

May 16, 2020

Presentation for Dominican Formation on *Gaudium et Spes Promulgated on Dec. 7, 1965*

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Paragraphs 63-76

Part 2 Chapter III Economic and Social Life

Section 1 Economic Development

Section 2 Certain Principles Governing Socio-Economic Life as a Whole

Chapter IV The Life of the Political Community

Man is the source, the center and the purpose of all economic and social life.

Extravagance and wretchedness exist side by side.

Economic inequality between countries is becoming more pronounced.

Section 1 Economic Development

Ingenuity and development must consider the whole man with regard for the full range of his material needs and the demands of his intellectual, moral, spiritual and religious life. This employment of man's efforts produce necessities and comforts must operate within the limits of moral order. Input must be given by a large number of people, not just the powerful few, or to the government authority. **Basic individual rights must be upheld.**

Agricultural help must be given to those in less developed countries to produce and get their crops to market. This involves educating them to perfect their professional skill. Migrant workers must be given living wages and good working conditions—not be regarded as tools of production. They must be treated as valuable, unique human beings—with dignity. Efforts must be made to assist these workers with employment opportunities in their own country as far as possible. Separation of workers from their families should be avoided.

Section 2 Certain Principles Governing Socio-Economic Life as a Whole

Man is not to be viewed as just a tool. Through labor, offered to God, man is associated with the redemptive work of Jesus, who conferred dignity on labor when at Nazareth He worked with His hands. **Providing sufficient employment for people to contribute to society and support their family is a duty of society.** The opportunity should be granted to workers to unfold their own abilities and personality through the performance of their work. I think of mentally and/or physically challenged people who should be given the opportunity of the dignity of work that is fitting their abilities. A job should not be all consuming. The employee should have time to devote to family, their spiritual lives, creative and recreational pursuits. This includes the right to have input in negotiating fair employment practices.

Charity must be employed in providing for the needy. Ownership of some external property or goods should be regarded as an extension of human freedom. Both private property ownership and public property ownership is necessary and serves the common good.

Workers should have the freedom to act on their own initiative and responsibility in order to advance in human culture and political life. Basically, workers should not be slaves. Justice and

charity demand giving the poor the means to security and taking personal initiative to better life for themselves and their families. This necessitates providing education needed for employment projects that give a family means to sustain and improve their economic position. Also, the provision of starter cash or small business loans to finance a project is needed. Opportunities must be provided to make it possible for people to be rescued from helplessness and hopelessness.

Chapter IV The Life of the Political Community

This stressed the right of people to freely meet and form association, the right to express one's opinion and profess one's religion both publicly and privately. Gaudium said "there is a steadily growing respect for men of other opinions or other religions." That may have been true in the 1960's but tolerance of Christians seems to have declined in our time. Gaudium stated: **"There is no better way to establish political life on a truly human basis than by fostering an inward sense of justice and kindness, and of service to the common good,..."** Citizens have the legitimate right to defend themselves against abuse of authority, one that oversteps its competence.

The rights of all people must be recognized, respected and furthered. Citizens must be careful not to attribute excessive power to public authority.

"When the exercise of rights is restricted temporarily for the common good, freedom should be restored immediately upon the change of circumstances." This brings to mind our current crisis with the covid-19 pandemic.

The nobility of honest political service was stressed. It seems in our divisive times this nobility is often disregarded and replaced with greed for power and greed for money.

The value of each citizen requires freedom and responsibility.

"It is only right, however, that at all times and in all places, the Church should have true freedom to preach the faith, to teach her social doctrine, to exercise her role freely among men."