



BRIDGING THE GAP 2025:

Social Justice in the Workplace:
Applying Principles of Catholic
Social Doctrine to HR Policies
and Practices

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TOPICS FOR EXPLORATION

What is Work? → Who is the Worker? Resources for Focusing on the Future

Pope Francis: “The Path to a Better Future” starts with “seeing”, “choosing”, “acting”

Environmental Scanning: Systematic Approach for seeing, choosing, and acting used by HR Practitioners (influence of external environment)

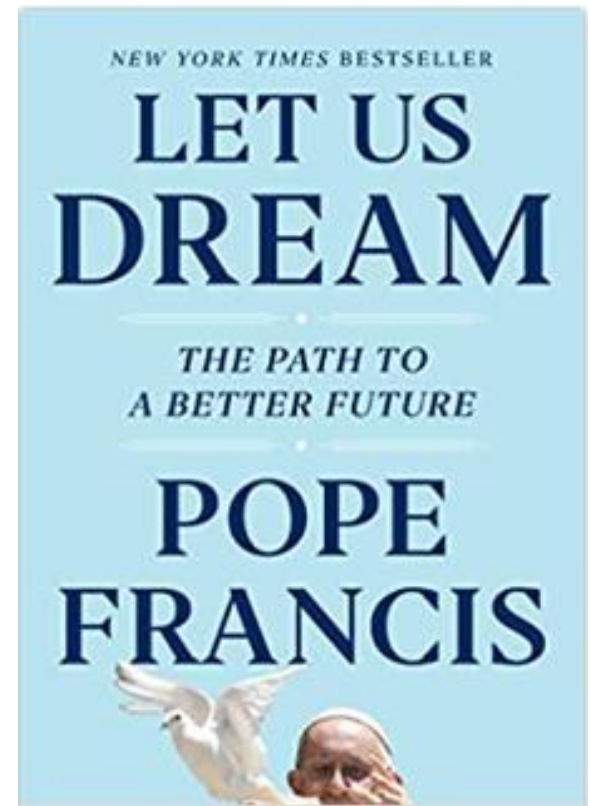
Catholic Social Doctrine: A Lens to Help Administrators in the Church see clearly, choose rightly, act authentically to her teachings

TOPICS FOR EXPLORATION

What is Work? → Who is the Worker?
Resources for a Path to a Better Future

- ✝ A Time to See
- ✝ A Time to Choose
- ✝ A Time to Act

God asks us to “dare to create something new.”



THE VATICAN HAS AN HR OFFICE!



SEGRETERIA
PER L'ECONOMIA



Specifically, the Holy Father highlights the importance of *giving care and attention to the selection and training of personnel, as well as the organization of work and the personal and professional growth of every individual* (n.II,7) and he hopes that *those who serve in the Curia are chosen from Bishops, priests, deacons, members of Institutes of Consecrated Life and Societies of Apostolic Life, and lay men and women outstanding for their spiritual life, solid pastoral experience, simplicity of life and love for the poor, spirit of communion and service, competence in the matters entrusted to them, and ability to discern the signs of the times.* (n.II,7) <https://www.spe.va/en/aree/risorseumane.html>

SYSTEMS SEEING?

System:

“ ... a set of ideas that pervade a society’s technology and institutions and inform its civilization.”

-- George Gilder
Life After Google, 2018

“In the past, man has been first;
In the future, the system must be first.” **Ouch!**

-- Frederick Winslow Taylor
The Principles of Scientific Management, 1911

Human persons find ourselves in “systems” by virtue of our work.

THE CURRENT SYSTEM

The Marketplace



The image shows the coat of arms of the Holy See, featuring a golden papal tiara (mitre) on a shield. The shield is divided into three horizontal sections: a blue top section with a golden cross, a yellow middle section, and a blue bottom section with white wavy lines representing water. A golden arm holding a crosier is visible on the left side of the shield.

POPE FRANCIS: A NEW WAY OF SEEING

Environmental Scanning (systems):

Analyzing the effect of external forces on an organization through systematic processes or templates such as the S.W.O.T.

Pope Francis on how to widen our gaze:

- *Go to the “edge of existence”, out in the periphery, to see the world as it is*
- *Be struck by what you see – the people cast into the margins of society*
- *Don’t erase history – have compassion for those in the past*
- *Seeing the present is the first step to strengthen our institutions*



RECOVER THE VALUES OF THE GOSPEL: CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE

From Rerum Novarum to Laudato Si:

The Church begins on a new path of building a “corpus” of doctrinal works developing the Church’s teaching in the area of social matters.

Each subsequent document renews the principles and applies them to the “system” of the specific era at the time, decrying the suffering of those persons having “fallen through the cracks” and exhorting the faithful and the institutions themselves, to recall the CSD principles and respond to their capacity.

The image shows the crest of the Holy See on the left side of the slide. It features a golden crown with a cross on top, a hand holding a crosier, and a shield with a cross and a palm tree. The background of the slide is white with a faint grid pattern.

RECOVER THE VALUES OF THE GOSPEL: CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE

Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum

- ✚ Written in response to “the first great social question” – human labor.
- ✚ Collaboration, not class struggle, is the fundamental means for change.
- ✚ Methodology became a paradigm for future encyclicals revisiting the theme of human labor.
- ✚ Core principle: **The Dignity of the Human Person**
- ✚ Theme: The just ordering of society; rights, responsibilities
- ✚ Being struck by what he saw: The collateral damage of industrialism was an affront to human dignity



RECOVER THE VALUES OF THE GOSPEL: CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE

What is Work?

Work is “probably the essential key” to the whole social question.

*“Through work man must **earn his daily bread** and contribute to the continual advance of science and technology and, above all, to elevating unceasingly the cultural and moral level of the society within which he lives in community with those who belong to the same family.”*

~ Pope St. John Paul II, Laborem Exercens

“Daily Bread” from the “Universal Destination of Goods”

Gaudium Et Spes

A graphic on the left side of the slide features a golden mitre at the top, a hand holding a crosier, and a shield with a palm tree, a cross, and wavy lines representing water.

EXPLORING KEY PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE

1. Dignity of the Human Person
2. Common Good
3. Universal Destination of Goods

4. Participation
5. Solidarity
6. Subsidiarity
7. Association

8. Preferential Option for the Poor

EXPLORING KEY PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE



Subjects - Orientation

1. Dignity of the Human Person
2. Common Good
3. Universal Destination of Goods



Dynamics - Interaction

4. Participation
5. Solidarity
6. Association
7. Subsidiarity



Measure of How We Love

8. Preferential Option for the Poor



APPLICATIONS TO HR / ADMINISTRATION

Let's take a look at some areas of HR where applying these principles might point us into a different direction:

- Compensation Administration
- Retirement Plans
- High-Deductible Health Plans
- Remote Workforce
- Predictors
- Standards of Communication
- Problem Resolution Policies
- Anti-Harassment Policies

What else?

How about policies in the parish, school, health care?



FINAL THOUGHTS: FULL CIRCLE

The Church, an Institution

“Love thus needs to be organized if it is to be an ordered service to the community.”

~ Pope Benedict XVI, Deus Caritas Est

Administrative Responsibility of the Institution: Economic Equilibrium

“ [E]conomic equilibrium means that an institution maintains enough financial resources to sustain its mission ... having enough resources to compensate its personnel with a just wage; ”

~ Rev. Donald Senior, The Gift of Administration

Social Justice Starts in the Family

“I see, above all, the pressing need to strengthen institutions, which are a vital reserve of moral energy and civic love. ... Of all the institutions, the family has taken the hardest knock of all.”

~ Pope Francis, Let Us Dream

Build the Culture through Communication

“Communication is not only the transmission of information, but it is also the creation of a culture.”

~ Pope Leo XIV, Address to Representatives of the Media



CATHOLIC SOCIAL DOCTRINE & HR POLICIES

QUESTIONS?

