

G R I S T

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The Dignity of the Human Person; Sin and the Hope of Salvation

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The Church sees in men and women, in every person, the living image of God himself. This image finds, and must always find anew, an ever deeper and fuller unfolding of itself in the mystery of Christ, the Perfect Image of God, the One who reveals God to man and man to himself... She invites all people to recognize in everyone – near and far, known and unknown, and above all in the poor and suffering – a brother or sister for whom Christ died. #105

The origin of social life is found in the human person, and society cannot refuse to recognize its active and responsible subject; every expression of society must be directed towards the human person. #106

Men and women, in the concrete circumstances of history, represent the heart and soul of Catholic social thought. **The whole of the Church's social doctrine develops from the principle that affirms the inviolable dignity of the human person.** #107

The essence and existence of man are constitutively related to God in the most profound manner. This is a relationship that exists in itself, it is therefore not something

that comes afterwards and is not added from the outside. The whole of man's life is a quest and a search for God... Among all the world's creatures, only man has a capacity for God. **The human being is a personal being created by God to be in relationship with God**; man finds life and self-expression only in relationship, and tends naturally to God. #109

The relationship between God and man is reflected in the relational and social dimension of human nature... **In one's neighbor there is a reflection of God** himself, the definitive goal and fulfillment of every person. #110

Man and woman have the same dignity and are of equal value, not only because they are both, in their differences, created in the image of God, but even more profoundly because the dynamic of reciprocity that gives life to the "we" in the human couple, is an image of God... Indeed, the human couple can participate in God's act of creation. #111

Man and woman are in relationship with others above all as those to whom the lives of others have been entrusted. #112

With this specific vocation to life, man and woman find themselves also in the presence of all other creatures. They can and are obliged to put them at their own service and to enjoy them, but their **dominion** over the world **requires the exercise of responsibility, it is not a freedom of arbitrary and selfish exploitation.** #113

The *heart* designates man's inner spirituality ... the **spiritual faculties** which most properly belong to man, which are his prerogatives insofar as he is created in the image of his Creator: **reason**, the **discernment of good and evil**, **free will**.

#114

The marvelous vision of man's creation by God is inseparable from the tragic appearance of **sin**...personal sin that **affected the human nature**...sin transmitted by propagation to all mankind, that is, by the transmission of a human nature deprived of original holiness and justice.

#115

The consequences of sin, insofar as it is an act of separation from God, are alienation, that is, the separation of man not only from God but also from himself, from other men and from the world around him.

#116

Every sin is *personal* (an act of the person) **and *social*** (having social consequences).

#117

Certain sins constitute by their very object a direct assault on one's neighbor. Such sins in particular known as **social sins**...are committed against the justice due in relations between individuals, between the individual and the community, and also between the community and the individual ...[e.g.]every sin against the rights of the human person, starting with the right to life, including that of life in the womb, and every sin against the physical integrity of the individual; every sin against the freedom of others, especially against the supreme freedom to believe in God and worship him; every sin against the dignity and honor of one's neighbor; every sin against the common good and its demands.

#118

The consequences of sin perpetuate the **structures of sin**. The **actions and attitudes opposed to the will of God and the good of neighbor**, as well as the structures arising from such behavior, appear to fall into two categories today: on the one hand the **all-consuming desire for profit**, and on the other, the **thirst for power**, with the intention of imposing one's will upon others. In order to characterize better each of these attitudes, one can add the expression: "at any price."

#119

The doctrine of original sin, which teaches the universality of sin, encourages men and women not to remain in guilt and not to take guilt lightly, continuously seeking scapegoats in other people and justification in the environment, in heredity, in institutions, in structures and in relationships ... This doctrine, however, must not be separated from the consciousness of the universality of **salvation in Jesus Christ**. If it is so separated it engenders a false anxiety of sin and a pessimistic view of the world and life, which leads to contempt of the cultural and civil accomplishments of mankind.

#120

The reality of communion with the Trinitarian God to which men and women have always been oriented in the depths of their being...is a reality that people cannot attain by their own forces alone...By means of Christ, we share in the nature of God [and are called to eternal life].

#122

The universality of this hope also includes, besides the men and women of all peoples, heaven and earth...**all creation, together with all humanity, awaits the Redeemer.**

#123