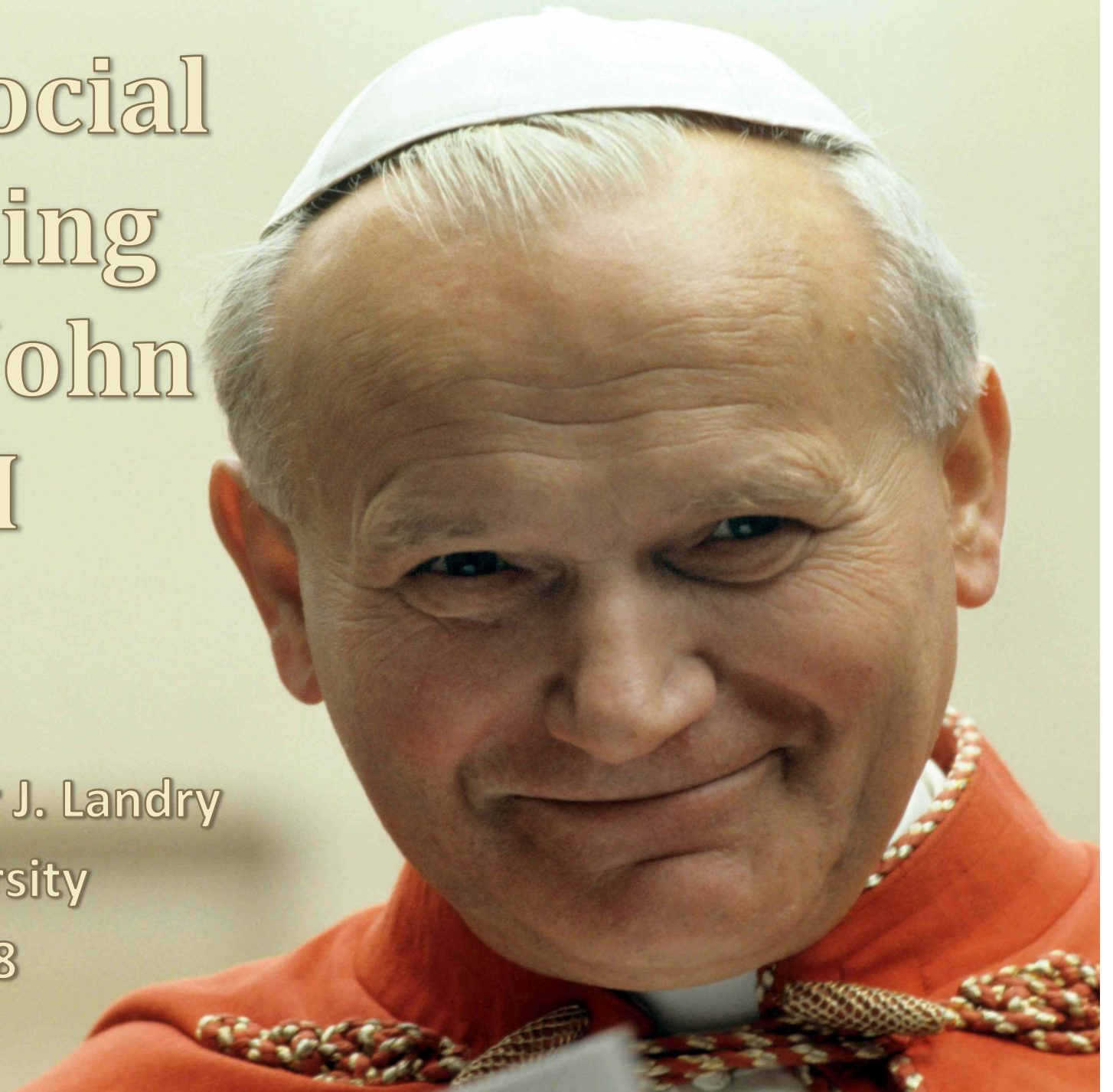


# The Social Teaching of St. John Paul II

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# Preceding History

To understand the quantum leap of John Paul II's social teaching, we need to know a little of what preceded it:

- *Rerum Novarum* (Leo XIII, 1891)
- *Quadragesimo Anno* (Pius XI, 1931)
- *Mater et Magistra* (Pope John XXIII, 1961)
- *Gaudium et Spes* (Vatican II, 1965)
- *Popolorum Progressio* (Paul VI, 1967)



# Scope of Catholic Social Teaching

The Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Catholic Church (published in 2004 and authorized by John Paul II) lists several themes of the Church's social teaching:

- Marriage and Family
- Human Work (the dignity of work, right to work, rights of workers, solidarity)
- Economic Life (morality and the economy, private initiative and business initiative)
- Political Community (authority, democratic system, civil society, interaction with religious communities)
- International Community (fundamental rules, organization, cooperation for development)
- The Environment
- Peace (fruit of justice and love; it's opposite is war)

We will focus above all on “economic subjects” which fundamentally involve human work, economic life, the political community as well as culture.



# Deeper Anthropological & Biblical Re-Readings of CST

- John Paul II's Christological theological anthropology
- *Redemptor Hominis* (1979) as the program for his pontificate and his social teaching.
- Antecedents in *Gaudium et Spes*.
  - Christ fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear (GS 22):
  - Man cannot discover himself except in the sincere gift of self (GS 24)



# Deeper Anthropological & Biblical Re-Readings of CST

- Applications of this theological anthropology to other areas of his pontificate
  - Human Sexuality
  - God's Mercy
  - Dignity of Women
  - Family
  - Moral Theology
  - Faith and Reason
  - Protection of Human Life
  - Ecumenism
  - Art
  - Priestly Formation and Priestly Life
  - Human Suffering



# Deeper Anthropological & Biblical Re-Readings of CST

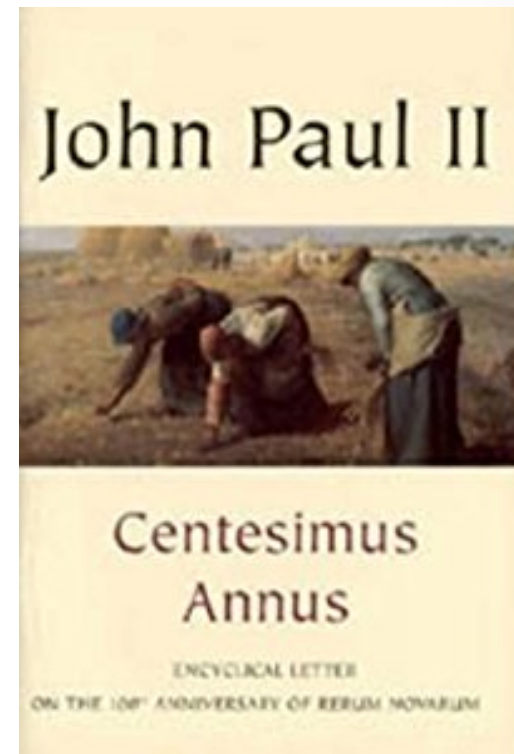
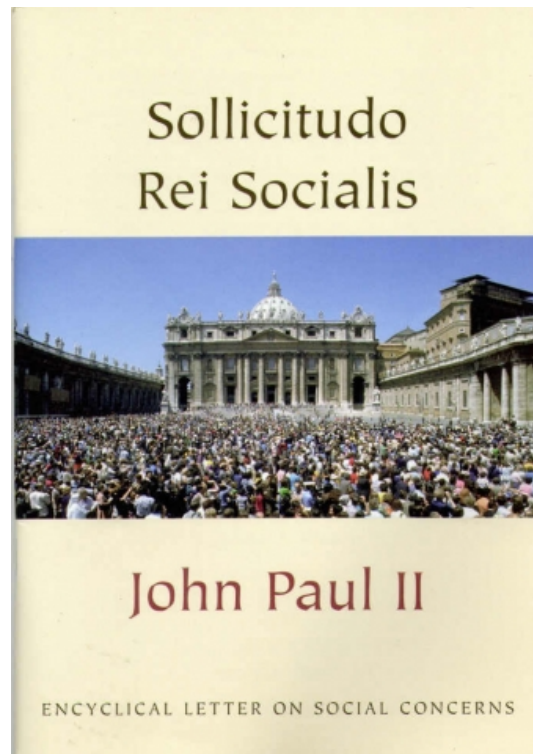
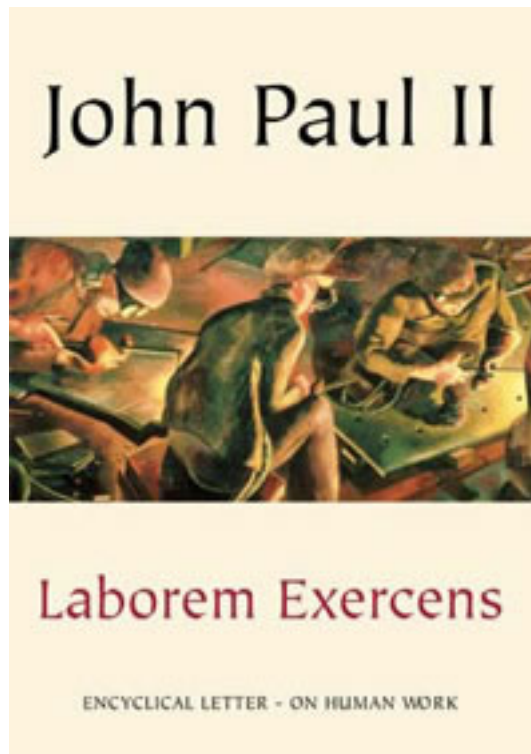
- Applications of this theological anthropology within his three major social encyclicals.
  - Laborem Exercens (1981)
  - Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987)
  - Centesimus Annus (1991)
- The Compendium shows how Pope John Paul II provided the theological-moral nature for the Church's social teaching.
  - His social teaching did not sound like mere public policy announcements
  - Rather it seemed very much like an application of the Gospel





# John Paul II's Three Social Encyclicals

- Laborem Exercens (1981)
- Sollicitudo Rei Socialis (1987)
- Centesimus Annus (1991)





# Laborem Exercens

- Background
- Summary of Core Teachings
  - Work is a fundamental dimension of man's life on earth
  - The primary basis for the value of work is man himself
  - Jesus, the way of the Church, who fully reveals man to himself, reveals the fundamental redemptive meaning of human work.
  - Men and women cannot be treated as merchandise or "objects" but are "subjects" at the work place. Otherwise their work becomes alienating. The Primacy of labor over capital.





# Sollicitudo Rei Socialis

- Background
- Summary of Core Teachings
  - Expansion of the “subjectivity” of work, found in *Laborem exercens*, to all citizens and members of organizations
  - Globalization, unrestricted by ethical principles, will wreak havoc on third world peoples.
  - A theologically grounded theory of human development that takes economics seriously but emphasizes the primary of the spiritual.
  - Conversion, particularly on the part of the powerful, is needed.
  - Conversion is also necessary on the part of developing countries, to eliminate corruption, dictatorial and authoritarian forms of government.



# Centesimus Annus

- Background
- Summary of Core Teachings
  - The fall of communism was above all because of a distorted anthropology that tried to understand man exclusively at the level of material desires while excluding spiritual values.
  - The Free Economy and the distinction between “good” and “bad” capitalism (CA 42)
  - The free and virtuous society is a network or complex of three parts:
    - a democratic political community
    - a free economy and
    - a vibrant, public moral culture.



# Centesimus Annus

- Summary of Core Teachings
  - Freedom is intrinsically tied to moral truth, and hence truth and training in authentic freedom are essential for Democracy.
  - Poverty is essentially a problem of exclusion
  - There are some important goods that cannot be satisfied by market forces.
  - A need for the development of a true economic personalism (CA 30-43)
    - Principle cause of wealth is the person and his ideas
    - The person works within a community
    - Work involves a practical realism
    - Man's vulnerability to sin must not be forgotten



# Further Reading

- *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2004.
- *The Social Agenda: A Collection of Magisterial Texts*, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, 2000.
- Pope St. John Paul II
  - *Centesimus Annus*, 1991
  - *Laborem Exercens*, 1981
  - *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 1987
- Pope Benedict XVI
  - *Deus Caritas Est*, 2005 (19-42)
  - *Caritas in Veritate*, 2009.
  - Inaugural Session of the Fifth General Conference of CELAM, part IV, “Social and Political Problems”
- Pope Francis
  - *Evangelii Gaudium*, 2013 (176-258)
  - *Laudato Si'*, 2015