

Vocabulary for Unit 2

cardinal virtues: Based on the Latin word for “pivot,” four virtues that are viewed as pivotal or essential for full Christian living: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.

common good: The good that is collectively shared by a number of people and that is beneficial for all members of a given community. Social conditions that allow for all citizens of the earth, individuals and families, to meet basic needs and achieve fulfillment promote the common good.

commutative justice: This type of justice calls for fairness in agreements and contracts between individuals. It is an equal exchange of goods, money, or services.

deterrence: The belief that war, especially nuclear war, can be prevented through the ability to respond to a military attack with a devastating counterattack.

distributive justice: The responsibility that society has for safeguarding essential human rights and ensuring the just distribution of the earth’s resources, with special regard for those people whose basic needs are going unmet.

fair trade: An organized social movement and market-based approach that aims to help producers in developing countries to obtain living wages for their labor.

justice: The cardinal virtue concerned with the rights and duties within relationships; the commitment, as well as the actions and attitudes that flow from the commitment, to ensure that all persons—particularly people who are poor and oppressed—receive what is due them.

legal justice: The social responsibilities that citizens owe their country and society.

Magisterium: The Church’s living teaching office, which consists of all bishops, in communion with the Pope.

racism: Treating people of a different race without the full respect their equal dignity requires.

social doctrine: The body of teaching by the Church on economic and social matters that includes moral judgments and demands for action in favor of those being harmed.

social encyclical: A teaching letter from the Pope to the members of the Church on topics of social justice, human rights, and peace.

solidarity: Union of one’s heart and mind with all people. Solidarity leads to the just distribution of material goods, creates bonds between opposing groups and nations, and leads to the spread of spiritual goods such as friendship and prayer.

stewardship: The careful and responsible management of someone or something that has been entrusted to a person’s care. This includes responsibly using and caring for the gifts of creation that God has given us.

subsidiarity: The moral principle that large organizations and governments should not take over responsibilities and decisions that can be carried out by individuals and local organizations, and the responsibility of large organizations and governments to support the good of human beings, families, and local communities, which are the center and purpose of social life.



universal destination of goods: The principle that the earth and all its goods belong to God, and he intends these goods to provide the things all human beings need to live with dignity.

virtue: A habitual and firm disposition to do good.

