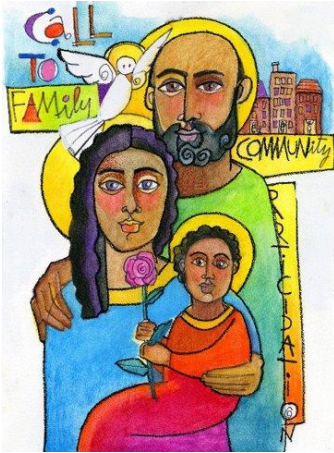


Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching:

USCCB: Call to Family, Community and Participation



The person is not only sacred but also social. How we organize our society—in economics and politics, in law and policy—directly affects human dignity and the capacity of individuals to grow in community. Marriage and the family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Scriptural References:

- [Genesis 4:8-15](#) I am my brother's and sister's keeper.
- [Micah 6:6-8](#): Act justly, love kindness, walk humbly with God.
- [John 15:12-17](#) This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you.
- [Romans 12:4-8](#) We are one body, individually members of one another.
- [James 2:14-17](#) Our faith is dead if we ignore others in need.
- [1 Peter 4:8-11](#) Serve one another with the gifts you have received.

Family

“The existence of each individual is deeply tied to that of others: life is not simply time that passes; life is a time for interactions.” (Pope Francis, *Brothers and Sisters to Us* [[Fratelli Tutti](#)], no. 66)

“Human beings are so made that they cannot live, develop and find fulfillment except ‘in the sincere gift of self to others.’ Nor can they fully know themselves apart from an encounter with other persons: ‘I communicate effectively with myself only insofar as I communicate with others.’ No one can experience the true beauty of life without relating to others, without having real faces to love. This is part of the mystery of authentic human existence. ‘Life exists where there is bonding, communion, fraternity; and life is stronger than death when it is built on true relationships and bonds of fidelity. On the contrary, there is no life when we claim to be self-sufficient and live as islands: in these attitudes, death prevails.’” (Pope Francis, *On Fraternity and Social Friendship* [[Fratelli Tutti](#)], no. 87)

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"Insofar as it is a 'small- scale Church,' the Christian family is called upon, like the 'large-scale Church,' to be a sign of unity for the world and in this way to exercise its prophetic role by bearing witness to the Kingdom and peace of Christ, towards which the whole world is journeying. Christian families can do this through their educational activity-that is to say by presenting to their children a model of life based on the values of truth, freedom, justice and love-both through active and responsible involvement in the authentically human growth of society and its institutions, and by supporting in various ways the associations specifically devoted to international issues." (St. John Paul II, *The Family in the Modern World* [*Familiaris Consortio*], no. 48)

Community/Participation

"Local individuals and groups can make a real difference. They are able to instill a greater sense of responsibility, a strong sense of community, a readiness to protect others, a spirit of creativity and a deep love for the land. . . . Social problems must be addressed by community networks and not simply by the sum of individual good deeds." (Pope Francis, *On Care for Our Common Home* [*Laudato Si'*], nos. 179, 219)

"People in every nation enhance the social dimension of their lives by acting as committed and responsible citizens, not as a mob swayed by the powers that be. Let us not forget that 'responsible citizenship is a virtue, and participation in political life is a moral obligation.'" (Pope Francis, *The Joy of the Gospel* [*Evangelii Gaudium*], no. 220, quoting United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship*, Nov. 2007, no. 13)

"In order that the right to development may be fulfilled by action: (a) people should not be hindered from attaining development in accordance with their own culture; (b) through mutual cooperation, all peoples should be able to become the principal architects of their own economic and social development." (World Synod of Catholic Bishops, *Justice in the World* [*Justica in Mundo*], no. 71)

For the entire publication of Call to Family, Community and Participation:
<https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/call-to-family-community-and-participation>

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