



V justice and solidarity among nations

Excerpt from the Catechism of the Catholic Church; Third part (life in Christ); Second section (The Ten Commandments); Chapter Two (love your neighbor as yourself); Article 7 (the Seventh Commandment); Point V (justice and solidarity between

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Catechism of the Catholic Church

* PART THREE LIFE IN CHRIST
OR SECOND SECTION THE TEN COMMANDMENTS
+ SECOND CHAPTER "LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF"
Article 7 THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT
* V Justice and solidarity among nations

2437 At the international level the inequality of resources and economic means is such that it creates among the nations a veritable 'abyss'(SRS 14). On the one hand, some possess and develop the means of growth, and on the other, those who accumulate debts.

2438 Various causes, of a religious, political, economic and financial nature, today confer on the social issue a global dimension (SRS 9). Solidarity between the nations whose policies are already interdependent is necessary. It is even more essential when it comes to ending the 'perverse mechanisms that hinder the development of the less advanced countries (cf SRS 17; 45). It is necessary to replace the abusive financial systems, if not usury (cf CA 35), the trade relations wicked between the nations, the arms race, by a common effort to mobilize the resources towards goals of moral, cultural development and economic 'redefining the priorities and the scales of values' (CA 28).

2439 Rich nations have a serious moral responsibility for those who cannot by themselves ensure the means of their development or have been prevented from doing so by tragic historical events. It is a duty of solidarity and charity; it is also

an obligation of justice if the well-being of rich nations comes from resources that have not been paid with justice.

2440 Direct aid constitutes an appropriate response to immediate, extraordinary needs caused, for example, by natural disasters, epidemics, etc. But it is not enough to repair the serious damage that results from indigence or to permanently remedy the needs. International economic and financial institutions should also be reformed to promote and strengthen equitable relations with the least developed countries (cf SRS 16). The efforts of poor countries working for their growth and their release must be sustained (cf CA 26). This doctrine demands to be applied in a very particular way in the field of agricultural work. Peasants, especially in the Third World, form the majority mass of the poor.

2441 To increase the sense of God and the knowledge of himself constitutes the basis of all the complete development of human society. This multiplies the material goods and puts them at the service of the person and his freedom. It decreases economic misery and exploitation. It grows respect for cultural identities and openness to transcendence (cf SRS 32; CA 51).

2442 It is not for the pastors of the Church to intervene directly in the political activity and the organization of social life. This task is part of the vocation of the lay faithful, who act on their initiative with their fellow citizens. Social action can involve a plurality of concrete pathways. It must always attend to the common good and conform to the evangelical message and the teaching of the Church. It belongs to the lay faithful to 'animate, with their Christian commitment, the realities and, in them, to seek to be witnesses and operators of peace and justice' (SRS 47; CF 42).