

GRIST

Diocese of New Ulm Social Concerns Office June/July, 2010

Human Work: Part I

from the } *Compendium of the
Social Doctrine of the Church*

[There is a duty to cultivate and care for the earth.] #255

Work is part of the original state of man and precedes his fall; it is therefore not a punishment or curse. #256

Work has a place of honor because it is a source of...the conditions for a decent life...but one must not succumb to the temptation of making an idol of work, for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life is not to be found in work. #257

The apex of biblical teaching on work is the commandment of the Sabbath rest. #258

In his preaching, Jesus teaches that we should appreciate work...He describes his own mission as that of working. #259

Jesus teaches man not to be enslaved by work... Everything will find its proper place, meaning and value only if it is oriented to the Kingdom of God and His righteousness. #260

Freeing people from evil, practicing brotherhood and sharing: these give to work its noblest meaning, that which allows humanity to set out on the path to the eternal Sabbath, when rest will become the festive celebration to which men and women inwardly aspire. #261

Human activity aimed at enhancing and transforming the universe can and must unleash the perfections which find their origin and model in the uncreated Word. #262

Work represents a fundamental dimension of human existence as participation not only in the act of creation but also in that of redemption. #263

No Christian, in light of the fact that he belongs to a united and fraternal community, should feel that he has the right not to work and to live at the expense of others. #264

By his work and industriousness, man – who has a share in the divine art and wisdom – makes creation, the cosmos already ordered by the Father, more beautiful...increases the common good, above all to the benefit of those who are neediest...Work becomes an occasion for contemplation...devout prayer...ora et labora. #266

Human work has a twofold significance: *objective/contingent*...the sum of activities, resources, instruments and technologies used by men and women to produce things... *subjective/stable*... the activity of the human person as a dynamic being capable of performing a variety of actions that are part of the work process and that correspond to his personal vocation. #270

Subjectivity gives to work its particular dignity, which does not allow that it be considered a simple commodity or an impersonal element of the apparatus for productivity...The human person is the measure of the dignity of work... The subjective dimension of work must take precedence over the objective dimension. #271

Work is for man and not man for work. #272

Work has an intrinsic social dimension. #273

Work is an obligation/duty on the part of man. #274

Men and women are called to reflect in their own manner of working the image of him in whose likeness they are made. #275

Work is superior to every other factor connected with productivity; this principle applies, in particular with regard to capital. #276

Labor has an intrinsic priority over capital. #277

Scientific and technological progress and the globalization of markets, of themselves a source of development and progress, expose workers to the risk of being exploited by the mechanisms of the economy and by the unrestrained quest for productivity. #279

The relationship between labor and capital also finds expression when workers participate in ownership, management and profits. #281

Property, which is acquired in the first place through work, must be placed at the service of work. This is particularly true regarding the possession of the means of production, but the same principle also concerns the goods proper to the world of finance, technology, knowledge and personnel. #282

Private and public property, as well as the various mechanisms of the economic system, must be oriented to an economy of service to mankind. #283

Rest from work is a right. #284

Sunday is a day that should be made holy by charitable activity devoting time to family and relatives, as well as to the sick, the infirm and the elderly... Moreover, Sunday is an appropriate time for the reflection, silence, study and meditation that foster the growth of the interior Christian life. #285

Public authorities have the duty to ensure that, for reasons of economic productivity, citizens are not denied time for rest and divine worship. Employers have an analogous obligation regarding their employees. #286

Work is a fundamental right and a good for mankind...an appropriate way to give expression to and enhance human dignity... needed to form and maintain a family, to have a right to property, to contribute to the common good. #287

Work is a good belonging to all people and must be made available to all who are capable of engaging in it. "Full employment" therefore remains a mandatory objective for every economic system oriented towards justice and the common good. #288

The planning capacity of a society...is measured also and above all on the basis of the employment prospects that it is able to offer. #289

Maintaining employment depends more and more on one's professional capabilities. Instructional and educational systems must not neglect human or technological formation. #290

The duty of the State does not consist so much in directly guaranteeing the right to work...as much as in the duty to sustain business activities by creating conditions which will ensure job opportunities, by stimulating those activities where they are lacking or by supporting them in moments of crisis. #291

There is a need to promote an effective international cooperation among States... that safeguards the right to work. #292

The market is a multifaceted sector of work activity...Special attention [is to be] given to the relational components of the goods produced and of the services rendered in many areas: instruction, health care, basic social services and culture. #293