

Dignity of Workers & Rights of Workers

These can be used for publication in parish bulletins, catechetical newsletters, etc.

Work is more than a way to make a living; it is an expression of our dignity and a form of continuing participation in God's creation. All work is essential and equally valued. If the dignity of the work and the worker are to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected – the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to organize and join unions, to private property, and to economic initiative. The economy exists to serve the common good of all people. The work is for the worker and not the other way around. *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1999

The economy exists for the person, not the person for the economy. A fundamental moral measure of any economy is how the poor and vulnerable are faring.

A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops

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All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family, and serve the common good.

A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops

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All people have a right to life and to secure the basic necessities of life (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, safe environment, economic security). All people, to the extent they are able, have a corresponding duty to work, responsibility to provide for the needs of their families, and an obligation to contribute to the broader society.

A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops

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The global economy has moral dimensions and human consequences. Decisions on investment, trade, aid and development should protect human life and promote human rights, especially for those most in need wherever they might live on this globe.

A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops

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In economic life, free markets have both clear advantages and limits; government has essential responsibilities and limitations; voluntary groups have irreplaceable roles, but

cannot substitute for the proper working of the market and the just policies of the state.
A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops



Society has a moral obligation, including governmental action where necessary, to assure opportunity, meet basic human needs and pursue justice in economic life.
A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops



Workers, owners, managers, stockholders and consumers are moral agents in economic life. By our choices, initiative, creativity and investment, we enhance or diminish economic opportunity, community life and social justice.
A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops



All people have the right to economic initiative, pro productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions as well as to organize and join unions or other associations.
A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, U.S. Catholic Bishops

Workers are not to be treated as slaves; justice demands that the dignity of human personality be respected in them, ... gainful occupations are not a mark of shame to man, but rather of respect, as they provide him with an honorable means of supporting life. It is shameful and inhuman, however, to use men as things for gain and to put no more value on them than what they are worth in muscle and energy.

Rerum Novarum, Pope Leo XIII, 1891

Work is more than a way to make a living; it is an expression of our dignity and a form of continuing participation in God's creation. The economy must serve people, not the other way around. All work is essential and equally valued. If the dignity of the work and the worker are to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected. The economy exists to serve the common good of all people.

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1999

Every perspective on economic life that is human, moral, and Christian must be shaped by three questions: What does the economy do for people? What does it do to people? And how do people *participate* in it? The economy is a human reality: men and women working together to develop and care for the whole of God's creation. All this work must serve the material and spiritual well-being of people.

Economic Justice for All, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1986

The ultimate source of human rights is not found in the mere will of human beings, in the reality of the State, in public powers, but in man himself and in God his Creator. These rights are “universal, inviolable, inalienable.” Universal because they are present in all human beings, without exception of time, place or subject. Inviolable insofar as “they are inherent in the human person and in human dignity” and because “it would be vain to proclaim rights, if at the same time everything were not done to ensure the duty of respecting them by all people, everywhere, and for all people.” Inalienable insofar as “no one can legitimately deprive another person, whoever they may be, of these rights, since this would do violence to their nature.” (quoting John Paul II, World Day of Peace, 1999)\

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, Pontifical Council, 2005