

### BULLETIN INSERT – EMPLOYMENT/WORK

... [W]ork must be regarded not merely as a commodity, but as a specifically human activity. In the majority of cases a man's (woman's) work is his/her sole means of livelihood. Its remuneration, therefore, cannot be made to depend on the state of the market. It must be determined by the laws of justice and equity. Any other procedure would be a clear violation of justice, even supposing the contract of work to have been freely entered into by both parties.

*Mater et Magistra, #18*

... [P]rivate ownership of property, including that of productive goods, is a natural right which the State cannot suppress. But it naturally entails a social obligation as well. It is a right which must be exercised not only for one's own personal benefit but also for the benefit of others.

*Mater et Magistra, #19*

As for the State, its whole *raison d'être* is the realization of the common good in the temporal order. It cannot, therefore, hold aloof from economic matters. On the contrary, it must do all in its power to promote the production of a sufficient supply of material goods, 'the use of which is necessary for the practice of virtue'. It has also the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its weaker members, the workers, women and children. It can never be right for the State to shirk its obligation to work actively for the betterment of the condition of the working man (woman).

*Mater et Magistra, #20*

It is furthermore the duty of the State to ensure that terms of employment are regulated in accordance with justice and equity, and to safeguard the human dignity of workers by making sure that they are not required to work in an environment which may prove harmful to their material and spiritual interests.

*Mater et Magistra, #21*

It is certainly true that work, as a human issue, is at the very center of the "social question" to which, for almost a hundred years . . . , the Church's teaching and the many undertakings connected with its apostolic mission have been especially directed.

*Laborem Exercens, #2*

It is rather to highlight . . . the fact that human work is a key, probably the essential key, to the whole social question.

*Laborem Exercens, #3.1*

And the 'poor' appear under various forms; they appear in various places and at various times; in many cases they appear as a result of the violation of the dignity of human work; either because the opportunities for human work are limited as a result of the scourge of unemployment or because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family.

*Laborem Exercens, #8.5*

Work is a good thing for man (woman)—a good thing for his/her humanity—because through work man (woman) not only transforms nature, adapting it to his/her own needs, but he also achieves fulfillment as a human being and indeed in a sense becomes 'more a human being'.

*Laborem Exercens, #9.2*

... [W]e must first recall a principle that has always been taught by the Church: the principle of the priority of labor over capital. This principle directly concerns the process of production. In this process labor is always a primary efficient cause, while capital, the whole collection of means of production remains a mere instrument or instrumental cause.

*Laborem Exercens, #12*

We must emphasize and give prominence to the primacy of man (woman) in the production process, the primacy of the human over things. ... Man (woman) as the subject of work and independent of the work he/she does—man (woman) alone is a person.

All these rights, together with the need for workers themselves to secure, give rise to yet another right: the right of association, that is to form associations for the purpose of defending the vital interest of those employed in the various professions. These associations are called labor or trade unions.

*Laborem Exercens, #20*