



On the human work

Encyclical letter of the Pope John Paul II in the 90 anniversary of the Rerum Novarum

14 September 1981

Human work 90 years after the "Rerum Novarum"

Having fulfilled, on 15 May of the current year, ninety years since the publication by Leon XIII, the great pontiff of the "social question" of that encyclical of decisive importance, which begins with the words Rerum Novarum, I want to dedicate this document precisely to human work, and even more I want to dedicate it to man in the vast context of that reality that is work.

Indeed, if, as I have said in the encyclical Redemptor Hominis, published at the beginning of my service at the Roman headquarters of St. Peter, Man "is the first and fundamental path of the Church", (4) and this is precisely because of the unfathomable mystery of redemption in Christ. Then we must go back to this path incessantly and always continue again in its various aspects in which all the wealth is revealed and at the same time all the fatigue of the human existence on earth.

General Index

I. Introduction

1. Human Labor 90 years after the "Rerum Novarum"

2. In a line of organic action development and social teaching of the Church
3. The problem of labor, the key to social issues

II. Work and man

4. In the Book of Genesis
5. Work in the objective sense: technique
6. The work in subjective sense: the man, subject of the work
7. A threat to the right order of values
8. Solidarity of the men of the work
9. Person work-dignity
10. Work and society: family, nation

III. Conflict between work and capital in the present historical phase

11. Dimension of this conflict
12. Work priority
13. Economy and materialism
14. Work and property
15. "Personalist" argument;

IV. Rights of men of labor

16. In the broad context of human rights
17. Entrepreneur: "Indirect"; and "direct";
18. Employment problem

19. Salary and other social benefits
20. Importance of trade unions
21. Dignity of agricultural work
22. The person disabled and the work
23. The work and the problem of emigration

V. Elements for a spirituality of work

24. Particular mission of the Church
25. Work as a participation in the work of Creator
26. Christ, the man of, labor
27. Human labor in the light of the Cross and Resurrection of Christ