



1. Rich Woman, Poor Woman

Dramatized Reading for Two Women

Rich woman I am a woman

Poor woman I am a woman

Rich woman I am a woman born of a woman,
whose man owned a factory.

Poor woman I am a woman born of a woman,
whose man labored in a factory.

Rich woman I am a woman whose man wore
silk suits, who constantly
watched his weight.

Poor woman I am a woman whose man wore
tattered clothing, whose heart
was constantly strangled by
hunger.

Rich woman I am a woman who watched two
babies grow into beautiful
children.

Poor woman I am a woman who watched two
babies die because there was no
milk.

Rich woman I am a woman who watched
twins grow into popular college
students with summers abroad.

Poor woman I am a woman who watched
three children grow, but with
bellies stretched from no food.

Rich woman But then there was a man:

Poor woman But then there was a man:

Rich woman and he talked about the
peasants getting richer
by my family getting poorer.

Poor woman and he told me of days that
would be better,
and he made the days better.

Rich woman We had to eat rice!

Poor woman We had rice.

Rich woman We had to eat beans!

Poor woman We had beans.

Rich woman My children were no longer
given summer visas to Europe.

Poor woman My children no longer cried
themselves to sleep.

Rich woman And I felt like a peasant ...

Poor woman And I felt like a woman ...

Rich woman ... a peasant with a dull, hard,
unexciting life.

Poor woman ... like a woman with a life that
sometimes allowed a song.

Rich woman And I saw a man.

Poor woman And I saw a man.

Rich woman	And together we began to plot with the hope of the return to freedom--	Rich woman	... and we all had drinks to celebrate ...
Poor woman	I saw his heart begin to beat with hope of freedom, at least ...	Poor woman	... and they shot them all.
Rich woman	... someday, the return to freedom.	Rich woman	... the most wonderful martinis.
Poor woman	... someday, freedom.	Poor woman	They shot my man.
Rich woman	And then ...	Rich woman	And then they asked us to dance.
Poor woman	But then ...	Poor woman	And then they came for us.
Rich woman	... one day ...	Rich woman	Me ...
Poor woman	... one day ...	Poor woman	For me, the woman ...
Rich woman	... there were planes overhead and guns firing close by.	Rich woman	... And my sisters.
Poor woman	... there were planes overhead, and guns firing in the distance.	Poor woman	... or my sisters.
Rich woman	I gathered my children and went home.	Rich woman	And then they took us.
Poor woman	I gathered my children and ran.	Poor woman	Then they took us.
Rich woman	And the guns moved farther and farther away.	Rich woman	They took us to dinner at a small, private club.
Poor woman	But the guns moved closer and closer.	Poor woman	They stripped from us the dignity we had gained.
Rich woman	And then, they announced that freedom had been restored!	Rich woman	And they treated us to beef.
Poor woman	And then, they came, young boys really ...	Poor woman	And then they raped us.
Rich woman	They came into my home along with my man.	Rich woman	It was one course after another.
Poor woman	They came and found my man.	Poor woman	One after the other they came at us.
Rich woman	Those men whose money was almost gone ...	Rich woman	We nearly burst we were so full.
Poor woman	They found all of the men whose lives were almost their own ...	Poor woman	Lunging, plunging ... sisters bleeding, sisters dying ...
		Rich woman	It was magnificent to be free again!
		Poor woman	It was hardly a relief to have survived.

Rich woman And then we gathered the children together.

Poor woman And then, they took our children ...

Rich woman And he gave them some good wine ...

Poor woman ... and they took their scissors ...

Rich woman And then we gave them a party.

Poor woman And then they took the hands of our children ...

Pause

Rich woman The beans have almost disappeared now.

Poor woman The beans have disappeared.

Rich woman The rice: I've replaced it with chicken or steak.

Poor woman The rice, I cannot find it.

Rich woman And the parties continue, night after night to make up for all the time wasted.

Poor woman And my silent tears are joined once more by the midnight cries of my children.

Rich woman And I feel like a woman again.

Poor woman They say, I am a woman.

*This reflection was written by a working class Chilean woman in 1973, shortly after Chile's socialist president, Salvador Allende, was overthrown. A US missionary translated the work and brought it with her when she was forced to leave Chile.

* *Sojourners* July 1985 p. 25

The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are those who mourn,
for they will be comforted.

Blessed are the meek,
for they will inherit the earth.

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst
for righteousness,
for they will be filled.

Blessed are the merciful,
for they will receive mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart,
for they will see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers,
for they will be called children of God.

Blessed are those who are persecuted
for righteousness' sake,
for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Blessed are you
when people revile you and persecute you
and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely
on my account.

Rejoice and be glad,
for your reward is great in heaven,
for in the same way they persecuted the
prophets who were before you.

Matthew 5:3-12 [NRSV translation]

Reflection

Reflect on "Rich Woman, Poor Woman" for a few minutes and then spend some time answering the questions below.

What thoughts and feelings are you left with after this reading?

Choose one issue. What do you know about it, both from your personal experience, and on a societal level?

What societal issue(s) did this reading raise for you?

What do you think the Church would say about the issue that you've chosen?



2. Charity and Justice

What's the difference?

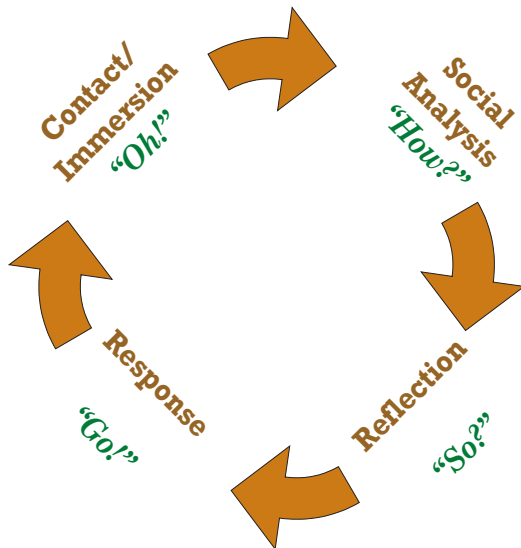
Charity Direct Service	Justice Systemic Change
Scriptural Reference: The parable of the Good Samaritan	Scriptural Reference: The Exodus experience
Private, individual acts	Public, collective actions
Responds to immediate need	Responds to long-term need
Provides direct service: food, clothing, shelter	Promotes social change in institutions
Directed at the effects of injustice: symptoms	Directed at the root causes of social injustice
<i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • homeless shelters, • food shelves, • clothing drives, • emergency services 	<i>Examples:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • legislative advocacy • changing corporate policies or practices • congregation-based community organizing.



3. The Pastoral Circle

What is the Pastoral Circle?

The pastoral circle is the model which highlights the four movements that are essential for action on behalf of justice. It includes contact or immersion, structural/social analysis, reflection and response.



I. Contact/Immersion

Effective movement around the circle should be grounded in experience. “When contact is made, a privileged question to be asked is: what is happening to the poor in this situation?” (*From the Kinsler Jubilee Workbook VIII, by Ross and Gloria Kinsler, © Sabbath Economics Collaborative*)

What did you observe about this issue throughout your immersion?

What is the problem? Who is hurting?

What feelings are you left with? How does this issue touch you personally?

II. Social Analysis

Structural (or social) Analysis is a process by which one examines the causes of issues of injustice. It recognizes that economic, political, social, and cultural systems interact with one another to produce the situation in which we live. Many times, injustice occurs at the level of systems.

What are the reasons, activities, and policies in each of these areas that lead to violation of human rights?

Why does this situation exist? What are the root causes?

Economic factors

Economic factors refer to production, distribution, and consumption. It asks questions about the patterns of ownership and decision-making about land, capital, technology, resources, and labor.

Who owns? Who controls?
Who pays? Who is left out?

Political Factors

Political factors refer to the ways in which governmental policies are decided upon and enacted, and how these decisions affect people's lives.

What patterns and institutions organize the collective life of the group?

Who decides? What decisions do they make?
For whom? What is the decision making process?
Who has power?

Social Factors

Social factors refer to how people relate to one another, including the groups they form. Examples would be ethnic groups, racial groups, and groups formed around class, age, and gender.

Who is left out? Who is included? What is the basis for inclusion/exclusion?

Historical Factors

Historical factors look at this situation within its historical context. It involves examination of both the history of the issue and the history of the geographical place in which the issue is occurring.

What past events influence the situation today?

Cultural Factors

Cultural factors are the sum of the ways of believing, thinking, feeling, and acting which constitutes what people call their "way of life." They are reflected in media, education, arts/entertainment, sports, mores, health, and housing.

What values are evidenced? What do people believe in? Who influences what people believe in?

III. Theological Reflection

Theological reflection "evaluates this situation and what is really most at stake in this situation" in light of our Scripture, the Church's social teaching, and our lived faith.

What lessons from Scripture can help us to interpret this experience?

What key principles from Catholic Social Teaching apply to this situation?

IV. Response

Do you have enough information and analysis to be able to act? ...

If not, what else do you need to know?

Where would you go to find this out?

If you were to act to change this situation, what root causes would you attack?

How can you act to support the empowerment of those who are poor and disadvantaged in this situation?

Our main source for this section was the Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul & Minneapolis. We recommend you bookmark and visit their site regularly: www.osjspm.org



4. The Church's Social Teaching

The Church's Social Teaching: “a central and essential element of our faith”

From *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching:
Challenges and Directions*
US Bishops, 1998

“Far too many Catholics are not familiar with the basic content of Catholic social teaching. More fundamentally, many Catholics do not adequately understand that the social teaching of the Church is an essential part of Catholic faith. This poses a serious challenge for all Catholics, since it weakens our capacity to be a Church that is true to the demands of the Gospel. **We need to do more to share the social mission and message of our Church.**”

“**Catholic social teaching is a central and essential element of our faith....** Because this commitment to social justice is at the heart of who we are and what we believe, it must be shared more effectively.”

“**If Catholic education and formation fail to communicate our social tradition, they are not fully Catholic.**”

[We need to] “... ensure that every Catholic understands how **the Gospel and Church teaching call us to choose life, to serve the least among us, to hunger and thirst for justice, and to be peacemakers.** The sharing of our social tradition is a defining measure of Catholic education and formation.”

“Central to our identity as Catholics is that we are called to be leaven for transforming the world, agents for bringing about a kingdom of love and justice.”

“The Scriptures say, ‘Without a vision the people perish’ (Proverbs 29:18). As Catholics, we have an inspiring vision in our social teaching. In a world that hungers for a sense of meaning and moral direction, this teaching offers ethical criteria for action. In a society of rapid change and often confused moral values, this teaching offers consistent moral guidance for the future. For Catholics, this social teaching is a central part of our identity.”

“**The test for our Church is not simply have we ‘kept the faith’ but have we shared the faith.**”

The pages that follow offer an overview of the principal documents that expound the Church's social teaching, together with an indication of the contemporary events that were taking place in the world.

You will find a much more developed presentation of this under the title “The Busy Christian's Guide to Catholic Social Teaching”: on the online resource Salt of the Earth.

Historical Context

mid-late 18th century

Industrial Revolution in Britain

Mechanisation, invention of steam engine

1789 French Revolution

early 19th century

Trade unions legal in Britain.

1815 End of Napoleonic Wars

Industrial Revolution spreads throughout Europe.

Height of imperialism:

European control of Africa, parts of Asia, and India;

U.S. involvement in Latin America.

mid-late 19th century

1848 Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels publish the

Communist Manifesto

1867 First volume of *Das Kapital* published

Socialism spreads.

Height of imperialism:

European control of Africa, parts of Asia, and India;

U.S. involvement in Latin America.

late 19th century

1891 * *Rerum novarum* published

1893 Panic brings failure of 491 banks and over 15,000 commercial institutions

early 20th century

1900 Socialist Revolutionary Party of Russia founded
Russia: Peasant revolt (1902); "Bloody Sunday" massacre (1905)

Strikes and industrial unrest in Britain.

Suffragette riots in Whitehall, London.

Famine and revolution in China: Manchu dynasty overthrown.

1913 German Army Bill expands German army

1914-1918 World War I

1917 Russian Revolution

1920 First full-time session of League of Nations.

1925 Adolf Hitler publishes *Mein Kampf*

1926 General strike in Britain

1929 Great Depression

Unemployment in Germany exceeds 3 million.

1930 German elections: 107 Nazis win seats in Reichstag

1930 War breaks out between Paraguay and Bolivia

1930 Revolution in Brazil; revolution in Argentina

1931 National Government formed in Britain after severe financial crisis

1930 Japan invades Manchuria

1931 * *Quadragesimo anno* published

May 15, 1891

Pope Leo XIII

Rerum novarum (The Condition of Labor)

Context

- Industrial Revolution, exploitation of workers. Great poverty.
- Public authorities are not protecting the rights of the poor.

Main points

- Plea for human dignity through just distribution of wealth. Blames decline of morality (alcohol consumption, prostitution, and divorce) on inequality.
- Argues from Natural Law to defend workers' basic human rights, which include: the right to work; to own private property; to a just wage; and to organize in workers' associations.
- Both employers and employees have rights and responsibilities.
- The Church has the right and duty to speak out on social issues. The Church's role is to teach social principles and bring social classes together.
- The state's role is to ensure a just society through laws that preserve rights.

May, 1931

Pope Pius XI

Quadragesimo anno (Reconstruction of the Social Order)

Context

- A response to the Great Depression, which began in 1929 and rocked the world. In Europe, rise of Hitler and Nazism.
- Fortieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum* (Latin title is literally "On the fortieth year ...")

Main points

- Details the positive impact of *Rerum novarum* on the social order—through the Church, civil authorities, and (by this time) flourishing unions
- New context warrants a new response.
- Critique of capitalism: free competition has destroyed itself, with the state having become a "slave" serving its greed.
- Notes that the lot of workers has improved in the Western World, but also that it has deteriorated elsewhere.
- Warns against a communist solution, however, because communism condones violence and abolishes private property.
- Labor and capital need each other.
- A just wage is necessary so workers can fulfill their right to acquire private property.
- The state has the responsibility to reform the social order
- Economic affairs cannot be left to free enterprise alone.
- Public intervention in labor-management disputes approved.
- International economic cooperation urged.
- Introduces the concept of "subsidiarity," saying social problems should be resolved on more local levels first.

May 15, 1961
Pope John XXIII
Mater et Magistra (Christianity and Social Progress)

Context

Paradox of

- great advances (nuclear energy, automation, space exploration, and improved communication technologies) and therefore complex, new problems for industrialized nations.
- millions living in poverty in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.

Main points

- Enumerates the economic, scientific, social, and political developments since *Rerum novarum* and *Quadragesimo anno*.
- Disparity is now not so much between rich and poor classes as between rich and poor nations.
- Speaks in favor of non-industrialized nations (first encyclical to use this expression)
- Decries arms race and the plight of the world's farmers.
- Arms spending contributes to poverty.
- Peace would be possible if economic imbalances among nations were righted.
- Industrialized nations have a duty to help poor, non-industrialized nations, but with due respect for the latter's culture and avoiding domination.
- Technological advances are making nations increasingly interdependent, so greater need of cooperation and mutual assistance are necessary.
- All Catholics should know and live out Catholic social teaching.
- Advocates "see>judge>act" as a model of effective lay involvement.

April 11, 1963
Pope John XXIII
Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth)

Context

Critical moment in world relations, especially the Cold War:

- August 1961 erection of Berlin Wall
- October 1962 Cuban missile crisis

Main points

- True peace can only be built on the foundation of social rights and responsibilities, which exist
 - between people
 - between people and public authorities
 - between states
 - among peoples and nations
- Acknowledges that changing culture means change in roles and rights of women
- Argues that justice, right reason, and human dignity demand end to arms race
- Advocates strengthening of United Nations

Historical Context

early-mid 20th century

- 1933 Germany; Hitler becomes Chancellor; Reichstag burned
- 1933 Japanese occupation of part of China
- 1936 German occupation of Rhineland
- 1938 Germany occupies Austria
- 1939-1945 World War II
- 1945 Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki
- 1945 United Nations established
- 1947 India and Pakistan become independent (from Britain)
- 1948 UN Declaration of Human Rights
- 1950 Korean War
- World population reaches 2.5 billion
- 1952 US tests first H-bomb
- 1952 Vietnam divided; North under Communist control
- 1952 Cambodia becomes independent (from France)
- 1956 Martin Luther King Jr. leads bus boycott in Alabama
- 1957 USSR launches Sputnik I and II
- 1957 Common Market founded
- 1958 US launches Vanguard and Explorer satellites
- 1959 Guerillas take Havana; Castro becomes Prime Minister
- 1960 OPEC (Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries) set up
- 1961 Berlin Wall erected
- 1961 First human in space
- 1961 **Mater et Magistra* published
- 1961-1973 US involvement in Vietnam War
- 1962 Second Vatican Council opens
- 1962 Cuban Missile crisis
- 1963 Nuclear Test Ban Treaty signed by US, USSR, and Britain
- 1963 **Pacem in Terris* published

Pacem in terris

was the first ever encyclical to be addressed not only to the faithful of the Catholic Church, but to all people of good will.

Historical Context

mid 20th century

- 1963 President Kennedy assassinated
- 1964 Nelson Mandela and seven other black leaders sentenced to life imprisonment
- 1965 Demonstrations against Vietnam War throughout the world
- 1965 Civil Rights march, Selma to Montgomery
- 1965 **Gaudium et spes* published
Second Vatican Council closes
- 1966 Race riots in Chicago, Cleveland, Brooklyn
- 1967 **Populorum progressio* published

December 1965

Second Vatican Council

Gaudium et Spes (The Church in the Modern World)

Context

Vatican II; great reform of the Church, especially the liturgy. Council Fathers decide to look beyond “internal” Church matters and address the Church’s relation to the world today.

Main points

- All members of the Church, as the “People of God,” must read “the signs of the times”; must examine the great technological and social changes that have transformed the world and measure their benefits and cost
- Industrialization and improved mass communication bring certain benefits, but also detrimental consequences: greater gaps between rich and poor, overpopulation, rapid growth of city life, questioning of traditional values by the younger generation, threat to family life.
- Explores relationship between Catholic Church and humanity
 - the Church’s mission “begins in this world”
 - Christ as “Lord of history”
 - task of all members of Church to work for better world
- Church needs to use culture more in spreading the gospel
- New developments in weaponry demand a new evaluation of war

March 26, 1967

Pope Paul VI

Populorum progressio (The Progress of Peoples)

Context

- Vietnam War
- various wars of “Independence” in Africa

Main points

- The Church, in response to Jesus’ teachings, is called to foster human progress
- True progress not calculated solely in terms of economic and technological advances, but rather of fostering full human potential (social, cultural, and spiritual).
- Points to poverty as root cause of world conflict: development is means to peace
- Growing gap between rich and poor nations
- Radical inequity in trade relations that “free trade” alone cannot correct
- Warns that growing disparity tempts the poor to violence and revolution as possible solutions
- Praises and encourages support for work of international development agencies, e.g. World Fund, and Food and Agriculture Organization
- The goods of the earth belong to all, so the right to private property is subordinate: “the superfluous wealth of rich countries should be placed at the service of poor nations”

May 1971

Pope Paul VI

Octogesima adveniens (A Call to Action)

Context

- The world is verging on a recession; vulnerability of the “new poor”
- Follows a decade of action on behalf of civil rights; coincides with the women’s movement of the early 1970s, and continuing protests against the War in Vietnam.
- Commemorates 80th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (hence its Latin title)

Main points

- Speaks of the “new poor”: namely, the elderly, the handicapped, and those marginalized by urbanization (especially the young, and women)
- Speaks out against lingering discrimination because of race, origin, color, culture, sex, and religion.
- Christians have a personal responsibility to challenge injustice in the name of the Gospel
- Injustice needs to be combatted economically, but also politically
- Encourages individual Christians and local churches to apply gospel principles of justice to contemporary situations and take appropriate political action

Historical Context

late 20th century

- 1967-68 China and France test thermonuclear devices
- 1967 Six Day War: Israel defeats attacks by neighboring Arab states
- 1968 “Prague Spring” ends with occupation of Czechoslovakia by Warsaw Pact troops
- 1968 Student protest movement in France brings down government
- 1968 Student protest movements in US, Germany, Japan
- 1968 Civil rights demonstrations and riots in Northern Ireland
- 1968 Summer of “flower power” San Francisco
- 1969 Neil Armstrong walks on the moon.
- 1969 Woodstock music festival
- 1971 **Octogesima adveniens* published
- 1971 First Synod of Bishops meets on the theme “Justice in the World”

November 30, 1971

Synod of Bishops on Justice in the World

(Justice In The World)

Context

- First Synod of Bishops, so first major example of post-Vatican II collegiality
- Strongly influenced by the insights of Church leaders from Africa, Asia, and Latin America
- Echoes of 1968 Medellin conference of Latin American bishops, especially the theme of “liberation”

Main points

- Explores dynamics of “oppression” and “liberation”
- God is a “liberator of the oppressed” and recognizes that structural injustices oppress humanity
- “Justice ... is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel”
- Justice is an essential ingredient to the liberation of human beings—not to mention a key expression of Christian love
- Lists injustices catalogued: against migrants and refugees, also human-rights violations, torture, political prisoners, etc.
- Church should speak on behalf of the voiceless sufferers
- Church must be a witness for justice—via education, international relations, and especially the way it treats its own members (particularly women and laypeople)

Historical Context

late 20th century

- 1973-1974 Arab oil embargo
- 1974 India test nuclear device
- 1974 World economic recession
- 1975 Saigon falls to Communists. Vietnam War ends
- 1975 **Evangelii nuntiandi* published
- 1978 First "Test tube baby" born (England)
- 1979 SALT II Treaty signed by US and USSR
- 1979 Iran; Shah goes into exile; Ayatollah Khomeini returns from exile
- 1979 Peace Treaty between Israel and Egypt, ending official state of war since 1948
- 1979 Sandinista government sworn in in Nicaragua after Somoza loses US support and goes into exile
- 1979 Soviet troops in Afghanistan
- 1979 Mother Teresa awarded Nobel Peace Prize
- 1980 Solidarnosc union founded in Poland
- 1980 World Health Organization announces elimination of smallpox
- 1981 **Laborem exercens* published

October 26, 1975

Pope Paul VI

Evangelii Nuntiandi

(Evangelization in the Modern World)

Context

- Modern culture: especially problems of atheistic secularism, indifference, consumerism, focus on pleasure, discrimination, and desire to dominate.
- Issued on tenth anniversary of closing of Vatican II

Main points

- Need to "make the Church of the 20th century ever better fitted for proclaiming the Gospel to people of the 20th century"
- Church has to continue proclaiming the message of Jesus
- Jesus' message is one of salvation, that includes liberation from injustice and all forms of oppression
- Need to "evangelize" human judgment, values, interests, thought, and lifestyle.
- Importance of evangelization in modern increasingly de-Christianized world,
- Explores means of evangelization: homilies, personal witness, mass media, etc.

September 14, 1981

Pope John Paul II

Laborem exercens (On Human Work)

Context

- Vast numbers of people are unemployed or underemployed
- Commemorates 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*

Main points

- work is the key to making life more human and the measure of human dignity.
- criticizes both capitalism and Marxism
- denounces tendency to treat humans as mere instruments of production;
- against collectivism; affirms right to private property but as subordinate to the right of common use.
- work is a duty; employers need to provide for workers via good planning, unemployment benefits,
- need for international collaboration to right imbalances in standards of living
- resources must be used to create employment
- wages must be sufficient to support a family, and working mothers should be afforded special consideration
- workers deserve health care, right to leisure, pension, accident insurance, decent working environment
- right to form unions strongly supported
- work opportunities for disabled people
- people have a right to leave native countries in search of a better livelihood.

1986

Unites States Conference of Catholic Bishops *Economic Justice For All*

Context

- 33 million “poor”; 20 to 30 million “needy”; and 8 million unemployed

Main points

- Notes challenges facing U.S. economy: central role of U.S. in a global economy; mobility of capital and technology affects jobs worldwide; depletion of natural resources; high unemployment and harsh poverty; economic life failing to support family life; investment of resources in arms production contributes to hardship
- Develops Christian vision of economic life:
 - need to examine inequalities of income, consumption, privilege, and power
 - poor should have the single most urgent claim on the conscience of the nation
 - need for investment of wealth, talent, and energy in favor of the poor and excluded to ensure their active participation in the economy.
- Need to:
 - create new jobs, provide training, remove barriers to equal employment
 - re-evaluate tax and welfare systems to provide services and human dignity
 - be fairer in trade with developing nations
- Church must model good management, fair wages, and ethical investment

Historical Context

late 20th century

- 1982 Solidarnosc outlawed by Polish government
- 1984 Discovery of AIDS virus
- 1985 Mikhail Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of Communist Party in Soviet Union
- 1986 Overthrow President Duvalier (“Baby Doc”) in Haiti
- 1986 “People Power” revolution in Philippines, supported by Cardinal Sin; Corazon Aquino becomes President
- 1986 US bombing of Libya
- 1986 Gorbachev initiates policies of *glasnost* and *perestroika*
- 1986 ***Economic Justice for All*** published

Some extracts from *Economic Justice for All*

“We are believers called to follow Our Lord Jesus Christ and proclaim his Gospel in the midst of a complex and powerful economy. This reality poses both opportunities and responsibilities for Catholics in the United States. Our faith calls us to measure this economy, not by what it produces but also by how it touches human life and whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person. Economic decisions have human consequences and moral content; they help or hurt people, strengthen or weaken family life, advance or diminish the quality of justice in our land.”

...

“We write to share our teaching, to raise questions, to challenge one another to live our faith in the world. We write as heirs of the

biblical prophets who summon us ‘to do right, and to love goodness, and to walk humbly with your God’ (Micah. 6:8). We write as followers of Jesus who told us in the Sermon on the Mount: ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit Blessed are the meek Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness You are the salt of the earth You are the light of the world’ (Matthew 5:1-6, 13-14). These words challenge us not only as believers but also as consumers, citizens, workers, and owners. In the parable of the Last Judgment, Jesus said, ‘For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink As often as you did it for one of my least brothers, you did it for me’ (Matthew 25:35-40). The challenge for us is to discover in our own place and time what it means to be ‘poor in spirit’ and ‘the salt of the earth’ and what it means to serve ‘the least among us’ and to ‘hunger and thirst for righteousness.’”

Historical Context

late 20th century

- 1987 "Black Monday" on London Stock Market; worst day for shares in 20th century
- 1987 US and USSR sign Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces Treaty, agreeing to reduce nuclear arsenals
- 1987 **Sollicitudo rei socialis* published
- 1988 Soviet troops begin withdrawal from Afghanistan
- 1989 Demonstrations for democracy in China; repressed in Tiananmen Square Massacre
- 1989 Opening of Hungarian border; mass exodus of East Germans into West Germany
- 1989 Vietnamese troops complete withdrawal of troops from Cambodia (after ten years of occupation)
- 1989 Berlin Wall comes down
- 1989 Czechoslovakia's Communist Party leaders resign
- 1989 Romania's dictator overthrown, executed
- 1989 US invasion of Panama
- 1990 Nelson Mandela released after 26 years in prison
- 1990 Lithuania declares independence from USSR
- 1990 Free elections in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, and Bulgaria
- 1990 Iraq invades Kuwait; coalition of US and allied troops sent to region
- 1990 Reunification of East and West Germany
- 1991 Kuwait liberated
- 1991 Civil war in Iraq.
- 1991 **Centesimus annus* published

December 30, 1987

Pope John Paul II

Sollicitudo rei socialis (On Social Concern)

Context

- Worrying state of world economy is in flux: debt, unemployment, and recession affecting not just the poor but also the affluent nations
- Commemorates 20th anniversary of *Populorum progressio*

Main points

- Regrets 20 lost years of unfulfilled hopes since *Populorum progressio*: growing gap between northern and southern hemispheres, global debt (forcing nations to export capital), unemployment and underemployment. International trade discriminates against developing countries.
- East-West blocs ideological opposition contributes to underdevelopment: militarism ("wars by proxy"), imperialism, neo-colonialism, and exaggerated concerns for security. All this blocks cooperation and solidarity.
- Criticizes the West for abandoning itself to a growing, selfish isolation
- Criticizes the East for ignoring its duty to alleviate human misery
- Arms trade, by both blocs, contributes to refugee populations and increased terrorism
- Emergence of "superdevelopment," an excessive availability of goods leading to consumerism and waste
- Highlights existence of "structures of sin"

May 1, 1991

Pope John Paul II

Centesimus annus (The Hundredth Year)

Context

- The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe.
- 100th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*

Main points

- Socialism flawed because based on an atheistic view of humanity instead of a transcendent one. Results in society "without reference to human dignity and responsibility."
- Whereas capitalism recognizes the freedom of the human person.
- Criticizes "unbridled," "radical," or "primitive" capitalism but talks of a "business economy" that serves and protects the human person, and of the free market as "efficient instrument for utilizing resources and effectively responding to needs"
- Warns against:
 - danger of consumerism in modern capitalistic societies, that cheapens the person, harms society, and ultimately poisons the planet
 - elevating capitalism, as an economic tool, to the level of an all-encompassing ideology.

