

## PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

- *Dignity of the human person*

All people are sacred, made in the image and likeness of God. People do not lose dignity because of disability, poverty, age, lack of success, or race. The emphasis is on people over things, being over having.

- *Community and the common good*

The human person is both sacred and social. We realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in community. As Saint Paul said, "We are one body: when one suffers, we all suffer." We are called to respect all of God's gifts of creation, to be good stewards of the earth and each other.

- *Rights and responsibilities*

People have a fundamental right to life, food, shelter, health care, education, and employment. All people have a right to participate in the decisions that affect their lives.

Corresponding to these rights are duties and

responsibilities to respect the rights of others and to work for the common good.

- *Option for the poor*

The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. The poor have the most urgent moral claim on the conscience of any community. We are called to look at public-policy decisions in terms of how they affect the poor.

- *Dignity of work*

People have a right to decent and productive work, fair wages, private property, and economic initiative. The economy exists to serve people, not the other way around.

- *Solidarity*

We are one human family. Our responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic, and ideological differences. We are called to work globally for justice.