



1. Mother and Teacher of people, the catholic Church was founded as such by Jesus Christ so that, in the course of the centuries, they will find their salvation, with the fullness of a more excellent life, all those who were to enter the bosom of that one and receive their embrace. To this Church, "column and founded of the truth" (cf. 1 Tm 3, 15), entrusted its divine Founder a double mission, that of fathering children to himself, and of educating and directing them, watching with maternal solicitude for the life of individuals and societies, whose superior dignity always looked at the Church with the maximum respect and defended with the higher vigilance.

(Mater et Magistra, N. 1)

2. In fact, it is the Church that draws from the Gospel the teachings under which the conflict can be resolved completely, or, through its asperities, to make it more bearable; she is the one who tries not only to teach intelligence, but also to channel the life and customs of each with its precepts; she which improves the situations of the proletarians with many useful institutions; she who wants and ardently desires that the thoughts and forces of all social orders be aliened in order to look for the good of the workers' cause in the best possible way, and believes that to this end they should be oriented, although with justice and moderation, the same laws and the authority of the State.

(Rerum Novarum, N. 16)

3. The doctrine of Christ unites, in effect, the earth with heaven, as it considers the complete man, soul and body, intelligence and will, and orders him to elevate his mind from the transitory conditions of this earthly life to the heights of eternal life, where one day he must enjoy everlasting happiness and peace.

(Mater et Magistra, N. 2)

4. Nothing, then, is strange that the catholic Church, following the example and fulfilling the mandate of Christ, has consistently held up the torch of charity for two millennia, that is to say, from the institution of the ancient diaconate to the present day, thus with the teaching of its precepts as with its innumerable examples; charity which, harmoniously combining the teachings and the practice of mutual love, makes admirable the mandate of this double give that abridges the doctrine and social action of the Church entirely.

(Mater et Magistra, N. 6)

5. Thus, in the light of the sacred doctrine of the Second Vatican Council, the Church presents itself before us as a social subject of the responsibility of divine truth. With deep emotion we listen to Christ himself when he says, "The word you hear is not mine, but the Father who has sent me" (Jn 14, 24). This is why the Church is demanded that, when he professes and teaches faith, he is intimately attached to the divine truth (Dei Verbum, nn. 5, 10, 21) and translates it into lived behaviors of "rationabile obsequium", a gift conforming to reason (cf. Dei Filius, ch. 3).

(Redemptor Hominis, N. 19)

6. But the office of interpreting "authentically the word of God written or transmitted has been entrusted only to the living Magisterium of the Church, whose authority is exercised in the name of Jesus Christ" (Dei Verbum, N. 10). The Church in its life and in its teaching, and is revealed as "pillar and value of truth", (1 Tm 3, 15) including truth regarding moral action. Likewise "The Church always and everywhere has the right to proclaim moral principles, always in the respect of the social order, and to make judgments about any human aspect, as demanded by the fundamental right of the man or for the salvation of the souls "(Code of Canon Law, Canon 747, N. 2). Precisely on the questions that characterize today the moral discussion and around which new tendencies and theories have been developed, the Magisterium, in fidelity to Jesus Christ and in continuity with the tradition of the Church, feels more urgent the duty of to offer self-discernment and teaching, to help man on his way to true freedom.

(Veritatis Splendor, N. 27)