The Immorality of Inequality and Catholic Social Teaching

99%: The Struggle for Democratic Equality
President’s Peace Commission – Spring 2012
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Historical Emergence

0 Modern Catholicism emerges out of the ashes of the French Revolution
0 After Vatican Council I (1869-70) – emergency of “Christian social order”
   0 Church and State cooperate
   0 Religious freedom is limited
   0 Order under a paternalistic Christian government
0 In the U.S. Catholic experience, this is very different model from what was emerging in Europe
   0 Separation of Church and State
   0 Religious Liberty

(David O'Brien – Social Teaching, Social Gospel, Social Action)
The Church and the Public Square

0 How does the Church define the terms of its participation in public debates?
0 What principles do they follow to govern their participation?
0 How are these principles put to practice?
What is Catholic Social Teaching?

Catholic Social Teaching strives to foster a living faith that leads to loving action in the world today by raising up a social vision that is transformative, thereby making visible the reign of God.
Seven Themes of CST

0 Life and Dignity of the Human Person
0 Call to Family, Community and Participation
0 Rights and Responsibilities
0 Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
0 The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
0 Solidarity
0 Care for God’s Creation
Sources of Catholic Social Teaching

0 Biblical resources - *the revealed and living word of God.*

0 Moral resources - *it grows out of scripture and engages human reason, knowing, experience. (philosophical roots)*

0 Ecclesial Resources - *the writings of the Popes and Bishops.*
Natural Law

Social Teachings of the Church are grounded in Natural Law Theory

Men and Women are created in the image of God – all have dignity as children of God
CST Evolves...

The tradition grows and develops over the course of history. It changes and grows as a result of internal forces pushing it in new directions and external forces drawing it into new fields:

- **External Forces:** i.e. globalization
- **External Forces:** i.e. industrialization
- **External Forces:** i.e. bioethics questions
- **External Forces:** i.e. secularism

Growth in the teaching comes from within the tradition. Some examples might include:

- Vatican II
- New encyclicals
- Theologies: i.e. Liberation Theology
- Bishops’ statements and letters
- Dialogue and discussion
CST and Social Justice

0 Catholic Social Teaching - leads us to loving/transformative action - or the work of advancing social justice

0 Social Justice is more than doing works of mercy (direct service), it also includes works of justice (changing systems)

0 Advanced in the document *Quadragesimo Anno* (1931) by Pope Pius XI
Catholic Social Action in the U.S. Catholic Experience

0 Response to the call of Vatican II to “Read the Signs of the Times”
0 Response to the new “urban industrial society” (turn of the century – early 1900s – 1960s)
0 Catholic immigrants led the efforts to organize in their neighborhoods and community institutions
0 Efforts that would benefit the common good
0 Examples:
  0 Catholic Credit Unions
  0 Labor organizing – trade unions
  0 National Catholic War Council (precursor to USCCB)
Catholic Social Institutions

0 Catholic orphanages, hospitals, nursing homes, schools, etc – mostly established by very large religious orders of men and women (1930s – 1960s)

0 Many still exist today... movement toward redefining “mission and identity”

0 They have lead the way in defining the Catholic communities commitment to the Common Good
Examples of Catholic Social Institutions

0 Catholic Healthcare – Hospitals, Nursing Care, Hospice
   0 1 out of 6 patients are treated in a Catholic hospital
0 Catholic Charities USA
   0 Over 100 years old, serves more than 10 million a year
0 Catholic Relief Services
   0 International humanitarian aid organization
   0 Began in 1943 resettling refugees from WW II
   0 Today, reach more than 100 million people in more than 100 countries on five continents
0 Catholic Education – grade schools, high schools and universities (over 400 year history)
Catholic Social Engagement

0 **Two Branches of the Same Tree**

0 **Sanctioned** – promoted and supported by the hierarchy of the Church

0 **Non-Sanctioned** – empowered laity (religious and some priests/bishops) who are passionately dedicated to advancing justice in light of Catholic Social Teaching

0 Provides an interesting and sometimes awkward dilemma for the official Church (especially when religious, priests and bishops venture to the non-sanctioned branch)
Sanctioned Engagement

- Work sponsored by the USCCB
  - Pro-Life movement – across all life issues
  - Promotion and defensive of marriage between one man and one woman
  - Catholic Campaign for Human Development
  - Environmental Justice
  - Combating Poverty and Food Insecurity
  - Immigration Reform and More..

See:
http://www.usccb.org/about/justice-peace-and-human-development/
Non-Sanctioned Engagement

0 Catholic Movements or Founded by Catholics:
  0 Catholic Worker Movement
  0 Various anti-war movements
  0 Call to Action – began by the bishops – but has since parted ways
  0 Women's Ordination Conference
  0 Voice of the Faithful – 10 years old – grew out of sexual abuse crisis in the Church
  0 Corpus – inclusive priesthood – married and women
  0 School of the Americas Watch – Foreign Policy
  0 Dignity USA/New Ways Ministry – Catholic LGBT organizations
Catholic Worker Movement

Took on model of Jane Addams and settlement house movement
Involved “personal sacrifice”
“radical” – going to roots
Instead of changing the world, it is about changing the self
Dorothy Day and Peter Maurin
http://www.catholicworker.org/
213 communities remain today since it’s founding in 1933, including a community here in San Antonio
Anti-War Movement

Philip and Daniel Berrigan, John Dear, many others...

Cantonsville Nine – burnt draft documents in May, 1968

On September 9, 1980, Daniel, Philip, and six others (the "Plowshares Eight") began the Plowshares Movement. They illegally trespassed onto the General Electric Nuclear Missile facility in King of Prussia, Pennsylvania, where they damaged nuclear warhead nose cones and poured blood onto documents and files.

Pax Christi International – began in 1945 after WW II and is in more than 100 countries now – Catholic Peace Movement

http://youtu.be/l3SHRc-NTrk
School of the Americas

- Started by Fr. Roy Bourgeois, a Maryknoll Priest in 1990
- Now a growing movement that holds annual protests at the gate of Ft. Benning, GA every November and Days of Action in Washington, DC every April
- Goal is to cut funding to a school that has trained thousands of Latin American soldiers that have gone on to violate human rights in their home countries. Including the execution of the Jesuits in El Salvador, the Assination of Archbishop Romero and the killings of the four church women.

http://youtu.be/FK1t88akuCo
CST and the Occupy Movement

- CST is a strong ally to the Occupy Movement
- Blessed Pope John Paul II addressed very strong words to these “structures of sin.” He said: “The all-consuming desire for profit” and “the thirst for power, with the intention of imposing one’s will upon others” is opposed to the will of God.
- The Catholic social teaching principle known as “the universal destination of the earth’s goods” insists that all people deserve a fair share of creation and the goods of humankind, and certainly to the point of having each basic need met entirely.
- Pope Paul VI taught that God intends for everyone to adequately share in the goods of the earth.
- Blessed John Paul II said that the human inadequacies of capitalism are far from disappearing.
- Pope B16 promotes the same ideas in his current encyclicals.
CST and the Occupy Movement

The U.S. Catholic Bishops document *Economic Justice for All* (1986) is very applicable to the current movement:

- Every economic decision and institution must be judged in light of whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person.
- Human dignity can be realized and protected only in community.
- All people have a right to participate in the economic life of society.
- All members of society have a special obligation to the poor and vulnerable.
- Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community.
- Society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights.