

Seven Principles of Christian Social Justice

1. The Dignity of the Human Person

- 1.1. Every person is made in the image and likeness of God, and hence every human life is sacred and has an inherent dignity.
- 1.2. The measure of any institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

2. The Call to Family and Community

- 2.1. We are social beings and have the right and duty to participate in society and seek together the common good and well-being of all.
- 2.2. The family is the central social institution, and must be supported and strengthened.

3. Rights and Responsibilities

- 3.1. Every person has a fundamental right to life and all those things needed for human dignity.
- 3.2. Every person in turn has a responsibility to each other, to their family, and to the larger society to assure that these rights are preserved and protected for all.

4. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- 4.1. Scripture tells us that God has a preferential concern for the poor and vulnerable, and it instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.
- 4.2. A basic moral measure of a society is how its most vulnerable members are faring.

5. The Dignity of Work

- 5.1. All work has inherent dignity, for it is a way we participate in God's continuing creation.
- 5.2. Every person has a right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and form unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.
- 5.3. An economy must serve people, not the other way around.

6. Solidarity

- 6.1. We are our brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they live.
- 6.2. We are one human family. "Loving our neighbor" has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

7. Care for God's Creation

- 7.1. We are the stewards of God's creation.
- 7.2. We are therefore called to protect our planet and the natural blessings and resources it provides for all people and generations.

These 7 principles are derived from the document "Seven Key Themes of Catholic Social Teaching," United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1999.