



"ALL ARE EQUAL IN HUMAN DIGNITY."

—#44, Pacem in Terris, Pope John XXIII

The Center for Social Concerns invites you to join us as we consider the theme of Dignity throughout the 2021-22 academic year. For more information, visit socialconcerns.nd.edu.

SEVEN WAYS TO ADVANCE DIGNITY IN THE WORLD:

1. Advocate for Human Dignity

Volunteer. Engage in ND Votes efforts on campus. Sign up for MercyWorks. Attend the March for Life.

"The root reason for human dignity lies in [humanity's] call to communion with God."

—#19, Gaudium et Spes

2. Protect Our Creation

Purchase only what you need. Consume less energy. Support the Office of Sustainability efforts. Recycle.

"The urgent challenge to protect our common home includes a concern to bring the whole human family together to seek a sustainable and integral development."

—#13, Laudato Si'

3. Practice Compassion

Assist people with developmental disabilities at Corvillia (corvillia.org). Visit the elderly. Tutor. Do an SSLP.

"Love—caritas—is an extraordinary force which leads people to opt for courageous and generous engagement in the field of justice and peace."

—#1, Caritas in Veritate

4. Explore Globalization

Buy fair trade items. Apply to the ISSLP. Meet refugees in South Bend. Study abroad.

"A stranger is no longer a stranger for the person who must become a neighbor to someone in need."

—#41, Evangelium Vitae

5. Pray

Pray and reflect on readings from Catholic social teaching. Get a spiritual director. Discern your vocation to meet the need in the world. Fast from using your phone one day a week for a month.

"Faith not only helps people to find solutions; it makes even situations of suffering humanly bearable, so that in these situations people will not become lost or forget their dignity and vocation."

—#59, Centesimus Annus

6. Work for Racial Justice

Take a racial justice seminar like "Act Justly: Racial Justice in America" at the center. Attend diversity events on campus.

"All our educational institutions [are charged] to break any silence around the issue of racism, to find new and creative ways to raise awareness, analyze curricula, and to teach the virtues of fraternal charity."

—Open Wide Our Hearts

7. Expand Your Knowledge

Add the Minor in Catholic Social Tradition or the Poverty Studies Interdisciplinary Minor to your studies.

"Open the paths which lead to mutual assistance among peoples, to a deepening of human knowledge, to an enlargement of heart, to a more (fraternal) way of living with a truly universal human society."

—#85, Populorum Progressio

PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL THOUGHT

1. The Common Good

We are called to be ministers of hope for others to serve the greater good. In community we realize the fulfillment of our dignity and rights in relationship with others.

2. The Life and Dignity of the Human Person

All people are a reflection of the image of God and thus all human life is sacred. We are all called to pursue peace and help overcome poverty, racism, and other conditions that demean human life.

3. Rights and Responsibilities

People have basic rights and responsibilities that derive from their dignity as creatures made in God's image. Catholic teaching emphasizes that people have a right to life and to the basic necessities that provide quality to life: food, shelter, health care, education, and employment. We are called to respect the rights of others and to seek the common good.

4. Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers

Work is an expression of our dignity and an expression of our involvement in God's creation. Our work should empower us to create a better future; it should never demean or detract from our inherent human dignity.

5. Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

While the common good embraces all, those who are in greatest need deserve preferential concern. A moral test for society is how we treat the weakest among us.

6. Caring for God's Creation

Care for the earth is a duty of our Catholic faith. We are all called to be careful stewards of God's creation and to ensure a safe and hospitable environment for vulnerable human beings now and in the future.

7. Living Solidarity

We are all responsible for all. As members of the common human family, we should strive to foster community and to live in solidarity with all our neighbors.

About Catholic Social Thought

Catholic social thought encompasses aspects of Catholic doctrine relating to matters dealing with the collective welfare of humanity. A distinctive feature of Catholic social thought is its concern for the poorest members of society. This concern echoes elements of Jewish law and the prophetic books of the Old Testament, and recalls the teachings of Jesus Christ recorded in the New Testament.

The foundations of modern Catholic social thought are widely considered to have been laid by Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical letter *Rerum Novarum*. From this founding document, subsequent papal documents, conciliar documents, and statements from Bishops' conferences in the past 100+ years, several principles can be drawn.

For more readings and resources on Catholic Social thought visit socialconcerns.nd.edu