

Catholic Social Teaching (CST)	Catholic Social Teaching (CST) is the Church's reflection - in the light of scripture - on the signs of the times and on how to put love of neighbour into action by helping to create a just society. CST is based not only on scripture, but also tradition and lived experience, and is found in encyclicals, other writings by theologians and Church leaders and documents from Church councils.
Common Good	This is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching and refers to the good that is shared by all. It includes the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily.
Dignity	Every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and therefore has inherent dignity. The Church's belief in the holiness of life and the dignity of each person is the foundation of all the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. Every human life has worth and every human being must be treated as valuable in their own right, not just valued for what they can achieve or contribute.
Encyclical	This is an open letter written by the Pope to the Church and all people of good will. Encyclicals are usually named after the opening words of the Latin text, eg. <i>Gaudium et Spes</i> .
Equity	Equity is the quality of being fair or impartial; it is not the same as equality. Justice is the moral virtue that is concerned with equity.
Human rights	Human rights are moral principles or norms that describe certain standards of behaviour, and are regularly protected as legal rights in national and international law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948.
Image of God	The belief that human beings are uniquely a reflection of God's personhood. Unlike the other animals, human beings are rational, free and moral. These capacities mean that we are able to enter into relationship with each other and with God. Because human beings are made in God's image, all human beings have a God-given dignity which can never be obliterated by sin, sickness or death.
Justice	Justice is the moral virtue that is concerned with equity and longs to see people obtain that to which they are entitled.
Option for the Poor <i>or</i> Preferential Option for the Poor	This is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching. It can be simply explained as 'opting to consider the poorest first'. The Church teaches that those in greatest need require the greatest response; this builds a just community: "As Christians, we are called to respond to the needs of all our sisters and brothers, but those with the greatest needs require the greatest response". (Economic Justice for All, 16)
Participation	This is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching. All people have a right to participate fully – socially, economically and politically – in the life of their community. The Church teaches it is wrong for anyone to be excluded unfairly or to be unable to participate fully in society.
Rights and responsibilities	This is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching. Every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human flourishing. Corresponding to these rights are duties or responsibilities towards one another, our families and the wider global community. The Common Good can only be achieved if human rights are protected and individuals take responsibility.

Solidarity	This key principle of Catholic Social Teaching is often described as 'standing with' or 'alongside' others. Solidarity is a determination to commit oneself to the Common Good because, as one human family, we are both interdependent and responsible for each other. This means that loving our neighbour has global dimensions.
Stewardship	This key principle of Catholic Social Teaching derives from the belief that by living in right relationship with creation we show respect to God the Creator. We have a duty to care for creation responsibly, as stewards rather than consumers, and to protect it for future generations.
Subsidiarity	This is a key principle of Catholic Social Teaching. All people have a right to participate in decisions and activities that affect their lives. Subsidiarity requires decision-making to occur at the lowest level possible by the people most affected by the decision.
Vatican II	This was the 21st Ecumenical Council of the Church, which took place in Rome from 1962-1965, including bishops from all over the world. It became known for its expression of Catholic doctrine for the Church in the modern world.