice which is due as an obligation and is wrongfully denied. (#137)

**Mater et Magistra –“Mother and Teacher” (On Christianity and Social Progress) Pope Joh XXIII 1961**

We must reaffirm most strongly that this Catholic social doctrine is an integral part of the Christian conception of life. (#222)

Individual human beings are the foundation, the cause and the end of every social institution. That is necessarily so, for men are by nature social beings. This fact must be recognized, as also the fact that they are raised in the plan of Providence to an order of reality which is above nature. (#219)

 Wherefore, whatever the progress in technology and economic life, there can be neither justice nor peace in the world, so long as men fail to realize how great is their dignity; for they have been created by God and are His children. (#215)

 The economic prosperity of any people is to be assessed not so much from the sum total of goods and wealth possessed as from the distribution of goods according to norms of justice. (#74)

 It is necessary that public authorities have a correct understanding of the common good. This embraces the sum total of those conditions of social living, whereby people are enabled more fully and more readily to achieve their own perfection. (#65)

One may not take as the ultimate criteria in economic life the interests of individuals or organized groups, nor unregulated competition, nor excessive power on the part of the wealthy, nor the vain honor of the nation or its desire for domination, nor anything of this sort. Rather, it is necessary that economic undertaking be governed by justice and charity as the principal laws of social life. (#38-39)

 The remuneration of work is not something that can be left to the laws of the marketplace; nor should it be a decision left to the will of the more powerful. It must be determined in accordance with justice and equity; which means that workers must be paid a wage which allows them to live a truly human life and to fulfill their family obligations in a worthy manner. (#71)

 There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice.

* First, one reviews the concrete situation;
* Secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles;
* Thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles.These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: observe, judge, act. (#236)

 If the organization and structure of economic life be such that the human dignity of workers is compromised, or their sense of responsibility is weakened, or their freedom of action is removed, then we judge such an economic order to be unjust, even though it produces a vast amount of goods, whose distribution conforms to the norms of justice and equity. (#83)

It is not enough merely to formulate a social doctrine. It must be translated into reality. And this is particularly true of the Church’s social doctrine, the light of which is Truth, Justice its objective, and Love its driving force. (#226)

It is therefore our urgent desire that this doctrine be studied more and more. First of all it should be taught as part of the daily curriculum in Catholic schools of every kind, particularly seminaries, …. We would also like to see it added to the religious instruction programs of parishes …. it must be spread by every modern means at our disposal: daily newspapers, periodicals, popular and scientific publications, radio and television. (#223)

We must reaffirm most strongly that this Catholic social doctrine is an integral part of the Christian conception of life. (#222)

As for the State, its whole raison d’être is the realization of the common good in the temporal order. It cannot, therefore, hold aloof from economic matters. On the contrary, it must do all in its power to promote the production of a sufficient supply of material goods, “the use of which is necessary for the practice of virtue.” It has also the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its weaker members, the workers, women and children. It can never be right for the State to shirk its obligation of working actively for the betterment of the condition of the workingman. (#20)

As regards taxation, assessment according to ability to pay is fundamental to a just and equitable system.) (#132)

The solidarity which binds all people together as members of a common family makes it impossible for wealthy nations to look with indifference upon the hunger, misery and poverty of other nations whose citizens are unable to enjoy even elementary human rights. The nations of the world are becoming more and more dependent on one another and it will not be possible to preserve a lasting peace so long as glaring economic and social imbalances persist. (#157)

Our predecessors have always taught that in the right of private property there is rooted a social responsibility. (#119)

As Our Predecessor Pius XII so rightly affirmed: The dignity of the human person “normally demands the right to the use of the goods of the earth, to which corresponds the fundamental obligation of granting an opportunity to possess property to all if possible.” This demand arises from the moral dignity of work. It also guarantees “the conservation and perfection of a social order which makes possible a secure, even if modest, property to all classes of people.” (#114)

Certainly one of the principal characteristics which seem to be typical of our age is an increase in social relationships, in those mutual ties, that is, which grow daily more numerous and which have led to the introduction of many and varied forms of associations in the lives and activities of citizens, and to their acceptance within our legal framework. Scientific and technical progress, greater productive efficiency and a higher standard of living are among the many present-day factors which would seem to have contributed to this trend. (#59)

The Church today is faced with an immense task: to humanize and to Christianize this modern civilization of ours. The continued development of this civilization, indeed its very survival, demand and insist that the Church do her part in the world. … In conducting their human affairs to the best of their ability, the laity must recognize that they are doing a service to humanity, in intimate union with God through Christ, and to God’s greater glory. And St. Paul insisted: “Whether you eat or drink, or whatsoever else you do, do all to the glory of God.” (#256)

Differences of opinion in the application of principles can sometimes arise even among sincere Catholics. When this happens, they should be careful not to lose their respect and esteem for each other. Instead, they should strive to find points of agreement for effective and suitable action, and not wear themselves out in interminable arguments, and, under pretext of the better or the best, omit to do the good that is possible and therefore obligatory. (#238)

**Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth) Pope John XXIII 1963**

*It is clearly laid down that the paramount task assigned to government officials is that of recognizing, respecting, reconciling, protecting and promoting the rights and duties of citizens. (#77)*

The common good is chiefly guaranteed when personal rights and duties are maintained. The chief concern of civil authorities must therefore be to ensure that these rights are acknowledged, respected, coordinated with other rights, defended and promoted, so that in this way each one may more easily carry out his duties. For “to safeguard the inviolable rights of the human person, and to facilitate the fulfillment of his duties, should be the chief duty of every public authority.” (#60)

 Beginning our discussion of the rights of man, we see that every person has the right to life, to bodily integrity, and to the means which are suitable for the proper development of life; these are primarily food, clothing, shelter, rest, medical care, and finally the necessary social services. Therefore a human being also has the right to security in cases of sickness, inability to work, widowhood, old age, unemployment, or in any other case in which one is deprived of the means of subsistence through no fault of one’s own. (#11)

Any human society, if it is to be well-ordered and productive, must lay down as a foundation this principle, namely, that every human being is a person; that is, human nature is endowed with intelligence and free will. Indeed, precisely because one is a person one has rights and obligations flowing directly and simultaneously from one’s very nature. And as these rights and obligations are universal and inviolable, so they cannot in any way be surrendered. (#8-10)

 This means that, if any government does not acknowledge the rights of the human person or violates them, it not only fails in its duty, but its orders completely lack juridical force. (#61)

It is also demanded by the common good that civil authorities should make earnest efforts to bring about a situation in which individual citizens can easily exercise their rights and fulfill their duties as well. For experience has taught us that, unless these authorities take suitable action with regard to economic, political and cultural matters, inequalities between the citizens tend to become more and more widespread, especially in the modern world, and as a result human rights are rendered totally ineffective and the fulfillment of duties is compromised. (#63)

There is a social duty essentially inherent in the right of private property. (#22)

One of the fundamental duties of civil authorities, therefore, is to coordinate social relations in such fashion that the exercise of one person’s rights does not threaten others in the exercise of their own rights nor hinder them in the fulfillment of their duties. (#62)

The natural rights with which We have been dealing are, however, inseparably connected, in the very person who is their subject, with just as many respective duties; and rights as well as duties find their source, their sustenance and their inviolability in the natural law which grants or enjoins them…. Once this is admitted, it also follows that in human society to one man’s right there corresponds a duty in all other persons: the duty, namely, of acknowledging and respecting the right in question. For every fundamental human right draws its indestructible moral force from the natural law, which in granting it imposes a corresponding obligation. Those, therefore, who claim their own rights, yet altogether forget or neglect to carry out their respective duties, are people who build with one hand and destroy with the other. (#28-30)

Since men are social by nature they are meant to live with others and to work for one another’s welfare. A well-ordered human society requires that men recognize and observe their mutual rights and duties. It also demands that each contribute generously to the establishment of a civic order in which rights and duties are more sincerely and effectively acknowledged and fulfilled. It is not enough, for example, to acknowledge and respect every man’s right to the means of subsistence if we do not strive to the best of our ability for a sufficient supply of what is necessary for his sustenance. (#31-32)

It is in keeping with their dignity as persons that human being should take an active part in government. (#73)

This statement of St. Augustine seems to be very apt in this regard: “What are kingdoms without justice but large bands of robbers.” (#92)

If we turn our attention to the economic sphere it is clear that man has a right by the natural law not only to an opportunity to work, but also to go about his work without coercion. (#18)

Indeed since the whole reason for the existence of civil authorities is the realization of the common good, it is clearly necessary that, in pursuing this objective, they should respect its essential elements, and at the same time conform their laws to the circumstances of the day. (#54)

The dignity of the human person involves the right to take an active part in public affairs and to contribute one’s part to the common good of the citizens. For, as Our Predecessor of happy memory, Pius XII, pointed out: “The human individual, far from being an object and, as it were, a merely passive element in the social order, is in fact, must be and must continue to be, its subject, its foundation and its end.” (#26)

Furthermore–and this must be specially emphasized–the worker has a right to a wage determined according to criterions of justice, and sufficient, therefore, n proportion to the available resources, to give workers and their families a standard of living in keeping with the dignity of the human person. (#20)

Since women are becoming ever more conscious of their human dignity, they will not tolerate being treated as mere material instruments, but demand rights befitting a human person both in domestic and in pubic life. (#41)

It is clearly laid down that the paramount task assigned to government officials is that of recognizing, respecting, reconciling, protecting and promoting the rights and duties of citizens. (#77)

Once again we exhort our people to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as to that of their own country. They should endeavor, therefore, in the light of the Faith and with the strength of love, to ensure that the various institutions–whether economic, social, cultural or political in purpose — should be such as not to create obstacles, but rather to facilitate or render less arduous people’s perfectioning of themselves both in the natural order as well as in the supernatural. (#146)

The government should make similarly effective efforts to see that those who are able to work can find employment in keeping with their aptitudes, and that each worker receives a wage in keeping with the laws of justice and equity. It should be equally the concern of civil authorities to ensure that workers be allowed their proper responsibility in the work undertaken in industrial organization, and to facilitate the establishment of intermediate groups which will make social life richer and more effective. (#64)

**Populorum Pregressio (On the Development of Peoples) Pope Paul VI (1967)**

Private property does not constitute for anyone an absolute or unconditioned right. No one is justified in keeping for his exclusive use what he does not need, when others lack necessities….The right to property must never be exercised to the detriment of the common good. (#23)

 “If someone who has the riches of this world sees his brother in need and closes his heart to him, how does the love of God abide in him?” (1 Jn 3:17). It is well known how strong were the words used by the Fathers of the Church to describe the proper attitude of persons who possess anything towards persons in need. To quote Saint Ambrose:

“You are not making a gift of your possessions to the poor person. You are handing over to him what is his. For what has been given in common for the use of all, you have arrogated to yourself. The world is given to all, and not only to the rich.” (#23)

 It is unfortunate that on these new conditions of society a system has been constructed which considers profit as the key motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligation.
This unchecked liberalism leads to dictatorship rightly denounced by Pius XI as producing “the international imperialism of money”. One cannot condemn such abuses too strongly by solemnly recalling once again that the economy is at the service of man. (#26)

 The struggle against destitution, though urgent and necessary, is not enough. It is a question, rather, of building a world where every man, no matter what his race, religion or nationality, can live a fully human life, freed from servitude imposed on him by other men or by natural forces over which he has not sufficient control; a world where freedom is not an empty word and where the poor man Lazarus can sit down at the same table with the rich man. This demands great generosity, much sacrifice and unceasing effort on the part of the rich man.

Let each one examine his conscience, a conscience that conveys a new message for our times. Is he prepared to support out of his own pocket works and undertakings organized in favor of the most destitute? Is he ready to pay higher taxes so that the public authorities can intensify their efforts in favor of development? Is he ready to pay a higher price for imported goods so that the producer may be more justly rewarded? (#47)

 Both for nations and for individual men, avarice is the most evident form of moral underdevelopment. (#19)

 Today the principal fact that we must all recognize is that the social question has become world-wide. (#3)

 The present situation must be faced with courage and the injustices linked with it must be fought against and overcome. Development demands bold transformations, innovations that go deep. Urgent reforms should be undertaken without delay. It is for each one to take his share in them with generosity, particularly those whose education, position and opportunities afford them wide scope for action. (#32)

 Increased possession is not the ultimate goal of nations nor of individuals. All growth is ambivalent. It is essential if people are to develop as human beings, but in a way it imprisons them if they considers it the supreme good, and it restricts their vision. (#19)

 Individual initiative alone and the mere free play of competition could never assure successful development. One must avoid the risk of increasing still more the wealth of the rich and the dominion of the strong, whilst leaving the poor in their misery and adding to the servitude of the oppressed. (#33)

 To seek to do more, know more and have more in order to be more: that is what people aspire to now when a greater number of them are condemned to live in conditions that make this lawful desire illusory (#6)

 The superfluous wealth of rich countries should be placed at the service of poor nations. The rule which up to now held good for the benefit of those nearest to us, must today be applied to all the needy of this world. Besides, the rich will be the first to benefit as a result. Otherwise their continued greed will certainly call down upon them the judgement of God and the wrath of the poor, with consequences no one can foretell. (#49)

 Economics and technology have no meaning except from the human person whom they should serve. And the human person is only truly human in as far as, master of one’s own acts and judge of their worth, one is author of one’s own advancement, in keeping with the nature which was given to human beings by the Creator. (#34)

 The desire for necessities is legitimate, and work undertaken to obtain them is a duty: If people will not work, neither let them eat. But the acquiring of temporal goods can lead to greed, to the insatiable desire for more, and can make increased power a tempting objective. Individuals, families, and nations can be overcome by avarice, be they poor or rich, and all can fall victim to a stifling materialism. (#19)

 Peace cannot be limited to a mere absence of war, the result of an ever precarious balance of forces. No, peace is something that is built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice among people. (#76)

 Development cannot be limited to mere economic growth. In order to be authentic, it must be complete: integral, that is, it has to promote the good of every person and of all humanity. (#14)

 Individual initiative alone and the mere free play of competition could never assure successful development. One must avoid the risk of increasing still more the wealth of the rich and the dominion of the strong, whilst leaving the poor in their misery and adding to the servitude of the oppressed. (#33)

 No one can remain indifferent to the lot of his brothers and sisters who are still buried in wretchedness, and victims of insecurity, slaves of ignorance. Like the heart of Christ, the heart of the Christian must sympathize with this misery: “I have pity on this multitude”. (#74)

 We have inherited from past generations, and we have benefited from the work of our contemporaries: for this reason we have obligations towards all, and we cannot refuse to interest ourselves in those who will come after us to enlarge the human family. The reality of human solidarity, which is a benefit for us, also imposes a duty. (#17)

  Every program made to increase production has, in the last analysis, no other raison d’etre than the service of humanity. Such programs should reduce inequalities, fight discriminations, free people from various types of servitude and enable them to be the instrument of their own material betterment, of their moral progress and of their spiritual growth. (#34)

 There can be no progress towards the complete development of individuals without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity. (#43)

 Experienced in human affairs, the Church … “seeks but a solitary goal: to carry forward the work of Christ Himself under the lead of the befriending Spirit.” … But, since the Church lives in history, she ought to “scrutinize the signs of the times and interpret them in the light of the Gospel.” Sharing the noblest aspirations of men and women and suffering when she sees them not satisfied, she wishes to help them attain their full flowing, and that is why she offers all people what she possesses as her characteristic attribute: a global vision of man and of the human race. (#13)

**Laborem Exercens (On Human Work) John Paul II 1981**

Human work is the key to the solution … of the whole “social question.” To consider work is of decisive importance when trying to make life “more human.” #3.

 We must pay more attention to the one who works than to what the worker does. The self-realization of the human person is the measure of what is right and wrong. #6.

 Work is in the first place “for the worker” and not the worker “for work.” Work itself can have greater or lesser objective value, but all work should be judged by the measure of dignity given to the person who carries it out. #6.

We must consequently continue to study the situation of the worker. There is a need for solidarity movements among and with the workers. The church is firmly committed to this cause, in fidelity to Christ, and to be truly the “church of the poor.” #8.

Work remains a good thing, not only because it is useful and enjoyable, but also because it expresses and increases the worker’s dignity. Through work we not only transform the world, we are transformed ourselves, becoming “more a human being.” #9.

Workers not only want fair pay, they also want to share in the responsibility and creativity of the very work process. They want to feel that they are working for themselves — an awareness that is smothered in a bureaucratic system where they only feel themselves to be “cogs” in a huge machine moved from above. #15.

Work is a duty, because our Creator demanded it and because it maintains and develops our humanity. We must work out of regard for others, especially our own families, but also because of the society we belong to and in fact because of the whole of humanity. #16.

We inherit the work of the generations before us, and we share in the building of the future of all those who will come after us. All this should be kept in mind when considering the rights that come with work or the duty to work. #16.

Yet the workers’ rights cannot be doomed to be the mere result of economic systems aimed at maximum profits. The thing that must shape the whole economy is respect for the workers’ rights within each country and all through the world’s economy. #17.

Created in God’s image, we were given the mandate to transform the earth. By their work people share in God’s creating activity….Awareness that our work is a sharing in God’s work ought to permeate even the most ordinary daily activities. By our labor we are unfolding the Creator’s work and contributing to the realization of God’s plan on earth. The Christian message does not stop us from building the world or make us neglect our fellow human beings. On the contrary it binds us more firmly to do just that. #25.

**Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (20th Anniversary of Popularm Progressio) Pope JP II 1987**

Recognition that the “social question” has assumed a worldwide dimension does not at all mean that it has lost its incisiveness or its national and local importance. On the contrary, it means that the problems in industrial enterprises or in the workers’ and union movements of a particular country or region are not to be considered as isolated cases with no connection. On the contrary they depend more and more on the influence of factors beyond regional boundaries and national frontiers. #9.

Interdependence must be transformed into solidarity, based upon the principle that the goods of creation are meant for all. That which human industry produces through the processing of raw materials, with the contribution of work, must serve equally for the good of all. #39.

Solidarity helps us to see the “other” whether a person, people or nation not just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our “neighbor”, a “helper” (cf. Gen 2: 18-20), to be made a sharer, on a par with ourselves, in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God. Hence the importance of reawakening the religious awareness of individuals and peoples. #39.

**Centesimus Annus (“The Hundredth Year”) Pope John Paul II, 1991**

In our time, the role of human work is becoming increasingly important as the productive factor both of nonmaterial and of material wealth. Moreover, it is becoming clearer how a person’s work is naturally interrelated with the work of others. More than ever, work is work with others and work for others: it is a matter of doing something for someone else. Work becomes ever more fruitful and productive to the extent that people become more knowledgeable of the productive potentialities of the earth and more profoundly cognizant of the needs of those for whom their work is done. #31

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The obligation to earn one’s bread presumes the right to do so. A society that denies this right cannot be justified, nor can it attain social peace. #43.

**A Place at the Table: A Catholic Recommitment to Overcome Poverty and Respect the Dignity of All God’s Children, U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), 2002.**

Work should not leave people poor but should provide wages sufficient to achieve a standard of living that is in keeping with human dignity. Workers have both an obligation and a right to work, as well as a right to participation, association, and economic initiative. This includes the right to choose to join a union and to bargain collectively.

**Evangelium Vitae (The Gospel of Life) Pope John Paul II - 1995**

The Gospel of Life is at the heart of Jesus’ message. Lovingly received day after day by the Church, it is to be preached with dauntless fidelity as “good news” to the people of every age and culture. (#1)

Every threat to human dignity is felt in the church’s heart. It affects its faith and engages its mission of proclaiming the Gospel of Life – a proclamation especially pressing because of the new threats to the life of individuals and peoples, especially where life is weak and defenseless. Next to the old scourges of poverty, hunger, disease, violence, and war, new threats are arising at an alarming scale. I repeat the words of the Second Vatican Council condemning crimes and attacks against human life: “-whatever is opposed to life itself such as any type of murder, genocide, abortion, euthanasia, or willful self-destruction; -whatever violates the integrity of the human person such as mutilation, torments indicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself; -whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; – as well as disgraceful working conditions, where people are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons … all these things and others of their kind are infamies indeed. They poison human society, but they do more harm to those who practice them than to those who suffer from injury. Moreover they am a supreme dishonor to the Creator.” (GS 27) (#3)

This moral uncertainty can in some way be explained by the gravity of today’s social problems, sometimes mitigating the responsibility of individuals, but it is no less true that we are confronted by a true structure of sin, which takes the form of a “culture of death.” This culture denies solidarity and is fostered by currents that encourage a society that is excessively concerned with efficiency. It is in a certain sense a war of the powerful against the poor. (#12)

It is also a question, in a certain sense, of the “moral conscience” of society: in a way it too is responsible, not only because it tolerates or fosters behavior contrary to life, but also because it encourages the “culture of death”, creating and consolidating actual “structures of sin” which go against life. The moral conscience, both individual and social, is today subjected, also as a result of the penetrating influence of the media, to an extremely serious and mortal danger: that of confusion between good and evil, precisely in relation to the fundamental right to life. (#24)

How can we fail to mention the daily gestures of unselfish love and care that countless people make, guided by the example of Jesus “the good Samaritan” (cf. Lk 10:29-37). The church has always been in the front line of providing this charitable help. (#27)

This sense of the value of life does not find as yet the refinement found in the Sermon on the Mount, for it provides severe forms of corporeal punishment and even the death penalty. It culminates in the positive commandment obliging us to be responsible for our neighbor as for ourselves: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (Lev 19:18). (#40)

At the basis of all these tendencies lies the ethical relativism which characterizes much of present-day culture. (#70)

It is a need which springs from “faith working through love” (Gal 5:6)…In our service of charity, we must be inspired and distinguished by a specific attitude: we must care for the other as a person for whom God has made us responsible. As disciples of Jesus, we are called to become neighbors to everyone (cf. Lk 10:29-37), and to show special favor to those who are poorest, most alone and most in need. (#87)

All this involves education and the promotion of vocations to service, particularly among the young…-all are eloquent expressions of what charity is able to devise in order to give new hope and practical possibilities for life. (#88)

**Fides et Ratio (Faith and Reason Pope John Paul II - 1998**

Faith and Reason are like two wings of the human spirit by which is soars to the truth.

Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth- in a word, to know himself- so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves.

It must not be forgotten that reason too needs to be sustained in all its searching by trusting dialogue and sincere friendship. A climate of suspicion and distrust, which can beset speculative research, ignores the teaching of the ancient philosophers who proposed friendship as one of the most appropriate contexts for sound philosophical enquiry.

A philosophy which no longer asks the question of the meaning of life would be in great danger of reducing the merely accessory functions, with no real passion for the search for truth.

Those who devote themselves to the study of Sacred Scripture should always remember that the various hermeneutical approaches have their own philosophical underpinnings, which need to be carefully evaluated before they are applied to the sacred texts.

The desire for knowledge is so great and it works in such a way that the human heart, despite its experience of insurmountable limitation, yearns for the infinite riches which lie beyond, knowing that there is to be found the satisfying answer to every question as yet unanswered.

Whether we admit it or not, there comes for everyone the moment when personal existence must be anchored to a truth recognized as final, a truth which confers a certitude no longer open to doubt.

Christianity proclaimed from the first the equality of all men and women before God.

One of the most significant aspects of our current situation, it should be noted, is the "crisis of meaning.”

Perspectives on life and the world, often of a scientific temper, have so proliferated that we face an increasing fragmentation of knowledge. This makes the search for meaning difficult and often fruitless. Indeed, still more dramatically, in this maelstrom of data and facts in which we live and which seem to comprise the very fabric of life, many people wonder whether it still makes sense to ask about meaning. The array of theories which vie to give an answer, and the different ways of viewing and of interpreting the world of human life, serve only to aggravate this radical doubt, which can easily lead to skepticism, indifference or to various forms of nihilism.

**Caritas Est (God Is Love) Pope Benedict XVI 2005**

We*have come to believe in God’s love*: in these words the Christian can express the fundamental decision of his life. Being Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction (#1).

God’s love for us is fundamental for our lives, and it raises important questions about who God is and who we are. In considering this, we immediately find ourselves hampered by a problem of language. Today, the term “love” has become one of the most frequently used and misused of words, a word to which we attach quite different meanings (#2).

When Jesus speaks in his parables of the shepherd who goes after the lost sheep, of the woman who looks for the lost coin, of the father who goes to meet and embrace his prodigal son, these are no mere words: they constitute an explanation of his very being and activity. His death on the Cross is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him. This is love in its most radical form (#12).

The entire activity of the Church is an expression of a love that seeks the integral good of man: it seeks his evangelization through Word and Sacrament, an undertaking that is often heroic in the way it is acted out in history; and it seeks to promote man in the various arenas of life and human activity. Love is therefore the service that the Church carries out in order to attend constantly to man’s sufferings and his needs, including material needs (#19).

Love—*caritas*—will always prove necessary, even in the most just society. There is no ordering of the State so just that it can eliminate the need for a service of love. Whoever wants to eliminate love is preparing to eliminate man as such. There will always be suffering which cries out for consolation and help. There will always be loneliness. There will always be situations of material need where help in the form of concrete love of neighbour is indispensable (#28).

Charity, furthermore, cannot be used as a means of engaging in what is nowadays considered proselytism. Love is free; it is not practised as a way of achieving other ends…those who practise charity in the Church’s name will never seek to impose the Church’s faith upon others. They realize that a pure and generous love is the best witness to the God in whom we believe and by whom we are driven to love. A Christian knows when it is time to speak of God and when it is better to say nothing and to let love alone speak. He knows that God is love…(#31).

“The consciousness that, in Christ, God has given himself for us, even unto death, must inspire us to live no longer for ourselves but for him, and, with him, for others. Whoever loves Christ loves the Church, and desires the Church to be increasingly the image and instrument of the love which flows from Christ (#33).

Prayer, as a means of drawing ever new strength from Christ, is concretely and urgently needed. People who pray are not wasting their time, even though the situation appears desperate and seems to call for action alone…Blessed Teresa [of Calcutta] wrote to her lay co-workers: “We need this deep connection with God in our daily life. How can we obtain it? By prayer” (#36).

Mary is the woman of hope…Mary is a woman of faith… Mary is a woman who loves… Mary has truly become the Mother of all believers. Men and women of every time and place have recourse to her motherly kindness and her virginal purity and grace, in all their needs and aspirations, their joys and sorrows, their moments of loneliness and their common endeavours. They constantly experience the gift of her goodness and the unfailing love which she pours out from the depths of her heart (#40, #41).

**Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth) Pope Benedict XVI**

If we love others with charity, then first of all we are just toward them. (6)

A society lacks solid foundations when, on the one hand, it asserts values such as the dignity of the person, justice and peace, but then, on the other hand, radically acts to the contrary by allowing or tolerating a variety of ways in which human life is devalued and violated, especially where it is weak or marginalized. (15)

Profit is useful if it serves as a means towards an end...Once profit becomes the exclusive goal...without the common good as its ultimate end, it risks destroying wealth and creating poverty. (21)

The world's wealth is growing in absolute terms, but inequalities are on the increase. (22)

Openness to life is at the center of true development. (28)

The dignity of the individual and the demands of justice require, particularly today, that economic choices do not cause disparities in wealth due to increase in an excessive and morally unacceptable manner, and that we continue to prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone. (32)

Solidarity is first and foremost a sense of responsibility on the part of everyone with regard to everyone, and it cannot therefore be merely delegated to the State. (38)

Many people today would claim that they owe nothing to anyone, except to themselves. They are concerned only with their rights, and they often have great difficulty in taking responsibility for their own and other people's integral development. Hence it is important to call for a renewed reflection on how rights presuppose duties, if they are not to become mere license. (43)

The economy needs ethics in order to function correctly - not any ethics whatsoever, but an ethics which is people-centered. (45)

The exclusion of religion from the public square - and, at the other extreme, religious fundamentalism - hinders an encounter between persons and their collaboration for the progress of humanity. Public life is sapped of its motivation and politics takes on a domineering and aggressive character. (56)

The greatest service to development, then, is a Christian humanism that enkindles charity and takes its lead from truth, accepting both as a lasting gift from God. Openness to God makes us open towards our brothers and sisters and towards an understanding of life as a joyful task to be accomplished in a spirit of solidarity. On the other hand, ideological rejection of God and an atheism of indifference, oblivious to the Creator and at risk of becoming equally oblivious to human values, constitute some of the chief obstacles to development today. (78)

**Ladato si’ (On our Common Home) Pope Francis 2019**

I would like to enter into dialogue with all people about our common home. (#3)

If we approach nature and the environment without…openness to awe and wonder, if we no longer speak the language of fraternity and beauty in our relationship with the world, our attitude will be that of masters, consumers, ruthless exploiters, unable to set limits on their immediate needs. By contrast, if we feel intimately united with all that exists, then sobriety and care will well up spontaneously. (#11)

There is a growing sensitivity to the environment and the need to protect nature, along with a growing concern, both genuine and distressing, for what is happening to our planet… Our goal is not to amass information or to satisfy curiosity, but rather to become painfully aware, to dare to turn what is happening to the world into our own personal suffering and thus to discover what each of us can do about it. (#19)

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet… The impact of present imbalances is also seen in the premature death of many of the poor. (#48)

We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. (#49)

We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental. Strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and at the same time protecting nature. (#139)

Along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a “culture of care” which permeates all of society. When we feel that God is calling us to intervene with others in these social dynamics, we should realize that this too is part of our spirituality, which is an exercise of charity and, as such, matures and sanctifies us. (#231)

Many things have to change course, but it is we human beings above all who need to change. (#202)

The current global situation engenders a feeling of instability and uncertainty, which in turn becomes “a seedbed for collective selfishness.” When people become self-centred and self-enclosed, their greed increases. The emptier a person’s heart is, the more he or she needs things to buy, own and consume. (#204)

All is not lost. Human beings… are also capable of rising above themselves, choosing again what is good, and making a new start… and [embarking] on new paths to authentic freedom. (#205)

A change in lifestyle could bring healthy pressure to bear on those who wield political, economic and social power. This is what consumer movements accomplish by boycotting certain products. They prove successful in changing the way businesses operate, forcing them to consider their environmental footprint and their patterns of production… This shows us the great need for a sense of social responsibility on the part of consumers. “Purchasing is always a moral – and not simply economic – act.” Today, in a word, “the issue of environmental
degradation challenges us to examine our lifestyle”. (#206)

Concern for others and the natural environment attunes us to] the moral imperative of assessing the impact of our every action and personal decision on the world around us. If we can overcome individualism, we will truly be able to develop a different lifestyle and bring about significant changes in society. An awareness of the gravity of today’s cultural and ecological crisis must be translated into new habits. (#208-209)

[Great importance of the family,] political institutions and various social groups are also entrusted with helping to raise people’s awareness. So too is the Church. All Christian communities have an important role to play in ecological education. (#214)

I would like to offer Christians a few suggestions for an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living. More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. (#216)

[T]he ecological crisis is also a summons to profound interior conversion…Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience. (#217)

**Fratelli Tutti (On Fraternity and Social Friendship) Pope Francis 2020**

A decline in the birthrate, which leads to the aging of the population, together with the relegation of the elderly to a sad and lonely existence, is a subtle way of stating that it is all about us, that our individual concerns are the only thing that matters. (No. 19)

I realize that some people are hesitant and fearful with regard to migrants. I consider this part of our natural instinct of self-defence. Yet it is also true that an individual and a people are only fruitful and productive if they are able to develop a creative openness to others. (No. 41)

We should also recognize that destructive forms of fanaticism are at times found among religious believers, including Christians; they too “can be caught up in networks of verbal violence through the internet and the various forums of digital communication. Even in Catholic media, limits can be overstepped, defamation and slander can become commonplace, and all ethical standards and respect for the good name of others can be abandoned”. How can this contribute to the fraternity that our common Father asks of us? (No. 46)

We fail to keep our attention focused, to penetrate to the heart of matters, and to recognize what is essential to give meaning to our lives. Freedom thus becomes an illusion that we are peddled, easily confused with the ability to navigate the internet. (No. 50)

The recent pandemic enabled us to recognize and appreciate once more all those around us who, in the midst of fear, responded by putting their lives on the line. We began to realize that our lives are interwoven with and sustained by ordinary people valiantly shaping the decisive events of our shared history: doctors, nurses, pharmacists, storekeepers and supermarket workers, cleaning personnel, caretakers, transport workers, men and women working to provide essential services and public safety, volunteers, priests and religious… They understood that no one is saved alone. (No. 54)

Let us admit that, for all the progress we have made, we are still “illiterate” when it comes to accompanying, caring for and supporting the most frail and vulnerable members of our developed societies. We have become accustomed to looking the other way, passing by, ignoring situations until they affect us directly. (No. 64)

We can start from below and, case by case, act at the most concrete and local levels, and then expand to the farthest reaches of our countries and our world, with the same care and concern that the Samaritan showed for each of the wounded man’s injuries. Let us seek out others and embrace the world as it is, without fear of pain or a sense of inadequacy, because there we will discover all the goodness that God has planted in human hearts. Difficulties that seem overwhelming are opportunities for growth, not excuses for a glum resignation that can lead only to acquiescence. Yet let us not do this alone, as individuals. … Let us renounce the pettiness and resentment of useless in-fighting and constant confrontation. Let us stop feeling sorry for ourselves and acknowledge our crimes, our apathy, our lies. Reparation and reconciliation will give us new life and set us all free from fear. (No. 78)

As couples or friends, we find that our hearts expand as we step out of ourselves and embrace others. Closed groups and self-absorbed couples that define themselves in opposition to others tend to be expressions of selfishness and mere self-preservation. (No. 89)

A love capable of transcending borders is the basis of what in every city and country can be called ‘social friendship.’ Genuine social friendship within a society makes true universal openness possible. (No. 99)

A truly human and fraternal society will be capable of ensuring in an efficient and stable way that each of its members is accompanied at every stage of life. Not only by providing for their basic needs, but by enabling them to give the best of themselves, even though their performance may be less than optimum, their pace slow or their efficiency limited. (No. 110)

Families are the first place where the values of love and fraternity, togetherness and sharing, concern and care for others are lived out and handed on. (No. 114)

We need to develop the awareness that nowadays we are either all saved together or no one is saved. Poverty, decadence and suffering in one part of the earth are a silent breeding ground for problems that will end up affecting the entire planet. (No. 137)

Certainly, all this calls for an alternative way of thinking. Without an attempt to enter into that way of thinking, what I am saying here will sound wildly unrealistic. On the other hand, if we accept the great principle that there are rights born of our inalienable human dignity, we can rise to the challenge of envisaging a new humanity. We can aspire to a world that provides land, housing and work for all. This is the true path of peace, not the senseless and myopic strategy of sowing fear and mistrust in the face of outside threats. (No. 127)

There is always the factor of ‘gratuitousness’: the ability to do some things simply because they are good in themselves, without concern for personal gain or recompense. Gratuitousness makes it possible for us to welcome the stranger, even though this brings us no immediate tangible benefit.” (No. 139)

Life without fraternal gratuitousness becomes a form of frenetic commerce, in which we are constantly weighing up what we give and what we get back in return. (No. 140)

Everything, then, depends on our ability to see the need for a change of heart, attitudes and lifestyles. Otherwise, political propaganda, the media and the shapers of public opinion will continue to promote an individualistic and uncritical culture subservient to unregulated economic interests and societal institutions at the service of those who already enjoy too much power. (No. 166)

Education and upbringing, concern for others, a well-integrated view of life and spiritual growth: all these are essential for quality human relationships and for enabling society itself to react against injustices, aberrations and abuses of economic, technological, political and media power. (No. 167)

Only a gaze transformed by charity can enable the dignity of others to be recognized and, as a consequence, the poor to be acknowledged and valued in their dignity, respected in their identity and culture, and thus truly integrated into society. (No. 187)

Dialogue is often confused with something quite different: the feverish exchange of opinions on social networks, frequently based on media information that is not always reliable. These exchanges are merely parallel monologues. (No. 200)

Authentic social dialogue involves the ability to respect the other’s point of view and to admit that it may include legitimate convictions and concerns. (No. 203)

The solution is not relativism. Under the guise of tolerance, relativism ultimately leaves the interpretation of moral values to those in power, to be defined as they see fit. (No. 206)

Is not the indifference and the heartless individualism into which we have fallen also a result of our sloth in pursuing higher values, values that transcend our immediate needs? (No. 209)

Each of us can learn something from others. No one is useless and no one is expendable. (No. 215)

One fundamental human right must not be forgotten in the journey towards fraternity and peace. It is religious freedom for believers of all religions. (No. 279)

**Catholic Social Teaching Documents**

Pope Pius XI – 1931 Quadragesimo Anno (After Forty Years) – On Reconstruction of the Social Order

Pope John XXIII – 1961 Mater et Magistra (On Christianity and Social Progress)

Pope John XXIII – 1963 Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth)

Pope Paul VI – 1967 Populorum Progressio (On the Development of Peoples)

Pope John Paul II 1981 Laborem Exercens (On Human Work)

Pope John Paul II 1987 Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (20th Anniversary of Populorum Progressio)

Pope John Paul II 1991 Centesimus Annus (The Hundredth Year)

Pope John Paul II – 1998 Fides et Ratio (Faith and Reason)

Pope Benedict XVI 2005 Deus Caritas Est (God Is Love)

Pope BenedictXVI 2009 Caritas in Veritate (Charity in Truth)

Pope Francis – 2019 Laudato Si’ (On our Common Home)

Pope Francis - 2020 Fratelli Tutti (On Fraternity and Social Friendship