

Principles of Catholic Social Teaching

1. **Dignity of the Human Person:** The foundation of all CST is the inherent dignity of the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God. The Church, therefore, calls for Integral Human Development, which concerns the well-being of each person in every dimension: economic, political, social, ecological and spiritual.
2. **Common Good:** We must all consider the good of others, and the good of the whole human family, in organizing our society – economically, politically, and legally. Human dignity can only be realized and protected through our relationship with society-at-large. We must love our neighbour locally and globally and prioritize the good of the human family over commercial interests.
3. **Solidarity:** Each of us is part of the human family and we are all interconnected and interdependent. Loving our neighbour has global dimensions. We must see ourselves in others and collaborate towards solutions. Solidarity is a commitment to strengthen community and promote a just society.
4. **Preferential Option for the Poor:** The moral test of any society is based on how the most vulnerable are treated. God's love is universal, so this principle does not intend that we should focus on the poor to the exclusion of others, but rather that we are called to prioritize those who are in most need.
5. **Care of Creation:** The earth is sacred. Creation has its own intrinsic value. We have a responsibility to protect the earth's ecological diversity, beauty, and life-sustaining properties and to hold it in trust for future generations.
6. **Subsidiarity and the Role of Government:** The state is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights, and develop the common good. Subsidiarity holds that such functions of government should be performed at the lowest level possible, as long as they can be performed adequately. When they cannot, higher levels of government must intervene. This principle goes hand in hand with participation.
7. **Participation:** Human beings are social, and how we live together affects the dignity of the individual and the progress of our society. All persons are entitled to participate in community, and in decisions that affect their lives, and cannot be excluded for any reason.
8. **Rights and Responsibilities:** We all have a right to those things which are required by human dignity. These are innately linked with our responsibility to ensure the rights of others- that we do not take more than is needed to fulfil our rights at the expense of another's.
9. **Economic Justice:** The economy must serve people, and not the other way around. All persons have a right to dignified work, and to fair wages and working conditions. Work is a form of continuing participation in God's creation.
10. **Peace:** To be in right relationship with God and each other. Peace is the fruit of charity and the consequence of justice.