

# Kingdom of God: What is Catholic Social Teaching



**ST. COLUMBAN MISSION**  
FOR JUSTICE, PEACE AND ECOLOGY

# DISCLAIMER

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# What Catholic Social Teaching is not

~~A political platform~~

~~Commentary on current events~~

~~A bunch of papal documents~~



**CST is a source of wisdom for helping  
to understand and build the  
“Kingdom of God”**

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# What Jesus Tells Us About the Kingdom

## The Kingdom is God's Justice

“Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me”  
Mt 25:34-26’

## The Kingdom is a Meant for Earth

“Our father in heaven  
holy is your name,  
your kingdom come,  
your will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.” Mt 6:9-10

## The Kingdom is Coming

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” Mk 1:15



# Our faith is all about “the Kingdom”

“Just as you cannot understand Christ apart from the kingdom he came to bring, so too your personal mission is inseparable from the building of that kingdom: “Strive first for the kingdom of God and [God’s] righteousness” (Mt 6:33). Your identification with Christ and his will involves a commitment to build with him that kingdom of love, justice, and universal peace.”

-Pope Francis, *Gaudete Et Exsultate*



Credit: ABC News



# The Basics of CST

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# CST Methodology

**SEE:** what are the poor and the oppressed, including the earth, saying to us?

**JUDGE:** what do the foundations of our faith (our scriptures and tradition) reveal about this situation?

**ACT:** How do we help build the “Kingdom of God” in this situation?

**EVALUATE:** What worked and what didn’t? What have you learned? What still needs to be done?

**CELEBRATE:** joy is the point!



see...



judge...





# CST In Action

**SEE:** listens to the cries of workers in unsafe and exploitative urban factories.

**JUDGE:** scripture reveals that God has special compassion for the poor; tradition (like St. Aquinas) teaches that private property must advance the common good.

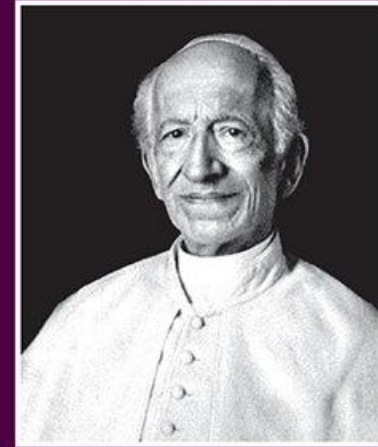
**ACT:** Advocates for collective bargaining, fair wages, and other reforms. Catholics in the US organize labor unions and support the New Deal reforms.

**EVALUATE:** USCCB's Labor Day statement revisits this themes for our times today.

**CELEBRATE:** We celebrate work through rest on weekend and holidays. We also celebrate the fruits of our work.

## Rerum Novarum

On the Condition of the  
Working Classes



Pope Leo XIII

May 15, 1891

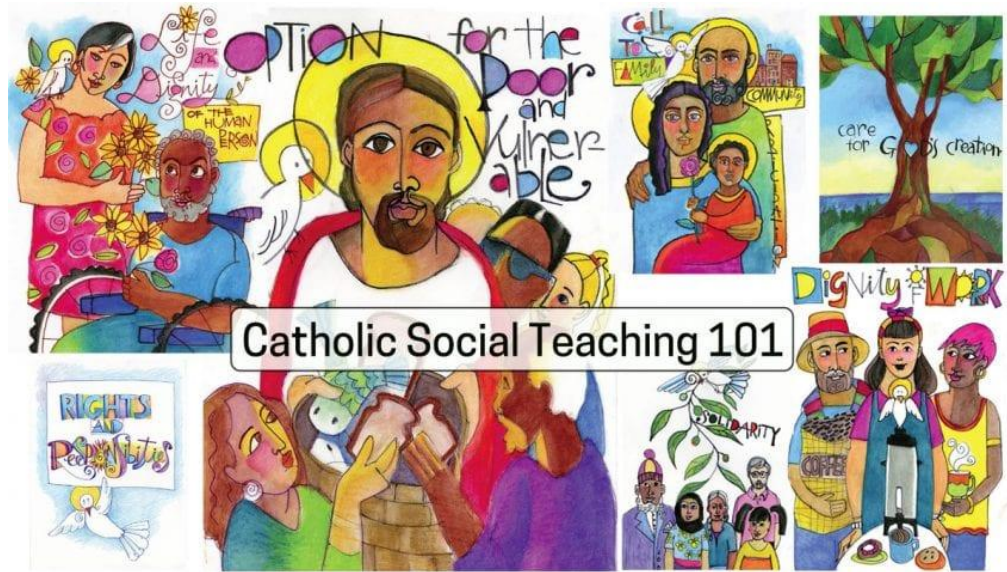
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Pope Leo XIII inaugurates modern Catholic Social Teaching with the publication of *Rerum Novarum* (1891).



# Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

- Call to Family, Community, and Participation
- Care for God's Creation
- Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- Life & Dignity of the Human Person
- Option for the Poor & Vulnerable
- Rights & Responsibilities
- Solidarity



# An Important Distinction

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# Two Feet of Love in Action

Charity responds to people's immediate needs.

Justice eliminates the root causes of those needs.



# Call to Family, Community, and Participation

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# We are each other's keepers

The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society—in economics and politics, in law and policy—directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. [...] We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

-United States Conference of Catholic Bishops



*Credit: Goldenkavishe*



A video still showing Pope Francis speaking at a podium in the U.S. House Chamber. He is wearing a white zucchetto and glasses. To his left sits Joe Biden, and to his right sits Mitch McConnell. Both are wearing dark suits. The background features a red and white striped curtain. A glass of water is on the podium to the left, and a crystal decanter is on the right.

**JOINT MEETING OF CONGRESS**

**U.S. House Chamber**

**C-SPAN**  
c-span.org

A political society endures when it seeks, as a vocation,

# Final Thoughts

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# Reflection Questions

Am I aware of problems facing my local community and involved in efforts to find solutions?

Do I support the efforts of people living in poverty to work for change in their neighborhoods and communities? Do my attitudes and actions empower or *disempower* others?



-Questions taken from "[Examination of Conscience in Light of Catholic Social Teaching](#)"

