Announcement

An Initiative of the Philosophy-Theology-Health Care Ethics Section of the S.C.S.S.: High School Textbooks on Social Justice

As a service to Catholic high schools and particularly to religion teachers, we propose to make a careful study of existing textbooks that treat Catholic social thought (not including "social studies" textbooks). These texts are widely used in high schools, in courses that often carry the title "Social Justice." The purpose of this project is twofold: 1) We wish to alert teachers to both the strong and weak points of various texts. 2) Authors of new texts will have a helpful set of guidelines.

Phase I: With this announcement, we invite all interested parties to examine the criteria listed below and make suggestions for improvement. We also invite additions to the list of textbooks to be evaluated. Please submit your contributions by February 1, 1999, to Dr. Eduardo J. Echeverría, the head of the Philosophy-Theology-Health Care Ethics Section of the S.C.S.S., at the following address: Department of Philosophy, Conception Seminary College, P.O. Box 502, Hwy 136 & VV, Conception, MO 64433-0502. Fax:660-944-2829. E-mail: drechev@hotmail.com

Phase II: Interested members or invitees of the S.C.S.S. are invited to review the various textbooks in light of the established criteria. We hope to find three reviewers for each textbook, one of whom is a present or former high school teacher. If you are interested, please contact the same address above by April 1, 1999.

Phase III: Reviewers are asked to have their work done by Feb. 1, 2000. The results will be made available to any interested parties.

Phase IV: Prospective authors of new texts, and publishers interested in working with such authors, can contact the S.C.S.S. at the above address. Donors interested in sponsoring an author are most appreciated, and should contact the S.C.S.S.
Textbooks
The following publishers have high school level books available in the area of Catholic social thought: Ave Maria; Benziger Brothers; Christian Brothers; Loyola; Institute for Peace and Justice; Orbis; Silver Burdett; St. Mary's; Tabor; Tan.

Criteria for Evaluation—a Draft
1. The concepts listed below (not necessarily the words themselves) are essential to a treatment of Catholic social thought. Please rate the text on each concept, using the scale below, and including comments as you deem necessary.
2. Then, list additional concepts/examples used in the text that are not included here and rate the treatment of those as well.
3. Please provide an overall assessment of how well the text conveys the spirit of Catholic social thought.

Scale:
0 = The topic is not included.
1 = The topic is dealt with in a highly unsatisfactory fashion.
2 = The topic is alluded to but not dealt with substantively.
3 = The topic is dealt with in a way that is not compelling, yet still is compatible with the Catholic social tradition.
4 = The topic is dealt with in a compelling manner, and is compatible with the Catholic social tradition. Still, some improvements could be made.
5 = Superior treatment of the topic—hard to imagine any improvement.

List of Concepts—a Draft Compiled by Mark Lowery, University of Dallas

Personalist Principle. The center-point of anthropology and of morality, and thus of Catholic social doctrine as well. The inviolable dignity or personhood of each individual human being. Every "human" (a biological category) is a "person" (an anthropological category). A person should never be "used," that is, treated as a mere means to someone else's end. Rather, each person is an end, not a means. This principle can be demonstrated by reason (natural law) and by Revelation.

Discrimination in its numerous forms (racial, sexual, etc.) violates the inherent dignity of the human person.

Transcendent dimension An awareness on the part of society that there exists a transcendent being, who is the creator of the natural law. The natural law consists of truths that transcend individual opinion. The awareness of transcendence prevents any human authority to tyrannize.

Eschatological Principle The awareness that only God, not some human attempt at social engineering, can bring about the ultimate perfection of humanity. An antidote to various forms of temporal messianism. On the level of the individual person, our ultimate end is not earthly happiness, but happiness in heaven. While it is often claimed that such an end diverts attention from earthly progress, the opposite is true.

Communal Nature of Man. Man is by nature meant to seek his final end in community and solidarity with others. This is not something he decides to do or contracts to do, but is rather something he is. Theologically, numerous doctrines (e.g., the communion of Saints) presuppose as well as further delineate man's communal nature.

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Common Good. The common temporal happiness of whole society, a goal sought by recognizing and striving for a transcendent truth, "the good." A society must set up the various conditions making such fulfillment possible for its citizenry.

The State. That authority, taking a variety of different forms throughout history, in charge of ordering a community toward the common good. The State is distinct from society and is to protect society.

Society. The vast range of intermediary institutions or "mediating institutions" that, given man's communal nature, exist to help the temporal community achieve the common good. Through these institutions, the individual person is made aware of and influenced by those transcendent truths which ultimately give him genuine freedom.

Principle of Subsidiarity. A higher level organization like the state may never usurp the legitimate and proper functions of the many mediating institutions that make up society, but should rather offer aid and assistance to that group. From the Latin *subsidium*, aid or help.

The Priority of the Family. The most important of the mediating institutions that nourish the person. The family, a natural institution of one man and one woman open to children, is the "first cell of society" that exists as a "sanctuary for life." Hence, it is indispensable to the dignity of the person.

Justice. Giving the other his due, that which is just or right. "The right" is what the virtue of justice is ordered toward (the "object" of justice), and the act of justice is the giving of "the right." The concept is dependent on the personalist principle which is in turn dependent on the transcendent dimension.

Rights and Duties. Rights do not exist outside the context of those duties which we have rooted in the natural order of things, the natural law. Numerous rights exist, based in human nature: the right to a just wage, the right to work, the right to property, etc. Other "rights" not based in nature, and hence not truly rights, include abortion "rights," homosexual "rights," the "right" to die, etc.

The Types of Law. Eternal, Divine, Natural, Human.

The Goal of Law. Law cannot make a person virtuous; but it can make him do at a very basic level the kind of acts that a virtuous person would do, and so can invite him to become virtuous. Hence, the goal of law is virtue, but law cannot coerce virtue.

The Relationship of Natural and Human Law. All human laws, in order to be true laws, must be compatible with the natural law. However, the human law should not encompass the entirety of the natural law.

Justice: Commutative (between equals), Distributive (what the State and the society owe to the person) and Communal (what the person owes to society and the State).

Social Justice. The actual existence of justice, in its three forms, in a given society. To the extent that the common good is being accomplished, social justice exists.

Kingdom of God, Kingdom of Man; Temporal History and Salvation History. The Christian is simultaneously a "citizen" of both orders, and the laity and clergy have distinctive tasks relative to the two.

Autonomy of the Temporal Order. Based on the doctrine of creation, temporal realities have their own laws and their own inner intelligibility, apart from the divine law.

Secularization/Secularism. Secularization is the gradual historical awareness on the part of mankind that the temporal order has its own proper autonomy. Secularism is the attempt to understand man without any transcendent reference point.
Expertise in Humanity. The Church is an expert in the nature of man, and her social principles safeguard man's true nature. She is not an expert in the various spheres of the temporal order.

Role/Vocation of the Laity. The laity have a baptismal vocation, which is the call to holiness; they have a vocation to a "state in life," either marriage or celibacy; most importantly for Catholic social thought, they have the unique vocation to shed the light of the natural law and the Gospel onto those temporal spheres where they possess special competence.

Politicization of the Faith. To treat Christianity as a means to a temporal end.

Liberation Theology. Theologies which tend to reduce Christianity to a means toward some scheme of human liberation, such as Marxism, multiculturalism, radical feminism, and the like.

Historicist Immanentism. The assertion, explicit or implicit in various theologies of liberation, that there is "one history", as opposed to a distinction between secular and salvation history.

Preferential Option for the Poor. God's love is available to all, but due to undue attachment to the world, we often lack the requisite poverty of spirit to accept and embrace his love. God's love flows preferentially, therefore, to those who are "poor." Often those who are materially poor are more "poor in spirit," and hence God's love flows more easily to them.

Religious Liberty. The most important of all freedoms, as affirmed in the Vatican II document Dignitatis Humanae. While each individual has the duty to seek the truth, the State must respect the conscience of each individual in the religious pursuit of that truth. Hence, there should be no coercion on the part of the State regarding religion.

Catholic Moment. A particularly neoconservative application of Catholic social principles that affirms the legitimacy of "personalist" forms of democracy. The theory holds that as our personalist democracy degenerates to the neutral state, it is an opportune moment for Catholics to help shore up the American experiment, particularly given the Catholic tradition's affirmation of the category "natural law" which can be used as a critical resource for nurturing civic conversation in the public square.

Natural Law. Man's participation in the eternal law, accessible to reason. A law imprinted on man's being by virtue of his being created.

Conditions for a Just War--see Catechism of the Catholic Church 2309

Retributive Justice. The balancing of the "scales of justice," it is one of the functions of punishment (alongside rehabilitation, restitution, and deterrence.) It is often confused with "acts of revenge," but is rather an act of justice which restores a proper order to the community, and which ought to be accompanied by a spirit of forgiveness, not revenge.

Death Penalty. Traditionally, the Church has taught that the state has the right, though not the duty, to exercise retributive justice (not vengeance) by acting as the instrument of God in putting to death a criminal who has lost his innocence (though not his dignity.) Presently the Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches that this right ought not be exercised unless there is no other way to protect society (2266-67).

"Culture of Death." Due to a culture which has abandoned the natural moral law in so many ways, including abortion, euthanasia, abandonment of the poor, and the like, as a sign of respect for the dignity of all life, Pope John Paul II has asked that the
State not use the death penalty.

*Seamless Garment.* A theory claiming that there is an inner consistency running through all the key "life" issues--abortion, nuclear war, poverty, euthanasia, the death penalty.

*Social Charity/Solidarity.* These are virtues based on our communal nature, allowing us to recognize everyone's common dignity, as opposed to a purely individualistic view of man.

*Collectivized Solidarity.* Using the State to force people to treat one another well and fairly, especially in the economic realm. Can easily violate the principle of subsidiarity.

*The "Third Way."* A supposed middle way between Socialism and Capitalism, avoiding the errors of each. This concept has not been strongly stressed by the recent social Magisterium, which instead emphasizes the legitimacy of the free market properly understood.

*Priority of Labor over Capital.* The worker should be respected as a person in the workplace, not as mere material in the economic process. Otherwise, the error of *economism* results.

*Private Property as a Right.* 1. Man has a natural right to a life that is decent, befitting his dignity. 2. Material goods are necessary for the maintenance of such a life (given the anthropological concept of man as possessing both soul and body). 3. Therefore, man has a natural right to use the goods of this world. 4. The best use of these goods is through ownership. Advantage of private property include: property is an expression of man's personality; it provides incentive to work; it helps, not hinders, better distribution and it produces wealth; if all goods were held in common, greed would cause disorder; it is the bulwark for other freedoms.

*Universal Destination of Goods or Social Mortgage of Property.* Private property is not an absolute right, for the goods of creation ought to flow to all people. Property can be held unjustly. However, the State cannot micromanage this universal destination; it remains the responsibility of lower level organizations and individuals.