

[Return to Article](#)

Published: Friday, October 29, 2004

'Compendium of the Social Doctrine': Select quotes

Here is a selection of quotes on 10 topics taken from the "Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church," released Oct. 25 at the Vatican.

ABORTION AND BIRTH CONTROL: "Concerning the 'methods' for practicing responsible procreation, the first to be rejected as morally illicit are sterilization and abortion. The latter in particular is a horrendous crime and constitutes a particularly serious moral disorder; far from being a right, it is a sad phenomenon that contributes seriously to spreading a mentality against life, representing a dangerous threat to a just and democratic social coexistence."

BUSINESS: "All those involved in a business venture must be mindful that the community in which they work represents a good for everyone and not a structure that permits the satisfaction of someone's merely personal interests. This awareness alone makes it possible to build an economy that is truly at the service of mankind and to create programs of real cooperation among the different partners in labor."

ENVIRONMENT: "The biblical message and the church's magisterium represent the essential reference points for evaluating the problems found in the relationship between man and the environment. The underlying cause of these problems can be seen in man's pretension of exercising unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations which, on the contrary, must distinguish all human activity."

FAMILY AND MARRIAGE: "The family, in fact, is born of the intimate communion of life and love founded on the marriage between one man and one woman. It possesses its own specific and original social dimension, in that it is the principal place of interpersonal relationships, the first and vital cell of society. The family is a divine institution that stands at the foundation of life of the human person as the prototype of every social order."

POLITICS: "A particular area for discernment on the part of the lay faithful concerns the choice of political instruments, that is, membership in a party or in other types of political participation. A choice must be made that is consistent with values, taking into account actual circumstances. In every case, whatever choice is made must be rooted in charity and tend toward the attainment of the common good. It is difficult for the concerns of the Christian faith to be adequately met in one sole political entity; to claim that one party or political coalition responds completely to the demands of faith or of Christian life would give rise to dangerous errors."

PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR: "The principle of the universal destination of goods requires that the poor, marginalized and in all cases those whose living conditions interfere with their proper growth should be the focus of particular concern. To this end, the preferential option for the poor should be affirmed in all its force. This is an option, or a special form of primacy in the exercise of Christian charity, to which the whole tradition of the church bears witness. It affects the life of each Christian inasmuch as he or she seeks to imitate the life of Christ, but it applies equally to our social responsibilities and hence to our manner of living, and to the logical decisions to be made concerning the ownership and use of goods."

PRIVATE PROPERTY: "Christian tradition has never recognized the right to private property as

absolute and untouchable. ... The universal destination of goods entails obligations on how goods are to be used by their legitimate owners. Individual persons may not use their resources without considering the effects that this use will have; rather, they must act in a way that benefits not only themselves and their family, but also the common good."

WAR: "The magisterium condemns 'the savagery of war' and asks that war be considered in a new way. In fact, it is hardly possible to imagine that in an atomic era, war could be used as an instrument of justice. War is a scourge and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations; it has never been and it will never be, because it creates new and still more complicated conflicts."

WOMEN AND WORK: "The feminine genius is needed in all expressions in the life of society; therefore, the presence of women in the workplace must also be guaranteed. The first indispensable step in this direction is the concrete possibility of access to professional formation. The recognition and defense of women's rights in the context of work generally depend on the organization of work, which must take into account the dignity and vocation of women, whose true advancement ... requires that labor should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them."

WORK: "The church teaches the value of work not only because it is always something that belongs to the person, but also because of its nature as something necessary. Work is needed to form and maintain a family, to have a right to property, to contribute to the common good of the human family. In considering the moral implications that the question of work has for social life, the church cannot fail to indicate unemployment as a real social disaster, above all with regard to the younger generations."

---*CNS*

[Home](#) | [News](#) | [Spirituality](#) | [Sports](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Entertainment](#) | [Liturgy](#) | [Viewpoints](#)
[About](#) | [Contact](#) | [Departments](#) | [Home Delivery](#)

copyright The Tidings Corporation ©2004
Contact us at: info@the-tidings.com