

Working for Justice

Chapter 45 Summary

Chapter Learning Objectives

- The participants will examine the Church's social teaching and how it directs us to live in a way that upholds Jesus' Great Commandments.
- The participants will explore how we are called to work for the common good.
- The participants will consider the distinction between acts of charity and works of social justice.

Content Summary

1. When we learn to love as God loves, we see strangers as neighbors.
2. The Church works to transform our world into a loving community. Our goal is social justice—a respect for all creation and for human rights.
3. Social justice involves working for the common good. The common good is served when all people are given the opportunity to fulfill all their needs and the needs of their families.
4. Although local, state, and national governments must work for the common good, we also need to organize society to work for justice on a global level through international federations such as the United Nations (UN), as well as charitable organizations like Catholic Relief Services (CRS).
5. Catholic social teaching has been called the Church's best-kept secret. Catholic social teaching is concerned with making sure all people have what they need—food, clothing, shelter, health care, respect, education, work, community, freedom, and all the basic rights that flow from human dignity.
6. Our moral vision of society begins with respect for human life and dignity. We are made in God's image, gifted with a soul, and redeemed by Jesus. So we all share an equal dignity.
7. A good test for our society is to see how our poorest and weakest, or most vulnerable, members are doing. The widening gap between rich and poor is a social sin.
8. Through work, we join God in his work of creation. That means workers should never be taken for granted. They should have fair wages, the right to join unions, and the ability to start their own businesses.
9. Everyone is our brother and sister. Living in solidarity means not only that we share our material goods through charity but also that we share our friendship and prayers with other people. Our efforts for justice can prevent wars and bring unity in a divided world.
10. We also need to be one with the earth itself. In the Book of Genesis, God tells us to care for all creation. It is time for all of us to be good stewards of the land, water, plants, and animals.

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