

# Response and Reflections on More to Come

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**ABSTRACT:** This article provides a summary overview of the essays that constitute the inaugural issue of *Praxis*. I also add an extended topical agenda for future work on Catholic Social Thought, pointing out concerns that have received insufficient attention in the past.

**KEYWORDS:** principles, justice, common good, participation, solidarity, human dignity

At the invitation of the editors of *Praxis*, this article is a reaction to the set of essays that constitutes the inaugural issue of this journal, and I add a personal reflection on how the body of Catholic Social Teaching might best be shaped for effective communication in the future, particularly for students who will eventually become leaders in the business world. The need for effective communication is urgent now and will remain so throughout the foreseeable future; hence the welcome mat put out for the publication of this journal.

The essays assembled here represent the views of practitioners. Kathy Saile, for example, is California director of NoKidHungry. Previously, she directed domestic social development for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Office of Peace and Justice in the Catholic Diocese of Phoenix, AZ, and worked for Catholic Charities/USA, the Franciscan Renewal Center in Scottsdale, AZ, and for Lutheran Services in America. The title of her contribution to this collection is simply “The Vocation.” Her article is rooted in the refreshing conviction that “my vocation is to be a practitioner of Catholic Social Teaching.” For her, vocation was an “innate desire within me to pursue

a career that would right wrongs, that would help ‘the least of these’ and that would make change.” Practicing discernment in moving from place to place; her consistent career focus has been on the implementation of Catholic Social Teaching whether within or outside Catholic organizations.

Readers of the essay are encouraged to keep an eye on the end (the implementation of Catholic Social Teaching) and an open mind on how and where to do it.

Bishop Stephen E. Blaire reflects on his personal engagement with the social ministry of the Church particularly while serving as Chair of the Domestic Policy Committee for the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2009–2015). Instead of identifying the urgent issues of justice or injustice that preoccupied him then, he writes for this inaugural issue about what he considers to be the three obstacles that “hinder our ability as individuals and as a society to build necessary just relationships.” Just relationships provide people with just societies. Those relationships are: (1) between the people and their God, (2) between the people with one another, and (3) between the people and their common home—the earth. “If justice is to prevail,” he writes, “right relationships must exist wherever people gather and interconnect.”

Of the endless array of obstacles to the forging of just relationships, Bishop Blaire identifies only three: (1) evil masquerading as good, (2) the tendency of people to see things from their own personal private perspective, and (3) the breakdown of dialogue. An example of evil masquerading as good would be presenting direct abortion as a good in protecting the reproductive rights of women. Bishop Blaire likes to deal in threes, so in order to explain what he means by the breakdown of dialogue he turns to a triad offered by Pope Francis who cites (1) human failure “to respect one’s own identity and that of others,” (2) the absence of “the courage to accept differences,” and (3) insufficient “sincerity of intentions”—all three working against the promotion of peace and justice in our world.

Dishonesty in dialogue is a barrier to building just relationships, as is closing one’s mind in a self-referential way, and naming an evil or lesser good as the greater good to be achieved. The bishop’s approach tends to be a bit abstract.

Sister Simone Campbell, SSS, comes to the rescue here with a down-to-earth chapter on “Catholic Social Justice and NETWORK’S Political Ministry.” The letters after her name—SSS—stand for Sisters of Social Service. And the NETWORK she writes about was established in 1971 when a group of forty-seven Catholic nuns responded to the call of the Catholic bishops of the United States to get involved in “systematic change.” These religious women created in Washington, D.C. a “network” to advocate for federal policies that

would advance economic and social justice. Sister Simone, a lawyer and experienced community organizer, joined NETWORK as executive director in 2004.

Her organization is committed to living out the following six principles of Catholic Social Justice: (1) to “uphold the dignity of each person as an equally valuable member of the human family,” (2) to “embrace our right and responsibility to participate with others in our shared public life,” (3) to “be in solidarity with those who are living in poverty in the struggle against structures of injustice,” (4) to “bridge divisions, rising above individual interest for the good of the whole community,” (5) to “unite with workers to build an economy that puts people, not profit, at the center,” and (6) to “nurture the earth, recognizing that we are interdependent with the rest of God’s creation.” Concern for creation, NETWORK would say, is inseparable from concern for justice.

Each year the NETWORK staff and board examine the social issues facing the federal government and adopt a lobbying agenda judged to be consistent with the principles of Catholic social teaching. That agenda brings them into face-to-face contact with legislators and other elected officials. This, as the saying goes, is where the rubber hits the road.

Under the cumbersome title of “Applying Catholic Social Teaching on Labor to Everyday Life to Advance the Work of Economic Justice,” Thomas Mulloy argues for “a renewed and clearer commitment to protecting the inherent dignity of human labor.” He is national director of poverty programs for the Society of St. Vincent de Paul in the U.S. He turns to the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* for what he considers to be “the most succinct and complete” summary of Catholic teaching on work. I will quote it here:

the right to a just wage; the right to rest; the right “to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers’ physical health or to their moral integrity”; the right that one’s personality in the workplace should be safeguarded “without suffering any affront to one’s conscience or personal dignity”; the right to appropriate subsidies that are necessary for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families; the right to a pension and to insurance for old age, sickness, and in case of work-related accidents; the right to social security connected with maternity; the right to assemble and form associations. (Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) No. 30)

Mulloy believes that the denial of the right to form unions is perhaps the biggest factor in the abuse of the rights of workers.”

He makes an interesting observation that bears repeating, namely, that the solidarity we should have with others requires more than simply standing beside them. It may mean “going a little further [*sic*] to shop in stores that

employ organized labor and pay a just wage, or purchasing fair trade goods.” This would, of course, require considerably more consumer education than we now enjoy.

Kim Lamberty’s essay focuses on a single strand of Catholic social teaching, namely, the so-called “preferential option for the poor,” and suggests a revised way of handling that option for U.S. Catholics today. I do not agree with her assertion that we have been handling it in a way “that bestows more benefits on the wealthy than the poor,” but I’m willing to let her have her say. She quotes Gustavo Gutierrez as saying that “the poverty of the poor is not a call to generous relief action, but a demand that we go and build a different social order.” Relief will not suffice; reform is necessary. But is anything short of reform more harmful than helpful? Based on her experience in trying to help poor Haitians from her base in a Catholic parish in suburban Washington, D.C., Lamberty thinks it is. In addition to Gutierrez, another Latin American theologian Jon Sobrino helps to shape her point of view. He calls for action on four fronts: (1) “[T]he non-poor must enter the world of the poor and honestly confront the reality of that world.” Sobrino says the poor must be given an opportunity to create their own wealth; if not, then acts of charity simply perpetuate the problem. (2) In Sobrino’s view, the poor must be given partiality, placed at the center. (3) He thinks engagement is needed—authentic interaction between the poor and non-poor in all decisions that affect the poor. (4) There is need for humility. “The option for the poor,” according to Sobrino, “must be permeated with humility so that in the end it will not become an option for oneself disguised as an option for the other.” Taking an option for oneself that is disguised as an option for the poor is, in Kim Lamberty’s experience, a common response by the non-poor to poverty.

Provision of orphanages by the non-poor to help poverty-stricken children is a good illustration, in Lamberty’s view, of how we have gone wrong. Most children residing in orphanages have parents; they would be better off, she thinks, with their parents. If the parents had income and a supportive tax system, they could care for their children better than orphanages can. Similarly in the case of hospitals. If they were not donor-dependent and the patients could afford to pay for care, so much the better for the sick. Lamberty refers to the “charity industry” and asserts unpersuasively: “We create dependence on our generosity, fueling our suspicions that the poor really can’t manage their own affairs without us. And we retain the bulk of the world’s wealth for ourselves.”

When it comes to solutions, Kim Lamberty is more positive and helpful. The reader will find them under the following headings: “Accompaniment,” “Partnership,” “Training,” “Access to Capital,” “Ethical Purchasing,” and “Advocacy.” In a concluding paragraph, she reframes what she calls a “true preferential

option for the poor” in terms of love—“The only solution is love, placing the needs of the other before myself, and the needs of the most vulnerable first.”

Giulia McPherson contributes a well-written and well-reasoned essay on “Defending the Rights of Refugees: A Catholic Cause.” She is director of advocacy and operations at Jesuit Refugee Services/USA and had prior experience as director for citizen advocacy at CARE/USA, an international humanitarian and development organization.

The dimensions of the refugee problem are shocking. Giulia McPherson counts “more than 65 million people forced to leave their homes as a result of persecution, conflict, generalized violence, or human rights violations.” The enormity of the problem argues that the rights of refugees deserve a place at the top of the Catholic social justice agenda. This will not happen without education and advocacy for refugees throughout the Catholic world.

Jesus, Mary, and Joseph—a family forced to flee its homeland for fear of persecution—fit the definition of refugees. Our sensitivity to the problem has roots not only in Scripture but is grounded in countless documents of papal teaching. Those documents deserve a second look, or, perhaps we should be suggesting that Catholics see them again for the first time and waste no further time in getting to work on behalf of refugees. It should come as no surprise that the Catholic Bishops in the United States are opposing the Trump Administration’s effort to deport so-called illegal refugees. Concern for migrants and refugees is very much on the mind of Pope Francis; the rest of the Church has a lot of catching up to do. This article will help.

The lengthy and impressive contribution from Sister Helene O’Sullivan, MM, is a valuable piece that will encourage readers to dig deeper and venture into previously unexplored territory. She calls attention to “The Prophetic Voice of the Church in the Context of Evolutionary Consciousness.” Her call for a needed change of worldview prompted me to think of the words of Jesus in his proclamation of the Kingdom of God (Mark 1: 14–15): “Jesus came to Galilee proclaiming the gospel of God: ‘This is the time of fulfillment. The kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe the gospel.’” The Greek word for “repent” is *metanoia* which means an attitudinal turnaround, a change of heart. The kingdom—a reign of justice, love, and peace—has been “at hand” these many years, but not yet grasped because we have failed to repent. We have not yet experienced that change of heart nor adopted that new worldview.

Interestingly enough, a relatively recent change in Catholic devotional life, namely, the introduction of the so-called Luminous Mysteries into the recitation of the Rosary, brings us the opportunity to reflect regularly on the implications of these words of Jesus in our day. We reflect on the third Luminous Mystery—The Proclamation of the Kingdom—when we recite the

rosary on Thursdays. We should be doing that in the context of an evolutionary consciousness.

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Now, as promised, I want to direct the reader's attention to the future and outline the agenda for shaping the social justice agenda over the years ahead.

I'll be concerned here mainly with the following principles of Catholic social thought:

- The Principle of Human Dignity
- The Principle of Respect for Human Life
- The Principle of Participation
- The Principle of Preferential Protection for the Poor and Vulnerable
- The Principle of Solidarity
- The Principle of Stewardship
- The Principle of Subsidiarity
- The Principle of Human Equality
- The Principle of the Common Good
- The Principle of Association

This list of ten represents an effort on my part<sup>1</sup> to condense or digest the essentials of the tradition of Catholic social teaching. They are a summary of a body of doctrine that is to be communicated, discussed, and, one would hope, assimilated in Catholic secondary and higher education, as well as parish-sponsored religious education,

Principles are best thought of as initiating impulses; they are internalized convictions that produce action. Principles direct your actions and your choices. Your principles help to define who you are. Principles are beginnings; they lead to something. Our objective in Catholic education is to produce principled people; my concern here is to stimulate thought about how to help students assimilate Catholic social principles and carry them with them into the world of work.

Very often, college students confuse "principal" and "principle," and use one or both of those words incorrectly in written assignments. I enjoy reminding students that the principal of their high school was the "pal" they

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<sup>1</sup>See William J. Byron, "Ten Building Blocks of Catholic Social Teaching," *America* 31 October 1998: 9–12.

may not have recognized as such in their adolescent years, but came later to appreciate as a friend. Any main event, top boss, or chief reason, is “principal.” By comparison, the “principles” students learn in school (with the “le” at the end of the word instead of the “al”) have the potential to l-e-a-d them through the thicket of a problem to be solved, or a decision to be made on their way to the future. *Principles lead to something.*

It is noteworthy that a virtue also leads to something. Some principles are virtues, but not all. A virtue is a power, a force for good. All virtues are values, but, as a moment’s reflection will remind you, not all values are virtues. For example, greed is a dominant value in the lives of some people. It directs practically all they think and do. Similarly fame, pleasure (you’ve heard of the “pleasure principle”), and jealousy are dominant values in many lives; you wouldn’t identify these as virtues. It is always important to know what drives you and whether your values are taking you in the right direction.

How might the principles of Catholic social thought play themselves out today? Let me list them first as follows:

### *I. The Principle of Human Dignity*

This is the bedrock principle of Catholic social teaching and indeed of all personal and social ethics. In the world of work, human dignity is taking a beating. Workers at all levels are being treated as if they were disposable parts. In many cases, bottom lines and balance sheets get more attention than human beings (too often regarded as human doings) who lose their jobs to “re-engineered” processes or to “reinvention” in the workplace. Involuntary separation from employment will be inevitable for many, so the ethical question is how each unique human person is to be laid off. It must be done with dignity and a modicum of security. This means severance pay, extended healthcare insurance, retraining or relocation assistance. Although employees will, regrettably, but for sound economic reasons, continue to be separated from their jobs, they must never be viewed by those making the downsizing decisions as disposable parts.

With the Enron debacle came the shocking revelations that executives enriched themselves by exercising stock options, based on insider knowledge, while employees were left holding empty 401(k) bags that had been loaded with what had become worthless Enron stock. Their human rights as well as their human dignity were violated by greedy executives who simply disregarded their value as human persons imbued with human dignity.

### *II. The Principle of Respect for Human Life*

The tradition of Catholic social thought views human life at every stage of development and decline as precious and therefore worthy of protection and

respect. Although moral arguments about abortion, capital punishment, euthanasia, and the use of nuclear weapons tend to dominate ethical discourse on the “life issues,” it is important to remember that business deals with life issues all the time. Think, for instance, of consumer product safety, pharmaceutical research and marketing, occupational health, mine safety, and other workplace safety considerations; think of food production, preparation, packaging, and marketing. Examine a list of federal regulatory agencies and you have the makings of an agenda for a review of ethical concerns relating to human life that conscientious business people have to keep in mind.

### *III. The Principle of Participation*

According to Catholic social thought, every human person in any workplace has a right to have some say in the decisions that affect his or her livelihood. To be shut out of all discussion is to be denied respect for one’s human dignity. The ethical thing to do in this new corporate culture, in cases either of layoff or of career continuation in the same organization, is to involve the employee in planning and in the execution of the plan. This means preparation for separation, should that have to happen; it also means enhancing the “value added” potential and the productivity of employees who will remain.

Moreover, ethical managers will acknowledge the importance of recognizing the dignity of their associates by including them in decision-making not simply because it is the right thing to do, but also because the “people process” leads to better business decisions.<sup>2</sup>

### *IV. The Principle of Preferential Protection for the Poor and Vulnerable*

The tradition of Catholic social thought keeps alive the story of the last judgment (Mt. 25:31–46) and emphasizes the importance of putting the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. Why is this so? Because the common good—the good of society as a whole—requires it. The opposite of rich and powerful is poor and powerless. If the good of all, the common good, is to prevail, preferential protection must move toward those affected adversely by the absence of power and the presence of privation. Otherwise the balance needed to keep society in one piece will be broken to the detriment of the whole.

Any parent knows what preferential love means. The vulnerable three-year-old child gets preference over his or her more self-sufficient older sibling under certain circumstances. Let the toddler run out into the path of an oncoming automobile and you’ll see the older child left to fend for him- or herself on

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<sup>2</sup>See Larry Bossidy and Ram Charan, *Execution: The Discipline of Getting Things Done* (Crown Business, 2002), 141 ff.

the sidewalk as the parent of both rushes out to extend preferential protection to the vulnerable child. So the modern church is asking for nothing unusual, unfamiliar, or extraordinary when it calls for preferential love (I like to think of it as preferential protection) of the poor and vulnerable.

For those who find this truth hard, and many middle- and upper-class American Catholics do, the words of Pope John Paul II might be reassuring: “Love for the poor must be preferential, but not exclusive.”<sup>3</sup> Those who happen not to be poor have no reason to conclude that they are not the constant object of God’s unfailing love, but talk about “preferential love” often moves them toward that false conclusion.

A challenge for those of us who work in education is to encourage large-hearted students to remember, when they are decision-makers in the world of work, to make room in their hearts for the poor. Stakeholder analysis, which is commonplace now in business ethics, should be sure to include the poor as stakeholders affected for good or ill by business decisions.

#### *V. The Principle of Solidarity*

Catholic social teaching insists that we are our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. This principle has global dimensions in an interdependent world. It functions as a moral category that leads to choices that will promote and protect the common good. It translates the familiar “love your neighbor” commandment to global dimensions in the interdependent world that we all inhabit. We are indeed our brothers’ and sisters’ keepers. We are one large and growing family. And we seem to be seeing more of the family these days as we find ourselves ever more frequently in the air, or on the road, rails, and seas for business or pleasure.

The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) makes it impossible for U.S. business decision-makers to avoid facing up to the fact that free trade is an important vehicle that can carry our poor brothers and sisters in other parts of the world toward economic betterment. It will not be without cost to some beneficiaries of many decades of past economic development in our country, but that is not a good reason to oppose free trade. If globalization means anything, it means globalization of markets with its promise, in the long run, of global economic justice and improvement for all. In this context, the “trade not aid” argument can, within proper limits, make a lot of sense.

#### *VI. The Principle of Stewardship*

Catholic teaching is consistent in portraying the steward as a manager, not an owner; hence the importance of including the idea of stewardship in business

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<sup>3</sup>“Ecclesia in America,” Mexico City, 22 January 1999.

education. The manager is, of course, the steward of investors' dollars. But the idea of stewardship is more expansive. In an era of rising consciousness about our physical environment, the principle of stewardship points to moral responsibility for the protection of the environment—croplands, grasslands, woodlands, air, water, minerals and other natural deposits. Stewardship responsibilities also look toward our use of our personal talents, our attention to personal health and our use of personal private property.

### *VII. The Principle of Subsidiarity*

Those who say the care of economic casualties and the creation of jobs should be “left to government,” risk violating the principle of subsidiarity, which would allow neither decisions nor actions at a higher level of organization that could be taken just as effectively and efficiently at a lower level. This principle would push decision making down to lower levels, but sometimes government must act in the interest of the common good. There will be instances, and the economic crisis of 2008 was surely one of them, when only government can address an issue properly and effectively.

In the present situation of widespread layoffs, rising executive compensation, and income stagnation for those who are, so to speak, caught in the middle, new public policy initiatives are being proposed. Reflective thinkers with no ideological prejudices against using tax policy for social purposes, are asking: Why can't Congress bar corporations from counting as a cost of doing business any executive compensation above a certain level, say, \$1 million? They could pay higher levels, if they wanted to, but it would be taxable corporate income before it became personal (and again taxable) income to the executive.

Respecting fully the principle of subsidiarity, there are other things that government can do in many areas. With respect only to downsizing, the extent to which government should do some of the following depends on the ethical extent of a given employer's obligation to assist those it lays off, and indeed of the whole private sector's social responsibility to address this problem privately. In any case, here are a few things government can do: Enlarge the unemployment insurance system beyond income maintenance during layoff to a re-employment system designed to help people get necessary training and find new jobs. Existing federally-financed job-training programs could be enlarged to include vouchers distributed to unemployed or underemployed persons who could purchase some education and skill training with those vouchers. Both pensions and health insurance should be portable and thus not only support people between jobs, but free them to search, take an occasional risk, and to move from job to job as opportunities arise. Some universal form of health

insurance would be a desirable safety net for those who now lose their health benefits when they lose their jobs.

The principle of subsidiarity should also apply in private sector organizations, in ordinary workplaces. This ties in with the principle of participation and, as is so often the case, is reducible to the principle of human dignity. Individuals are not to be ground under by impersonal, anonymous decision makers at higher levels in the organization. Students will need help in grasping this principle. It might be proposed to them as a “principle of delegation” or a principle of “proper respect for autonomy.”

### *VIII. The Principle of Human Equality*

This can be thought of as a principle of justice or simply fairness.

Everyone knows what fairness is. Just walk by a children’s play area and listen to the shouts of, “No fair! No fair!” We have an inner sense of fairness and we know when an unfair advantage has been taken. At least we think we know, and we are usually convinced that we are absolutely right. We just know it! Sometimes, a few additional facts or the recognition of our own biases will prompt us to reset our fairness clock, but we have a way of just *knowing* when unfair treatment occurs. Customers know it. Workplace associates know it. Everyone in any stakeholder category has a primitive sense of fairness that gives them a good idea of justice and human equality.

When we call it “justice,” we are talking about treating equals equally, giving to each what is his or her due. We can visualize justice as lawyers do, as trays in balance on a scale. Or, we can think of it as the prophet Amos did, in building-construction terms, as that which is measured by the straight (upright) string connected to a plumb bob. We cry, “Unjust,” when corners are cut, the social structure is “out of plumb,” or when things are simply not “on the up and up.”

You always have to be careful, of course, to control that tendency, when the scales are tipped against you, to “get even” and to baptize mean-spirited and unfair revenge “in the name of justice.” You can trick yourself into believing that avenging yourself by harming those who have harmed you is “right and just.” That behavior is both obvious and unworthy, clearly inconsistent with your own human dignity.

There are other traps set to spring out there in the corporate jungle. They are not directly related to downsizing. They are always there, in good times and in bad, putting pressure on both integrity and a sense of justice.

In the new corporate culture, some very old, often tried, but never true steps can lead the unsuspecting individual directly into the ethical swamp of personal injustice. The first step is taken when a person becomes enamored

with “easy money.” The second happens when one seeks the cover of “secrecy.” And the third step takes a person across the line or over the fence that was put in place by personal conscience. This fence has a sign posted on it that says: “Never violate a trust.” Secrecy, easy money, and the violation of trust are, in combination, very dangerous to anyone’s ethical health.

The degrees of engagement with this lethal combination (call it graft or corruption) can be measured in three categories, each representing money or something of significant monetary value: gift, bribe, extortion.

Gifts are easily understood; what often is not understood is the inappropriateness of some gifts in workplace settings (private sector or public). Inappropriate gifts corrupt workplace relationships. Bribery also corrupts.

Bribery is always a secret arrangement. It has one party pay money or give something of value to another for neglecting a duty or performing some other dishonest act. Neglect of duty is the moral issue; in any instance of bribery, personal honor is up for sale. Not only is integrity violated but injustice inevitably results because unfair gains are being taken and services that unknowing others have a right to expect, are not delivered.

The third degree of corruption—extortion—is simply a holdup. In a corrupt corporate culture, unjust payments are demanded if goods or services are to move in the market. Access to jobs is sometimes blocked by an outstretched palm waiting for a payoff. In times of economic ambiguity and uncertainty, the appeal of easy money will always be strong. A strong sense of justice will safeguard a person of integrity from violating any trust. If no trusts are violated, if no injustice is involved, a downsizing in response to economic necessity can be justified. But there is such a deep feeling of injustice, of unfair treatment, in so many downsized corners of our new corporate culture that those in control must examine their corporate conscience for evidence of injustice done to millions of separated employees in recent years. And those who feel the pressures of competition in this new corporate culture have to be very careful not to go the way of secrecy, in pursuit of easy money, at the price of a violated trust.

### *IX. The Principle of the Common Good*

Pursuit of the Common Good is a basic principle of ethical behavior; it is a bedrock principle of Catholic social thought like the principle of human dignity. Without it, social chaos would prevail. The “Common Good” is a catchall phrase that describes an environment that is supportive of the development of human potential while safeguarding the community against individual excesses. It looks to the general good, to the good of the many over against the interests of the one or very few. The notion of the common good is not to be confused with a utilitarian principle that would say that the “right” action is

whatever produces more good than evil for most of the community, or, to put it another way, the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of persons. Under this norm, something inherently wrong and plainly damaging to the common good would in some cases be permissible.

It is important that there be agreement in the community that the common good should always prevail over individual, personal interests. And this recognition functions as a voluntary norm or guideline for regulating the potential for socially damaging consequences of any self-interested behavior. It also functions as a basis for laws that put limits on individuals. Although the common good is higher than any private interest, it will always respect the inviolable dignity of the individual human person.

To promote and protect the common good is the reason why governments exist—a point worth noting here just after a discussion of the principle of subsidiarity, the principle that has a way of keeping government in its proper place.

It is regrettable, I think, that the notion of the common good is so seldom invoked in public policy debates over issues like healthcare insurance, minimum wage, welfare reform, immigration, foreign aid. Similarly, it is not often that workplace health, safety, civility, and compensation issues are discussed in terms both of the common good of the workplace community as well as the good of the broader community, of which the workplace is a part. In both the private and public sectors of policy making, the common good has to be factored into the decision-making process, if that process is to promote the good of all.

In this new corporate culture of diminished loyalty and heightened insecurity, it is important to note that economic interests and the common good are both served by widespread job security. No one was ever made more productive by being made less secure. The contingent nature of employment contracts and the growing uncertainties associated with workplace life are eroding confidence and damaging the common good.

### *X. The Principle of Association*

The tradition sees the person as not only sacred but also social. Hence, Catholic social teaching views social relationships in the economic and political orders, in law and in both corporate and public policy, as directly affecting human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. But before all this the tradition looks to the family.

The centerpiece of society is the family; family stability must always be protected and never undermined. By association with others—in families and in other social institutions that foster growth, protect dignity, and promote the common good—human persons achieve their fulfillment. Integrating this principle into education for business means encouraging a student to

look within, to his or her future success in balancing work and family, as well as looking outward to the impact of business decisions on the family life of workers, customers, and other stakeholders.

The question: “what is a family?” is making the rounds today in the public policy arena. The Catholic tradition has an unambiguous answer to this question. It will speak against same-sex marriage and can do that on firm, non-prejudicial, even non-judgmental grounds. However, to deny human persons who are also homosexual their reasonable and genuine human rights is quite another matter and, in this area of discussion and debate, the Catholic social principle of human dignity must never be ignored.

Central to the tradition of modern Catholic social thought is “the right to organize,” the right to form unions—associations of workers—to protect the dignity of workers. The principle of association has a special place in the tradition of Catholic social thought. I place it last on my list of ten not in any way to diminish its importance, but only to emphasize that it is one of them and all ten have to be understood, appreciated, and integrated into the value system that our students and all members of our faith community will carry with them into the culture clash that awaits them in the world of business.

At the end of this long discussion of the principles of Catholic social thought, I must highlight several areas that have received insufficient attention in the past and must be attended to now. Much work is needed now on the principles of the so-called just war, on all issues relating to war and peace, on the need for denuclearization, and the development of diplomacy in the service of peace. Pope Francis is calling our attention to the environment as well as to the poor and marginalized. There is much to do. This is the challenge for Catholics in the twenty-first century.

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