



Justice, Peace & Integrity of Creation News

Congregation of the Sisters of Bon Secours



Mission Focus: Women of healing... defending and caring for all creation

November & December 2026

The Common Good: The Heart of Catholic Social Teaching



Sisters and volunteers send postcards to neighbors encouraging them to vote in the midterms.

Whether you are navigating the economic realities of Trujillo or Kinshasa, or advocating with legislators in Washington DC, Catholic Social Teaching (CST) offers a powerful lens for public life. At the very center of this framework sits a revolutionary concept: the Common Good. The Church defines the common good as **"the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily."** It is the radical idea that a society's success is not measured by its gross domestic product or the wealth of its elite, but by how well it organizes itself so that *everyone* can thrive.

To truly understand the common good, we must look at how it intertwines with the foundational pillars of Catholic Social Teaching:

- **Radical Interconnectedness (Solidarity):** The common good is built on the reality that we do not exist in isolation. In a world that fiercely promotes hyper-individualism, CST insists that we are all responsible for all. Your neighbor's suffering—whether from lack of healthcare, poor education, or unsafe housing—diminishes the whole community.
- **The Floor of Dignity (Human Rights):** The common good cannot exist without protecting fundamental rights. This includes the right to life, food, shelter, fair wages, education, and religious freedom. Civic participation means actively building systems that guarantee these rights for everyone.
- **A Measure of Justice (The Preferential Option for the Poor):** A society cannot claim to serve the common good if its most vulnerable members are left behind. Whether it is addressing deep systemic poverty in Peru and the DRC, or tackling homelessness and economic anxiety in the US, UK, France, and Ireland, the vulnerable must be our primary legislative and social priority.

Seeking the common good is an antidote to the polarization tearing at our nations. It asks voters and leaders alike to look past immediate self-interest, political parties, or tribal loyalties, and instead ask a single, transformative question: *How will this law, budget, or policy affect the least among us?*

By entering the civic square with the common good as our compass, we cease to be merely political actors. We become instruments of God's justice, building a world that mirrors the unity, care, and dignity of the Kingdom of God.

(Excerpts from CAPP USA)

JPIC Days of Remembrance

November 3

St Martin de Porres,

Patron Saint of Race Relations

November 13

St. Frances Xavier Cabrini,

Patron of Migrants

November 9-20

COP 31



November 17

World Day of the Poor

November 25

**International Day for Elimination
of Violence Against Women**

December 1

World AIDS Day

December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe



Christians Prepare for COP 31



At the end of September, a coalition of 81 Christian organizations issued a statement urging EU leaders to accelerate fossil fuel phase-out and “lead by example in protecting the most vulnerable” ahead of COP31 in November. In their joint letter to the European Commission President, Vice President, Climate Commissioner, and the European Parliament delegation to COP31, the coalition draws on Pope Leo XIV’s warning before COP30: *“Creation is crying out in floods, droughts, storms and relentless heat... One in three people live in great vulnerability because of these climate changes. To them, climate change is not a distant threat, and to ignore these people is to deny our shared humanity.”*

To deliver real progress at COP31, the coalition calls on the EU to champion key priorities:

- To commit to a clear, binding roadmap —phasing out coal by 2030, gas by 2035, and oil by 2040—while ending fossil fuel subsidies and stopping new exploration permits
- Electrification Based on Renewables, Energy Efficiency and Sufficiency
- A Socially Just Transition: Building on June’s climate talks in Bonn (SB64), the coalition demands a strong Just Transition Mechanism at COP31 and calls on the EU to prioritize funding for a socially just transition in the next EU budget
- Triple Adaptation Finance by 2035: public grants to replenish the underfunded Loss and Damage Fund
- Food Sovereignty & Agroecology: The coalition urges EU leaders to break the current deadlock and establish clear goals for resilient, agroecological food systems at COP31. (Excerpts from *Laudato Si* Movement Europe)



Gift Giving & Catholic Social Teaching

During the holiday season, we are overwhelmed by consumption. The focus on buying and receiving gifts can distract us from the season and the impact our consumption has on people and the planet.

Over 100 years ago, Pope Leo XIII’s *Rerum Novarum* (1891) addressed the injustices of industrialization and the impact of wealth and excess on human dignity. He warned that humans could be “miserable in the midst of abundance” if the economy served profit rather than people. Today, we face the reality of consuming far more than the earth can sustain. This is especially true during the holiday season when consumption spikes, often at the cost of workers and the environment.

More recently in his encyclical *Magnifica Humanitas*, Pope Leo XIV states economic freedom must always be measured against the common good and the dignity of every person. This is possible when we recognize that the creation of dignified, valuable jobs are an essential part of its proper service to society.

In many countries where our products are made, workers face poor labor conditions and human rights violations. This holiday season, consider supporting ethical businesses that respect workers’ rights. Buy from vendors who use fair trade practices or from local artisans who prioritize transparency and sustainability. You can also consider giving gifts that are not physical products, such as experiences, classes, or donations made in someone’s name.

Catholic Social Teaching emphasizes the empowerment of all people and the importance of community-building. Pope John Paul II spoke of the need to help each person develop their full potential, affirming that every individual is in the process of “becoming.” Our actions during the holiday season should reflect this commitment by supporting others’ growth through collaborative and creative efforts like the annual makers holiday fair held by Bon Secours in Vendôme, France where community members sell handmade upcycled gifts to raise money for charity. (Excerpts from *Education for Justice Reflection*)

