



JUST Love

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Delay Means Death

António Guterres, Secretary General of the United Nations, is accustomed to speaking in measured, diplomatic tones. He pointedly abandoned that bland language in his reaction to the most recent report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change <https://www.ipcc.ch/> Speaking with urgency, Guterres said it was the most alarming thing he had ever seen, “an atlas of human suffering and a damning indictment of failed climate leadership....Nearly half of humanity is living in the danger zone – now. Many ecosystems are at the point of no return – now. Unchecked carbon pollution is forcing the world’s most vulnerable on a frog march to destruction – now...Delay means death.” (His full remarks can be found here <https://www.un.org/sg/en/node/262102>)

If you share Guterres’s sense of urgency, you might want to consider joining a new climate movement Third Act <https://thirdact.org/>. Founded by long time climate activist Bill McKibben, Third Act is aimed making climate activists of a growing and influential segment of American society – people over sixty. 10,000 people a day pass the 60-year-old mark. Third Act sees older Americans as a generation with, “unprecedented skills and resources that we can bring to bear. Washington and Wall Street have to listen when we speak, because we vote and because we have a large—maybe an overlarge—share of the country’s assets. And many of us have kids and grandkids and great grandkids: we have, in other words, very real reasons to worry and to work.”

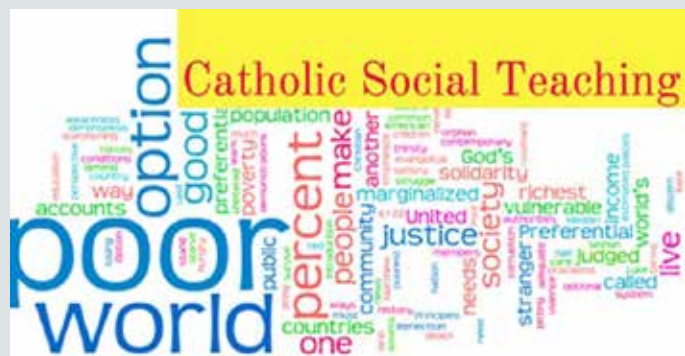


McKibben has said, “On a sprawling, multicultural, fractious planet, no person can be heard by everyone. But Pope Francis comes closer than anyone else...The power of celebrity is the power to set the agenda, and his timing has been impeccable. On those grounds alone, *Laudato Si'* stands as one of the most influential documents of recent times.” As Catholics, we have strong climate leadership in Pope Francis. At over 1 billion members, we are a global force to be reckoned with. Check out the resources of Third Act and see how you can do your part. There are videos that demystify the science of climate change. There’s information on how to leverage your economic power as a consumer and investor. There even a video on how to be an effective crank by writing letter to the editor. There’s no question that religious congregations in the United States are in their “third act.” We have a glorious history of responding with energy and ingenuity to human need. How will we respond to the greatest existential threat the human race has faced in its history? As Teresa of Avila said, “Let us not speak of the glories of our beginnings. We are always beginning now!”



Earth Day 2022: Invest in Our Planet-What Will You Do?

The three communities on our campus, the Sisters of Charity, the Academy of Saint Elizabeth, and Saint Elizabeth University, were very happy to be able to gather together for a common Earth Day Prayer on April 22. We “invested in our planet” and this land that we love by planting a Northern Red Bud tree. As a representative of each community watered the roots of the tree, we prayed, “God of Wonder, as we gather together to bless the earth and celebrate the potential of the Red Bud tree before us, we pray that it may serve as a living witness to our commitment to heal our common home through long-lasting, bold changes. Grant us the courage to continue to take this stand for the sake of the goodness of your creation, and the inspiration and delight it provides us. Amen.”



At the start of the pandemic, I began to audit a course each semester at Catholic Theological Union. This semester I enrolled in Catholic Social Teaching, taught by Dawn Nothwehr, OSF. While the reading was quite heavy, the learning has been incredible. Let me share some here.

I began the course with a general sense of Catholic Social Teaching and its key principles as somewhat monolithic. As we progressed through the semester, I realized the inaccuracy of this impression.

Reading many encyclicals and other Church documents as well as commentaries was eye-opening. I like to compare it to reading Scripture and then an exegesis of it. I began to see the ways in which the social teachings have evolved over time. For example, early encyclicals were addressed to the Catholic faithful while now they are addressed to the world. Earlier documents tended to be more deductive (top down) while later ones, are more inductive (bottom up). Since the time of Pope Paul, they recognize the complexity of the world and assume a more tentative than dogmatic style.

I traced a thread through the documents with the juxtaposition of socialism and capitalism. In different time periods they were condemned with varying degrees of intensity. With the collapse of the Communism, recent writings tend to issue strong critiques of liberal capitalism.

Another set of terms that have evolved are “development” and “liberation”. They have had an uneasy dance over the decades. I was also unaware of the numerous attempts to change the word “constitutive” to “integral” in the 1971 Synod of Bishops document, *Justice in the World*: “Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel...”

These comments merely scratch the surface of my learning. Should you be interested in learning more, I recommend some of our texts:

- Option for the Poor and for the Earth: From Leo XIII to Pope Francis* by Donal Dorr
- Christianity and the Political Order: Conflict, Cooptation, and Cooperation* by Kenneth Himes
- Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action* by Thomas Massaro
- Social Analysis for the 21st Century* by Maria Cimperman



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May 22-29, 2022 is the annual celebration of *Laudato Si' Week*. Spread knowledge of *Laudato Si'* by sharing copies of the SC 6 Weeks With *Laudato Si'* Calendar https://www.scnj.org/files/ugd/a2bb32_6395e038741246f38c6552fb8ab5d634.pdf

JPIC Date to Commemorate in May

1 1933 – Founding of the Catholic Worker Movement.

Do you know that almost the entire archive of the Catholic Worker newspaper can be found on line? Still only a penny a copy! <https://thecatholicnewsarchive.org/?a=cl&cl=CL1&sp=CW&e=-----en-20--1--txt-txIN----->

8 Mother’s Day Read the original Mother’s Day Proclamation, a call to disarmament <https://www.plough.com/en/topics/culture/holidays/mothers-day/the-original-mother-s-day-proclamation>

9 Birthdays of three extraordinary peacemakers: Peter Maurin (1877) co-founder of the Catholic Worker Movement;

Daniel Berrigan, SJ (1921) Check out the work of the Daniel Berrigan Collective for Contemplation, Community, Resistance <https://www.berrigancollective.org/>; Sophie Scholl (1921) founder of the White Rose, a nonviolent resistance movement to Hitler.

15 (1891) Pope Leo XIII begins modern Catholic Social Teaching with Rerum Novarum.

“The oppressed workers, above all, ought to be liberated from the savagery of greedy men, who inordinately use human beings as things for gain”

20 Birthday (1907) of Blessed Franz Jägerstätter, patron of conscientious objectors to war.