

What are the Principles of Catholic Social Teaching?

1. Dignity of the Human Person

We believe every human person is made in the image and likeness of God. This is a gift that we all share as fellow human beings; we are all infinitely loved by our Creator

2. Solidarity

Solidarity arises when we remember that we belong to each other. We reflect on this in a special way at Mass. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, "The Eucharist commits us to the poor. To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognise Christ in the poorest"

Solidarity spurs us to stand side by side with our sisters and brothers, especially those living in poverty

3. The Common Good

The common good means that the fruits of the earth belong to everyone. No one should be excluded from the gifts of creation.

4. The Option for the Poor and the Vulnerable

The option for the poor reminds us of God's preferential love for the poorest and most vulnerable people. God's love is universal; he does not side with oppressors, but loves the humble.

5. Peace

Peace is a cornerstone of our faith. Christ, the Prince of Peace, sacrificed himself with love on the cross. Catholic social teaching promotes peace as a positive, action-orientated concept.

6. Creation and Environment

We are called to protect the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. Environmental stewardship is a fundamental moral and ethical issue.

7. The dignity of work and participation

The dignity of work has been a key principle of Catholic social teaching from the very beginning. The human person should always come before the pursuit of profit. Workers have the right to productive work, fair wages and safe working conditions. They have the right to join trade unions, to a just wage, to spend time with their families and to rest. Work is an essential part of our human dignity and everyone has the right to participate.

8. Role of Government and Subsidiarity

The State has a positive moral function; it is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights and build the common good. The principle of subsidiarity emphasises that decisions should be made at the most local level possible as long as they can be effectively addressed.

