

Justice and Peace Scotland

Catholic Social Thought Quotations (2020)

The church has a long tradition of teaching which speaks to issues of human rights, development, peacebuilding and social justice. This is called Catholic Social Thought, and is comprised of Scripture, teachings of the Saints, Papal encyclicals, and documents from Bishops Conferences around the world, collated together in documents known as 'Catholic Social Doctrine', or Catholic Social Teaching. It is a constantly evolving body of work, as the Church reads the 'signs of the times' and responds to situations of injustice. We have also included teachings from contemporary Catholic figures, recognised for their faith and work for social justice, peacebuilding, and integral human development as part of the Church's mission to witness to Christ in the world.

The quotes below have been collated with the intention of being included in parish newsletters / bulletins to reflect either the Mass readings for that week, or a significant date in the social justice calendar. They can also be used in schools, or for personal/ group prayer or reflection.

These teachings are shared (week by week) as jpeg images on the Justice and Peace Scotland Facebook, Twitter and Instagram accounts, and all members are encouraged to share them through parish, diocesan, and personal accounts.

Anyone with an interest in obtaining these pictures independently (e.g – for inclusion on a parish website in advance) should contact office@justiceandpeacescotland.org.uk

CST quotes for Sundays in 2021 will be available December 2020. For more information please contact the Justice and Peace Scotland office. Or alternatively sign up to the Justice & Peace Scotland newsletter.

January

5 January (Nearest Sunday to International Day of Awareness of Human Trafficking (8th Jan))

No, this is the kind of fasting I want: Free those who are wrongly imprisoned; lighten the burden of those who work for you. Let the oppressed go free, and remove the chains that bind people.

Isaiah 58:6

12 January

The Christian is exhorted to offer his body and all his being to practice only good, mutual love, and justice; he is called to consecrate himself entirely to the service of God for the benefit of others.

Baptized and Sent: The Church of Christ on Mission in the World, Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples Pontifical Mission Societies

19 January

The faithful, therefore, must learn the deepest meaning and the value of all creation, as well as its role in the harmonious praise of God.

Lumen Gentium, para. 36

26 January (Closest Sunday to Holocaust Memorial Day (UK) (27th Jan))

“If the Church stays silent in the face of what is happening, what difference would it make if no church were ever opened again?”

Blessed Franz Jägerstätter O.F.S, Martyr

Born in 1907 in St. Radegund, Austria, Franz Jägerstätter developed a deep Christian faith following his marriage in 1936. As his faith developed Jägerstätter found himself in conflict with the policies and activities of the Nazi party. He deferred military service attempting to avoid conscription where possible. Having completed military training refused to take the ‘Hitler Oath’ and was exempted military service as a farmer. He was troubled by the Nazi suppression of the Church, reports of euthanasia programmes and questioned the morality of war. He sought advice from the Bishop of Linz and was disheartened that the leadership of the church was not prepared to confront the Nazi regime. Jägerstätter was called to active military service in 1943, and detained for refusing. Inspired by Fr Franz Reinisch, an Austrian priest who had been executed for refusing the Hitler Oath, Jägerstätter resolved to do likewise. He was executed by guillotine on 9 August 1943. He was declared a martyr by Pope Benedict in June 2007, and beatified later that year.

February

2 February

This is why I want a Church which is poor and for the poor.

Evangelii Gaudium para. 198

9 February

Among the fruits of justice, mercy to the poor should certainly be considered the most important. That justice which comes from faith belongs to Jesus Christ. It is true that “if one of the brothers or one of the sisters is in need of clothes and has not enough food to live on, and one of you says to them, ‘I wish you well; keep yourself warm and eat plenty’ without giving them these bare necessities of life, then what good is that?”

A Quo Die, Pope Clement XIII

16 February (Nearest Sunday before World Day of Social Justice (20 Feb))

The righteous know the rights of the poor; the wicked have no such understanding.

Proverbs 29:7

23 February

Pure and genuine religion in the sight of God the Father means caring for orphans and widows in their distress and refusing to let the world corrupt you.

James 1:27

March

1 March

God loves all men and women on earth and gives them the hope of a new era, an era of peace. His love, fully revealed in the Incarnate Son, is the foundation of universal peace. When welcomed in the depths of the human heart, this love reconciles people with God and with themselves, renews human relationships and stirs that desire for brotherhood capable of banishing the temptation of violence and war.

Pope Saint John Paul II, Message for World Day of Peace, 1 January 2000

8 March (International Women's Day)

She opens her arms to the poor and extends her hands to the needy.

Proverbs 31:20

15 March

Our world has a grave social debt towards the poor who lack access to drinking water, because they are denied the right to a life consistent with their inalienable dignity.

Laudato Si' para. 30

22 March (Nearest Sunday before the Feast of Saint Óscar Romero (24th March))

We know that every effort to improve society, above all when society is so full of injustice and sin, is an effort that God blesses; that God wants; that God demands of us.

Saint Óscar Romero, Bishop & Martyr

29 March

Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received – only what you have given: a full heart enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice and courage.

Saint Francis of Assisi

April

Palm Sunday (5 April)

And so at last the poor have hope, and the snapping jaws of the wicked are shut

Job 5:16

Easter Sunday (12 April)

When all seems to be dead, signs of the resurrection suddenly spring up. It is an irresistible force.

Evangelii Gaudium

19 April

It is essential to draw near to new forms of poverty and vulnerability, in which we are called to recognize the suffering Christ, even if this appears to bring us no tangible and immediate benefits. I think of the homeless, the addicted, refugees, indigenous peoples, the elderly who are increasingly isolated and abandoned, and many others.

Evangelii Gaudium

26 April (Nearest Sunday to the Feast of St Joseph the Worker / International Workers Day (1 May))

Evangelisers thus take on the 'smell of the sheep' and the sheep are willing to hear their voice.

Evangelii Gaudium, para. 24

May

3 May

The gift we can offer others is so simple a thing as hope.

Fr. Daniel Berrigan S.J

Daniel Berrigan was an American Jesuit priest, peace activist and poet. He joined the Society of Jesus after high school and became a prolific writer, academic, and activist on the side of the poor. He became involved with opposition to the Vietnam War, and was instrumental in organising Christian resistance to it. As a member of the Catonsville Nine he burned draft papers, and went on the run, becoming the first priest to appear on the FBI's Most Wanted list. Three years in prison did nothing to stop him, and he became an icon of nonviolence and the peace movement, founding the Plowshares Movement, opposing war, capital punishment, and ministering to people living with HIV in New York. He died on 30 April 2016.

10 May

I would therefore like us all to make the serious commitment to respect and care for creation, to pay attention to every person, to combat the culture of waste and of throwing out so as to foster a culture of solidarity and encounter.

Pope Francis, General Audience 5 June 2013, World Day of the Environment

17 May

Looking at our current reality, I ask myself if we have understood the lesson of *Pacem in Terris*? I ask myself if the words justice and solidarity are only in our dictionary or if we all work so that they become a reality?

Pope Francis, Address celebrating the 50th anniversary of 'Pacem in Terris', 3 October 2013

24 May

Let us treat others with the same passion and compassion with which we want to be treated. Let us seek for others the same possibilities which we seek for ourselves. Let us help others to grow, as we would like to be helped ourselves. The yardstick we use for others will be the yardstick which time will use for us.

Pope Francis, Address to the United States Congress, 24 September 2015

Pentecost Sunday (31st May)

Our world is being torn apart by wars and violence. ... Let everyone admire how you care for one another and how you encourage and accompany one another.

Evangelii Gaudium para.99

June

7 June

"An evangelising community gets involved by word and deed in people's daily lives: it bridges distances....and it embraces human life, touching the suffering flesh of Christ in others."

Evangelii Gaudium para.24

14 June (Nearest Sunday before World Refugee Day (20 June))

The Church's concern is focused especially on those fleeing from war, violence, political or religious persecution, from natural disasters including those caused by climate change, and from extreme poverty.

Christus Vivit, 91

21 June (Nearest Sunday before International Day in support of victims of Torture (26th June))

"Whatever violates the integrity of the human person, such as....torments inflicted on body or mind, attempts to coerce the will itself.... are infamies indeed. They poison human society but they do more harm to those who practise them than those who suffer from the injury. Moreover they are supreme dishonour to the Creator"

Gaudium et Spes para.27

28 June

At times we find it hard to make room for God's unconditional love in our pastoral activity. We put so many conditions on mercy that we empty it of its concrete meaning and real significance. That is the worst way of watering down the Gospel.

Amoris Laetitia, para 311

July

5 July

As a general principle it may be laid down that a worker ought to have leisure and rest proportionate to the wear and tear of their strength, for waste of strength must be repaired by cessation from hard work.

Rerum Novarum, para. 42

12 July

The Church which “goes forth” is a community of missionary disciples who take the first step, who are involved and supportive, who bear fruit and rejoice. An evangelizing community knows that the Lord has taken the initiative, he has loved us first (cf. *1 Jn 4:19*), and therefore we can move forward, boldly take the initiative, go out to others, seek those who have fallen away, stand at the crossroads and welcome the outcast.

Evangelii Gaudium, para. 24

19 July

But I want you to make yourselves heard in your dioceses, I want the noise to go out, I want the Church to go out onto the streets, I want us to resist everything worldly, everything static, everything comfortable, everything to do with clericalism, everything that might make us closed in on ourselves.

Pope Francis, Address to Rio WYD Pilgrims from Argentina, 25 July 2013

26 July

All of us can cooperate as instruments of God for the care of creation, each according to his or her own culture, experience, involvements and talents.

Laudato Si, para. 14

August

2 August

Christian love teaches us to give our fellows material as well as spiritual gifts. We should give them our last shirt and our last piece of bread.

Saint Maria Skobtsova, Righteous Martyr

Maria Skobtsova was born in 1891 in Riga. After being involved with revolutionary politics she fled Russia as a refugee settling in Paris. Living amongst other refugees caused her to reflect on her life, and the call to follow Jesus. Mother Maria established a house of hospitality where all would be welcome. After Paris fell to the Nazis in 1940 she continued the work of welcome, taking in many fleeing from the Nazis, forging baptism certificates to help Jews escape persecution, and smuggling children from Nazi detention. She was detained and sent to Ravensbrück concentration camp where she was executed on Easter Saturday 1945 in the gas chamber. She was glorified (canonised) in the Orthodox Church on 1 May 2004. One of those present was Cardinal Jean-Marie Lustiger, Archbishop of Paris who included St. Maria in the calendar of the Catholic Church in France. It is likely she is the only post-Schism saint included in both the Orthodox and Catholic church calendars. Maria Skobtsova Catholic Worker House in Calais, France continues her spirit of welcome and service to displaced people seeking safety.

9 August

If the consciousness of universal brotherhood truly penetrates into the hearts of men, will they still need to arm themselves to the point of becoming blind and fanatic killers of their brethren who in themselves are innocent, and of perpetrating, as a contribution to Peace, butchery of untold magnitude, as at Hiroshima on 6 August 1945?

Blessed Pope Paul VI, Message for World Day of Peace, 1967

The remembrances of the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki on 6th and 9th August 1945 respectively take place each year. These remain the first, and thus far only uses of nuclear weapons in war.

16 August

We cannot uphold an ideal of holiness that would ignore injustice in a world where some revel, spend with abandon and live only for the latest consumer goods, even as others look on from afar, living their entire lives in abject poverty.

Gaudete et Exultate, para. 101

23 August (International Day for the Remembrance of the Slave Trade and its Abolition)

Whatever insults human dignity, such as subhuman living conditions, arbitrary imprisonment, deportation, slavery, prostitution, the selling of women and children; as well as disgraceful working conditions, where men are treated as mere tools for profit, rather than as free and responsible persons; all these things and others of their like are infamies indeed.

Gaudium et Spes

30 August (Nearest Sunday to World Day of Prayer for Care of Creation (1 September))

The universe unfolds in God, who fills it completely. Hence, there is a mystical meaning to be found in a leaf, in a mountain trail, in a dewdrop, in a poor person's face. The ideal is not only to pass from the exterior to the interior to discover the action of God in the soul, but also to discover God in all things

Laudato Si, para 223

September

6 September

We need to go forth from our own communities and be bold enough to go to the existential outskirts that need to feel the closeness of God. He abandons no one, and he always shows his unfailing tenderness and mercy; this, therefore, is what we need to take to all people.

Pope Francis, Message to Pilgrims gathered at the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, 16 November 2013

13 September

Thus, in the spirit of the Book of Leviticus (25:8-12), Christians will have to raise their voice on behalf of all the poor of the world, proposing the jubilee as an appropriate time to give thought, among other things, to reducing substantially, if not cancelling outright, the international debt which seriously threatens the future of many nations"

Pope Saint John Paul II, Tertio Millennio Adveniente, para. 51

20 September (Nearest Sunday to UN International Day for Peace (21 September))

The only path is to renounce violence, to begin anew with dialogue, with the attempt to find peace together, with a new concern for one another, a new willingness to be open to one another.

Pope Benedict XVI, Good Friday 2011

World Day of Migrants and Refugees (27 September)

Therefore, as we fix our gaze on the Holy Family of Nazareth as they were forced to become refugees, let us think of the tragedy of those migrants and refugees who are victims of rejection and exploitation, who are victims of human trafficking and of slave labour.

Pope Francis, Angelus, 29 December 2013

October

4 October

Do we realize that something is wrong in a world where there are so many farm workers without land, so many families without a home, so many laborers without rights, so many persons whose dignity is not respected? ...So let's not be afraid to say it: we need change; we want change.

Pope Francis, Address to the Second World Meeting of Popular Movements, Bolivia, 9 July 2015

11 October (Nearest Sunday before World Day for eradication of poverty (17 Oct))

When I fed the poor, they called me a Saint. When I asked why the poor had no food, they called me a Communist.

Archbishop Hélder Câmara

Hélder Câmara was born in 1907 in north-eastern Brazil and served as Archbishop of Olinda and Recife. As a young priest he had been interested in the nationalist/ fascist movement *Integralismo*, but later rejected these ideologies becoming concerned with social justice, the plight of the poor, and availability of education in his region. He became known as the 'Bishop of the Slums' for his work with urban poor and encouraging people to seek social justice inspired by their faith. He participated in all four sessions of Vatican II, and in 1965 led 42 bishops in signing the 'Pact of the Catacombs'; where they committed to living lifestyles consistent with the poorest of their parishioners, and rejecting all signs of material wealth or social privilege. More than 500 bishops signed the pact in the following months. He became an archbishop in 1963 the same year as a military dictatorship took power in Brazil. Câmara championed human rights and democracy in the face of threats to his life, and became a 'nonperson'; the media in Brazil were not permitted to mention his name. Archbishop Câmara was nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize, however this was blocked due to pressure from Brazil's military dictatorship. In 2015 the Vatican declared *nihil obstat* (no obstacles) and his cause for canonisation is now open.

18 October

Among our tasks as witnesses to the love of Christ is that of giving a voice to the cry of the poor, so that they are not abandoned to the laws of an economy that seems at times to treat people as mere consumers.

Pope Francis, Address to Archbishop Justin Welby, 14 June 2013

25 October

We cannot remain spectators before the suffering of so many people who are worn out by hunger, violence, and injustice. ... If I do not draw near to that man, to that woman, to that child, to that old man or that old woman who is suffering, I do not draw near to God.

Pope Francis, Audience on 27 April 2016

November

1 November

I do not know how to love God except by loving the poor. I do not know how to serve God except by serving the poor.

Servant of God Dorothy Day

Dorothy Day was an American journalist who co-founded the Catholic Worker Movement, born on 8 November 1897, and died 29 November 1980. Praised by Pope Francis during his visit to the USA for her 'social activism, her passion for justice and for the cause of the oppressed, were inspired by the Gospel, her faith, and the example of the saints.' Her cause for canonisation is open.

8 November (Remembrance Sunday 2020)

Lasting peace however is not just a matter of structures and mechanisms. It rests above all on the adoption of a style of human coexistence marked by mutual acceptance and a capacity to forgive from the heart. We all need to be forgiven by others, so we must all be ready to forgive. Asking and granting forgiveness is something profoundly worthy of man; sometimes it is the only way out of situations marked by age-old and violent hatred.

Pope St. John Paul II, Message for World Day of Peace 1997

World Day of the Poor (15 November)

When a system fails to feed the poor it is time to look out for one that does.

Archbishop Frederick Keating of Liverpool (1921 – 1928)

22 November (International Day for Elimination of Violence against Women is observed on 25 November)

Mary was able to turn a stable into a home for Jesus, with poor swaddling clothes and an abundance of love. ... She is the woman whose heart was pierced by a sword and who understands all our pain. As mother of all, she is a sign of hope for peoples suffering the birth pangs of justice.

Evangelii Gaudium, para 286

29 November (World AIDS Day is observed on 1 December)

Our response to persons with AIDS must be such that we discover Christ in them and they in turn are able to encounter Christ in us. Although this response undoubtedly arises in the context of religious faith, even those without faith can and must look beyond suffering to see the human dignity and goodness of those who suffer.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Called to Compassion and Responsibility: A Response to the HIV/AIDS Crisis, 1989

December

6 December (Nearest Sunday to International Human Rights Day (8 December))

Above all, in one way or another, fight for the common good, serve the poor, be protagonists of the revolution of charity and service, capable of resisting the pathologies of consumerism and superficial individualism.

Christus Vivit, 147

International Human Rights Day recognises the signing of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights on 8th December 1948

13 December (Nearest Sunday to International Migrants Day (18 December))

The émigré Holy Family of Nazareth, fleeing into Egypt, is the archetype of every refugee family. Jesus, Mary and Joseph, living in exile in Egypt to escape the fury of an evil king, are, for all times and all places, the models and protectors of every migrant, alien and refugee of whatever kind who, whether compelled by fear of persecution or by want, is forced to leave his native land, his beloved parents and relatives, his close friends, and to seek a foreign soil.

Pope Pius XII, Exsul Familia Nazarethana

20 December

God's heart has a special place for the poor, so much so that he himself "became poor". The entire history of our redemption is marked by the presence of the poor. Salvation came to us from the "yes" uttered by a lowly maiden from a small town on the fringes of a great empire.

Evangelii Gaudium, para. 197

27 December (Nearest Sunday to World Day of Prayer for Peace (1 January))

Peace is not the product of terror or fear. Peace is not the silence of cemeteries. Peace is not the silent result of violent repression. Peace is the generous, tranquil contribution of all to the good of all. Peace is dynamism. Peace is generosity. It is right and it is duty.

Saint Óscar Romero, Bishop and Martyr