

Journal of Catholic Legal Studies

Volume 50
Number 1 *Volume 50, 2011, Numbers 1&2*

Article 5

March 2017

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Recommended Citation

Most Rev. Stephen E. Blaire, Most Rev. John Michael Botean, Most Rev. R. Daniel Conlon, Most Rev. Nicholas DiMarzio, Most Rev. Ronald Paul Herzog, and Most Rev. Joseph A. Pepe (2011) "A Conversation with Catholic Bishops and Scholars Regarding the Theology of Work and the Dignity of Workers: A Panel Discussion," *Journal of Catholic Legal Studies*: Vol. 50 : No. 1 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://scholarship.law.stjohns.edu/jcls/vol50/iss1/5>

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**A CONVERSATION WITH CATHOLIC
BISHOPS AND SCHOLARS REGARDING
THE THEOLOGY OF WORK AND THE
DIGNITY OF WORKERS:
A PANEL DISCUSSION**

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MODERATED BY: MOST REV. JOHN MICHAEL BOTEAN

EDITOR'S NOTE: The panel introduction by Professor David L. Gregory was preceded by brief comments from Dean Michael Simons. The panel was moderated by Most Rev. John Michael Botean.

SIMONS: Good morning. Most Reverend Bishops, conference guests, my name is Michael Simons. I am the Dean here at St. John's University School of Law, and it is my pleasure to welcome you to this Conference, "The Theology of Work and the Dignity of Workers."

What this Conference does is bring together people from a variety of different disciplines and perspectives who have something to say to each other about this timely and timeless topic.

The Conference is the work of the Center for Labor and Employment Law here at St. John's, under the wonderful leadership of my friend, Professor David Gregory; and before we turn it over to the

panelists, it is my pleasure to introduce Professor Gregory, the Dorothy Day Professor of Law here at St. John's.

Thank you.

GREGORY: Thank you, Dean. I will be brief. This Conference, in many ways, is a reminder to think back to the great teachers we have had over the years. Bishops are teachers—some come at the subject pastorally; others may take a more formal, academic approach. This panel reflects the heterogeneity of the Church in the United States. Some bishops are from major population centers; others are from rural areas. Each one is familiar with the financial and psychological devastation that pervasive unemployment has wrought on persons in his diocese.

But this panel is also an opportunity to celebrate the teachings of Catholic theology, which have much to say about our current economic and labor crises. I turn things over to our moderator, from Canton, Ohio, Bishop Botean. Thank you very much.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Thank you, Dr. Gregory, Brother Bishops. It is the oddest thing in the world that I should be here, being neither an academic nor a lawyer. But I *am* a pastor, a preacher, and it is on that basis that we have been asked to be here today—as pastors and preachers in the Church.

That nationwide unemployment and labor struggles are the backdrop for this Conference, I think, attests either to Dr. Gregory's incredible perspicacity or the movement of the Holy Spirit—that is, that this Conference should be happening at precisely this moment in American history. As a matter of fact, just Wednesday Bishop Conlon and

I were at a meeting at the Catholic conference in Ohio, where we heard from political leadership at meetings with other legislative advocacy faith groups.

And so, first, we had a couple of very nervous Democrats show up, who spoke to us for a little while and answered a few questions. And then we had some not so very nervous Republicans show up, a larger group. And then Governor John Kasich also showed up and did more of the preaching for that particular group. And so, I had a chance to reflect on just exactly what we were doing: meeting with political leadership there as a group of bishops. Of course, we have interests on behalf of our people, and on behalf of the world, and on behalf of the rights and priorities and prerogatives of God for the society that we live in—and that is the basis for our meeting with political leadership.

Then I ran into a quote that goes back to Peter Maurin, from the *Easy Essays*, and I thought I would start with a little bit of that. It is in the section on Catholic radicalism and it is entitled, *A Second Open Letter to Father Lord, S.J.*¹ Those of you who are familiar with the writings of Peter Maurin will recognize this title:

Dear Father:

There is a lot of talk today about the social value of Fascism.

But Fascism is only a stopgap between capitalism and Bolshevism.

Fascist dictatorship is a halfway house between the rugged individualism of capitalism and the rugged collectivism of Bolshevism.

¹ PETER MAURIN, *A Second Open Letter to Father Lord, S.J.*, in *CATHOLIC RADICALISM: PHRASED ESSAYS FOR THE GREEN REVOLUTION* 15, 15 (1st ed. 1949).

There is no essential difference between Fascist dictatorship and Bolshevik dictatorship.

The trouble with the world today is too much dictatorship and too little leadership.

Leadership cannot be found among politicians, businessmen and college professors.

The appointed leaders of mankind are the Catholic Bishops.

Catholic Bishops have ceased to lead because Catholic laymen and women do not consider the Bishops as their leaders in political and economic matters.

Catholic laymen and women look up to the Bishops in spiritual matters and look up to politicians and business men in political and economic matters.

Catholic laymen and women commit the great modern error of separating the spiritual from the material.

This great modern error, known under the name of secularism, is called a "modern plague" by Pope Pius XI.

You, who are a born agitator and a theologian, should bring a thorough understanding between Bishops, clergy, and lay people.

From that understanding would spring a form of Catholic Action that would be dynamic in character.

We are threatened with dynamic Bolshevik action because we are sorely lacking in dynamic Catholic Action.

[Signed,] Peter Maurin.²

In another example of hitting the nail—to my mind—on the head very precisely, Peter Maurin has identified where, as pastors and preachers in a world that values less and less either the pastoral

² *Id.*

activity or preaching activity of the Church, in which the Church seems to have less and less of a voice, theology is competing with ideology.

There is a fundamental difference between the two. On the one hand, ideology calls the concrete abstract; and it starts with abstractions and proceeds, I think, to further abstractions, demanding that the world fit into its principles. Theology, on the other hand, starts with observation and an open heart, in an atmosphere of reverence, to ascertain the activity and the principles that come from God's activity in the context of where God manifests God's Self, which is in the people, at least according to Matthew 25.³

Losing track of humans and their labor in the pursuit of the good life for oneself and for one's family is, I think, at the heart of a lot of what is going on. We forget with a kind of collective amnesia that every chair we sit on, every microphone we speak through, every pencil that we push on a piece of paper, every inch of every road that we travel on, is the result of some human being's labor.

Thousands of people are giving their precious and very limited lives' time in all of it, virtually all of it, so that we can have the lights on and hold this conference today; and yet, somehow, in our social mind we find it not only convenient, but the right thing to do, to prescind from those individual lives—those concrete human lives, men and women giving their lives' time for the world we live in.

³ See *Matthew* 25:31–46 (New Revised Standard) (“When the son of Man comes in his glory, . . . [He] will say . . . [F]or I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me.’ . . . ‘Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.’”).

What we are going to be doing today, as pastors and preachers, is engage in a conversation with one another and with you to see what it is that we ought to be doing, as the Church specifically. Peter Maurin says, rather extraordinarily, that Catholic bishops are supposed to be the leadership of all humanity;⁴ which is a sort of odd thing to say unless the claims of the Catholic Church, the truth claims, have anything to do with the reality of God, and leadership has anything to do with that truth. Leadership, as Maurin says, is sorely lacking.

Just before we met with the political leadership of the State of Ohio, the Ohio bishops, while what is called "Senate Bill 5," was being debated in the legislature—or probably not really debated—we had issued what I felt was a very mild, not very compelling, but very clear, mild statement of Catholic social teaching with regard to collective bargaining. And because nobody pays any attention to that in my diocese, I did not have the same experience as the other bishops from Ohio who—apparently, many of them—got scores of phone calls, letters, and complaints.

I observed, at the time, "Who would have thought that nineteenth-century teaching would be so cutting edge?" And yet it was. It aroused the ire—as well as the admiration—of people on both sides of the issue of collective bargaining in particular. Collective bargaining is not a political right as much as it is a reflection of the concreteness of labor: that labor is actual, individual lives, working collectively to accomplish something.

In the beginning, God created. And therein lies the core of human identity from the point of view of the theology of work and labor.

⁴ MAURIN, *supra* note 1.

That will do for my introduction. I would like to ask all the bishops to speak in turn. Everybody has some kind of presentation to give, and after those presentations we will talk amongst ourselves a little bit and then open it up to “Q and A.”

Bishop Blaire?

MOST REV. BLAIRE: Good morning, I am Bishop Stephen Blaire from the Diocese of Stockton in California, which is in the Central Valley, primarily in an area of agriculture and small cities.

I think it is appropriate that we are meeting today on the Feast of St. Joseph: St. Joseph, the Patron of the Universal Church and St. Joseph, the Patron of Workers.

I would like to begin by going back to the Second Vatican Council, to the document *Gaudium et Spes*, where the bishops declared that the Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and interpreting them in the light of the Gospel.⁵

I think that gives us the basis for understanding why we have Catholic social teaching. Our social doctrine is rooted in Apostolic teaching and represents a long tradition in the history of the Church. It came to be formulated in a very particular way, beginning with Leo XIII in the nineteenth century with *Rerum Novarum*: We as a Church look at signs of the times, look at the world in which we find ourselves, and apply the Gospel to the situations we encounter there.⁶

⁵ See PAUL VI, PASTORAL CONSTITUTION *GAUDIUM ET SPES* ¶ 4 (1965) [hereinafter *GAUDIUM ET SPES*].

⁶ See LEO XIII, ENCYCLICAL LETTER *RERUM NOVARUM* ¶ 2 (1891) (“[A]s on former occasions . . . We have addressed you in the interests of the Church and of the common weal, and have issued letters bearing on political power, human

When you read the Church's social teaching, you will always see an introduction that presents it in light of the Gospel; *that* is from where we draw our light as we recite our teaching. So in these well-over one-hundred years since *Rerum Novarum*, and the many subsequent encyclicals on social issues, we have elaborated a highly developed social doctrine that continues to speak to the situation in which we find the world, right up to the latest encyclical letter, *Charity in Truth*, of Pope Benedict XVI.⁷

One statement the Holy Father makes in the encyclical is that the economy—and that is, of course, what we are all focused on at this time—needs ethics in order to function correctly: not any ethics whatsoever, but an ethics that is people centered.⁸ Our social teaching is exactly that: It is people centered, centered on the dignity of the human person and centered on the worth of the human person. In so many of the presentations in this Conference, that theme predominated in the words of the speakers. It is certainly the most essential component in our social teaching.

In terms of the signs of the times—what I would like to do in my portion of the presentation is to lay out what I see as some of these signs of the times for today, and why we, as a Church, need to respond to them. These are some of the signs of the times in terms of the economy and labor and work and so forth:

In terms of the economic crisis, we face some very serious moral and human dimensions. We have so

liberty, . . . and like matters, so have We thought it expedient now to speak on the condition of the working classes.”)

⁷ See generally BENEDICT XVI, ENCYCLICAL LETTER *CARITAS IN VERITATE* (2009) [hereinafter *CARITAS IN VERITATE*].

⁸ See *id.* ¶¶ 35–37.

many people who are out of work. We have so many people who have lost their homes. We have more and more children in this country who are hungry.

We have examples now in the lineup for food in our Catholic charities: people getting in line who not so long ago were the people giving out the food. I know a case in our diocese—this was actually back at the time of the Enron situation—where an elderly woman lost her whole pension through what happened at Enron.

So there are numerous moral and human dimensions. I look again at my diocese, which has nineteen percent unemployment and one of the highest foreclosure rates in the country and was declared by *Forbes* magazine as the most miserable city in the country.

I see crime increasing. That goes along with the facts that people are out of work and there is not enough money. Our gang problems continue to explode. Our public education system is in great difficulty: Less than fifty percent of the kids from our local public school graduate. The moral and human dimensions of the economic crisis are all interrelated.

The pervasive unemployment continues to have devastating effects, but there are also situations pertaining to *work* that are changing dramatically. People who find themselves out of work may realize that the same job they worked at is no longer going to be available. Things are changing dramatically, and people may not be prepared or trained to enter into some of the new areas of work that are now available.

We look today at labor-management relations: The question, the whole question, of collective bargaining is being raised. The Church in its social doctrine has repeated many, many times the importance of workers being able to cooperate with management, and being able to participate in the decisions that affect them. The tool, of course, is collective bargaining.

We hear all kinds of questions about private unions and public-sector unions and the Church. I could not find any distinction as far as the Church's teaching in this regard—between public and private bargaining rights. Nevertheless, in the public sector there are particular issues, unique issues, that today have to be addressed. Union membership is at an all-time low.

The whole question of the common good requires every entity today to examine its conscience. Unions have to look and examine themselves in regards to how are they working for the common good. Government has to examine itself. Even the Church has to do so: We have to continually look at how we are being faithful in our institutional structure, being faithful to Christ.

There was some prior discussion at this Conference about the common good and how difficult it is to define. But there is a pretty good description in Benedict's encyclical—if you would just allow me to read his description, because I think it will help us to understand this common good to which every entity needs to commit.

Benedict says,

Besides the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of "all of us[,] made up of individuals, families and

intermediate groups who together constitute society. It is a good that is sought not for its own sake, but for the people who belong to the social community and who can only really and effectively pursue their good within it. To desire the *common good* and strive towards it *is a requirement of justice and charity*.⁹

We find many tensions in our society today between what people think is their own, individual, private good and a lack of consideration for the common good. And yet, all entities of society have to look to the common good. We have even had difficult issues with labor in our own Catholic institutions. Sometimes, some of our institutions have actively opposed unions and so it has been necessary to explore that issue.

We know today that, in the area of work, oftentimes people are not given full-time jobs or are offered fewer hours to avoid having to provide benefits. We know the whole question of benefits sometimes being on the line, which is a question of security. These are all signs of the times that we, as a Church, in our social teaching, can address and need to address.

It is the role of the Church, I believe, to present our teaching, our principles. It is not the role of the Church to find all the technical solutions. That area of responsibility belongs to government. It belongs to the unions. It belongs to various entities; but I believe it is our role to lift up these principles in light of the Gospel, to offer *that* kind of leadership.

⁹ *Id.* ¶ 7.

I believe it is our goal to lift up the importance of work and the place of work and the importance of decent wages; and that it is our *role* to lift up the importance of the worker and the conditions of justice and the rights of workers—especially their right to organize themselves and to have a decent salary.

I do think that there has been a contribution made in the area of practical applications and social teaching in which our own Catholic institutions have had to struggle with issues of labor. And there has been some very good work done respecting the just rights of workers, bringing together Church institutional leaders, labor, representatives of the political leadership, and bishops. And they have given some good thought to how campaigns should be carried out, to what is appropriate and right and just.¹⁰

Interesting that we are finding some of the same teachings of the Church, as Bishop Botean said, under discussion today that have been around for a hundred years; we have to continue to pull out of our tradition principles which speak to today. The Bishop's own statement on the economy lifted up a very, very important principle: The economy is for

¹⁰ See UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Respecting the Just Rights of Workers: Guidance and Options for Catholic Health Care and Unions 3* (2009) (“[T]he Domestic Policy Committee of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (‘USCCB’), invited the leaders of Catholic Health Care and the labor movement [including SEIU and AFL-CIO representatives] to join in . . . dialogue over the requirements of Catholic social teaching in shaping a just and fair workplace within Catholic Health Care.”); see also ASS’N OF DIOCESAN SOC. ACTION DIRS., *THE ROUNDTABLE: STANDARDS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR DIOCESAN SOCIAL ACTION OFFICES & DIRECTORS* (2010), available at <http://catholicroundtable.org/publications/standardsexpectations/StandardsExpectations2010.pdf> (detailing the need for dioceses to plan, and offering strategies to implement, activities that promote social justice, including teaching principles of Catholic social justice to parishioners; Bishops’ actively participating in formulating policy in line with Catholic social teaching; and sponsoring legislative advocacy efforts at the local, state, and federal levels).

people. We are not there for the sake of the market. The market is there for the sake of people, for the common good.

This is at the very heart of Catholic social teaching: always what is right and just and good for people. Let me conclude my little section. If you do not mind, I am going to read from what I think is a rather prophetic statement of Pope Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate*. It speaks very much to today's situation, and this is what he says:

[B]udgetary policies, with cuts in social spending often made under pressure from international financial institutions, can leave citizens powerless in the face of old and new risks; such powerlessness is increased by the lack of effective protection on the part of workers' associations. Through the combination of social and economic change, *trade union organizations* experience greater difficulty in carrying out their task of representing the interests of workers, partly because Governments, for reasons of economic utility, often limit the freedom or the negotiating capacity of labour unions. Hence traditional networks of solidarity have more and more obstacles to overcome. The repeated calls issued within the Church's social doctrine, beginning with *Rerum Novarum*, for the promotion of workers' associations that can defend their rights must therefore be honoured today even more than in the past, as a prompt and far-sighted response to the urgent need for new forms of cooperation at the international level, as well as the local level.¹¹

¹¹ See *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, *supra* note 7, ¶ 25.

So today, the teaching of the Church and the action of the Church is very much needed in terms of reinforcing the dignity of work and the rights of workers.

Thank you.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Thank you. Bishop Conlon?

MOST REV. CONLON: Thank you, good morning.

I am Bishop Daniel Conlon from the Diocese of Steubenville. It's a little place—it's in Ohio, actually, only about forty miles from Pittsburgh, where Professor Gregory mentioned is the place that Cardinal DiNardo came from. But I always like to say, Cardinal DiNardo was born and then reborn in Jesus Christ in Steubenville—his family only *later* moved to Pittsburgh.

We are very much part of the Rust Belt in Steubenville. Pittsburgh has seemed to scrape away a lot of its rust and repainted and gone on, but we are just looking at rust. On the other hand, we seem to be in marvelous shape compared to Stockton—our unemployment is only thirteen percent. We do have a challenging situation, but wonderful people—wonderful, Catholic people, and very hardworking people, a lot of blue-collar people.

I might be going in a very different direction from Bishop Blaire, and even specifically with regard to the document that I would like to reference. He spoke about Pope Benedict's latest encyclical. I would like to make reference to the Church's earliest document—at least, what we think of as the earliest document: the Book of Genesis.

We often think that work is part of Adam's punishment for Original Sin.¹² When my alarm clock goes off, I am inclined to think in that direction. I am not a morning person—I would like to think that nothing serious should happen before noon. So, here we are, at nine fifteen, and I am giving a talk before you fine people.

But, in point of fact, Genesis does not present work as part of the punishment for Original Sin. So I would like to present a few thoughts with regard to the relationship of work to the whole human person, and specifically its relationship to the person and our spiritual life. I am indebted to some extent for these comments to Dr. Scott Hahn, who is a professor at Franciscan University of Steubenville.

When you stop and think about it, Genesis says that God worked. Now, of course, when God worked, that is slightly different than for us to work. But God worked in the creation of the world, and then God rested.¹³ His creation of the world was an act of love and an act that gave life.

God commanded that Adam would also work; specifically, to till the earth and to care for the Garden in which Adam and Eve lived.¹⁴ So, even before Original Sin, there was work to be done, but it was work that gave pleasure and satisfaction to Adam and Eve. It was work that was integral to their life.

¹² See, e.g., *Genesis* 3:17–19 (New Revised Standard) (“And to the man [God] said, ‘Because you have . . . eaten of the tree about which I commanded you, “You shall not eat of it[.]”’ cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life By the sweat of your face you shall eat bread until you return to the ground”).

¹³ See *Genesis* 1–2.

¹⁴ See *Genesis* 2:15.

Adam and Eve were not placed in the Garden simply to be on permanent vacation. Work became drudgery and dangerous and contentious only after Original Sin¹⁵; but work in itself was something constructive, something given as a right prior to that.

In a very real way, actually, working is part of the way in which we reflect the fact that we are made in the image of God, because God works. God works to create and God works especially in redemption, in the sending of his son Jesus Christ, which work Jesus reflected back in death and resurrection. Jesus in the Incarnation also worked: worked as a carpenter, worked as a preacher, worked as a healer. He worked to accomplish reconciliation—among humans, and between humans and God. So work is part of God's Nature. And so when we work, we are simply reflecting the image of God.

Now, when God commanded Adam to till the Garden and to keep it, the book of Genesis uses two Hebrew words: *avodah* and *shamar*.¹⁶ When these words are used together in other places in the Old Testament, they are used to describe the ministerial duties of the Levites, the priestly ministers.

The Levites had work to do. You think we priests have it pretty easy, but *avodah*, in addition to meaning "manual labor," also meant other forms of service, including leading worship. So, those who were responsible for conducting the sacrifices in the temple in Jerusalem were described as being involved in *avodah*; and, to be perfectly honest, I suspect that performing those animal sacrifices in

¹⁵ See *Genesis* 3:17–19.

¹⁶ See generally SCOTT HAHN, *ORDINARY WORK, EXTRAORDINARY GRACE: MY SPIRITUAL JOURNEY IN OPUS DEI* (2006).

the Temple would have been significantly more physically demanding than even a two-hour liturgy in the Catholic Church, even in the Eastern tradition.

Shamar—to keep, to protect—also makes an easy transition, from protecting the Garden of Eden to protecting the sanctuary and the sacred furnishings. My point here is that even in this language of the Old Testament, what was expected of Adam at the very beginning was later transferred to those who were responsible for the cult, who were responsible for, specifically, the sacred acts of the people of God; so that we have this relationship, then, between the workday and the Sabbath. The seven-day week—six days of work and one day of rest—is not intended, then, to divide our lives, but simply to highlight different aspects of life.

This language—*avodah* and *shamar*—suggests that there is a harmony between serving God in the work that we do and serving God in our worship. So, really, Monday through Saturday, or Friday, or for a lot of people these days working ten-hour shifts and so forth—whatever we do—these words make evident that we are really serving God in our work. And our day of rest, a day that we devote more directly to God through worship, is the culmination of the work we have done.

To further make this point, the early Christians chose the word “liturgy” for their worship—their divine service—from the secular vocabulary of the day.¹⁷ In everyday use that word meant something

¹⁷ See *id.* at 293. In Ancient Greek—the lingua franca of the Mediterranean in the first century C.E.—before the terms were adopted by the early Christians, λειτουργός (pronounced “leitourgós”) meant public officer, and λειτουργία (“leitourgia”), now referred to as “liturgy,” meant the performance of public service.

like public service. I don't know if the Roman Senate had any consideration of collective bargaining for their public employees, but *it did* have to do with people who worked for the State and who did public work.

So, again, we find the idea that what the Church does when it comes to worship, God is, in some sense, carrying out duty, responsibility; so that work, then, is the way we serve God, whether it is collecting the garbage or teaching in a law school. Whatever the occupation is—being a nurse in a hospital, or whether that service is coming and celebrating Mass in Church—it is all part of service to God.

Acknowledging this continuity between life and work is important, because in our society today we don't have much integrity of life. Life tends to get dissected and dichotomized.

I was fortunate last night to have supper in Brooklyn with a young couple with two small children. The husband is a friend of a family from my earlier life—I have tried to keep up with them—and we were talking about work.

The husband is a struggling architect here in New York. The wife has now taken off of work because of the two children, and they are trying to figure out how to manage their life with only one income. They rent an apartment in Brooklyn and they are trying to understand how to make all of this work out. So we had this conversation about work, marriage, family life, and God; and I believe that this whole idea that all of life is service to God, all of life is tilling and keeping as it was for Adam, is important. The Church has this vision to offer:

that all of life is really service to God; and work is a way of integrating the disparate things we do—giving a sense of wholeness and unity to life.

My final point, simply, is that when we talk about the common priesthood, or the priesthood of the faithful, it really is pre-figured in Adam's charge to till and care for Paradise. And as God's creatures, we too are called—all of us—to make this sacred offering of our work, seven days a week.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Thank you, Bishop Conlon. Bishop DiMarzio?

MOST REV. DIMARZIO: The preceding panelists did a lot of work for me, so that is good. But I want to start with the whole idea again, as Bishop Conlon just said, that work is not a curse, it is a blessing. We have to see work in a positive way and, unfortunately, workers have kind of denigrated this in our society.

People do not see their individual labor as contributing to the overall common good. You work as much as you have to, try to earn as much as you can, and work as little as you can in some ways; and probably that is a part of the society in which we live.

But to see the positive understanding of work is probably the challenge before us: to see it in Christian terms, as a true blessing and also, as was just explained, really as a part of our spirituality. Work is something we need to integrate into our spiritual lives.

Perhaps one of the greatest proponents of the theology work was St. Josemaría Escrivá, the Founder of Opus Dei. He said some wonderful

things about work and he integrated them into his whole founding of a group that sees ordinary, daily work as a path to sanctification.

He said,

You can be sure that it is through the circumstances of ordinary life, ordained or permitted by the infinite wisdom of divine Providence, that we come close to God. But we shall not attain our goal if we do not strive to finish our work well; if we do not sustain the effort we put in when we began our work with human and supernatural zeal; if we do not carry out our work as well as the best do and, if possible, even better than the best.¹⁸

Literally, we have to look at work in a more positive way.

I now want to explore work as the key to the social question, and I will quote John Paul II in his encyclical *Laborem Exercens*—a key document in understanding work.

Let us not forget that John Paul II was a worker. In the Second World War, he had to perform forced labor in Nazi-occupied Poland. Yet he understood work in a different, more positive way, than many understand it.

He worked. He actually worked. He worked like Jesus worked. Obviously, for thirty years before his public ministry, Jesus worked. He worked as a carpenter. He was taught that trade by Joseph, whose Feast Day we celebrate today. So work became something important and sacred in the life of Jesus and also in John Paul's life. As he theologized on it, and spoke about it, John Paul II

¹⁸ JOSEMARÍA ESCRIVÁ, Working for God, Homily (Feb. 6 1960), in FRIENDS OF GOD, 72, 80 (2002).

said something truly important. He said, “[H]uman work is . . . probably *the essential key*, to the whole social question”¹⁹

Work is the key to the social question. What is the social question? I think Bishop Blaire said it when he discussed work, and the totality of life, as service to God. And the social question is how we come to understand the common good. How can we make the world more human? How can we make work more human so that it is not drudgery, so that it is not something that we look down upon but rather something that builds the world up?

With that as a beginning, I would like to take my discussion to a very practical level, one that is kind of my avocation: the immigration question. I truly think that the immigration “problem” today—as understood from both the legal and what we might call the “undocumented” side—is a question of work, work whose value, purpose, and proper meaning has been misunderstood.

In *Laborem Exercens*, however, John Paul II enunciates what he calls the “Gospel of Work,”²⁰ which remedies this misunderstanding. The encyclical prioritizes labor over capital—discusses “*the primacy of man over things*”; and it outlines the theme that humanity is the subject rather than the object of work.²¹ It states, in other words, that *humanity* produces *things* for humanity’s greater good; but the labor humanity expends and the things that labor produces are good only insofar as they benefit humanity as a whole.²² The capitalistic and Marxist understanding that man is

¹⁹ JOHN PAUL II, ENCYCLICAL LETTER *LABOREM EXERCENS* ¶ 3 (1981) [hereinafter *LABOREM EXERCENS*].

²⁰ *Id.* ¶ 6.

²¹ *Id.* ¶ 4, 12.

²² *See id.* ¶ 12.

not good in himself, but is only good when he works to produce something, stands in direct opposition to this Gospel of Work.²³

Rather, work is a part of man's vocation. Work in itself is something good, and whatever man does is good because of his work. It is not the other way around—that what is produced is good; rather, the work in itself is good.²⁴

Clearly, I think that is what we misunderstand in our present-day immigration question. Looking at the issue, we recognize why people are here in our society.

I always say this—especially about undocumented labor—“People are working.” They are here to work. We do not have the problem that undocumented immigrants are camped out here in Flushing Meadows Park and not working. They are all living in houses; they all have work and they all have jobs. They may have documents that are false to allow them to have that job, but the problem of immigration—if we want to see it as a problem—is in the workplace; it is not at the border. The border only allows people to come in, but work is why people stay. Through it they earn a living and, more importantly, contribute to our society.

²³ John Paul II expresses this opposition by quoting *GAUDIUM ET SPES*: “Just as human activity proceeds from man, so it is ordered towards man. For when a man works he not only alters things and society, he develops himself as well.” *Id.* ¶ 26 (quoting *GAUDIUM ET SPES*, *supra* note 5, at ¶ 35); see *GAUDIUM ET SPES*, *supra* note 5, at ¶ 35 (“Human activity . . . takes its significance from its relationship to man. Just as it proceeds from man, so it is ordered toward man[;] . . . growth is of greater value than any external riches which can be garnered.”).

²⁴ See *LABOREM EXERCENS*, *supra* note 19, at ¶ 9 (stating that, toil aside, “work is a good thing for man”); *id.* ¶ 16 (describing work as a duty, but a good necessary to develop one’s own humanity and to advance the well-being of others—including family, society, and humankind as a whole).

When we misunderstand the problem as one of legality—saying, well, they broke the law—then we superficially end the discussion. But the reality is a deeper than that. The truth is, they are working and contributing to our society, and we, in fact, look the other way because we need their labor and we let them come. If we were willing to treat the problem in its fullness, we would look to the workplace to stop illegal immigration, but we do not. Ultimately, to honestly see immigration as a “problem,” we would have to discount the value of immigrants’ work in our society; and, since we look to the border, not the workplace, we are giving short shrift to the question—again, looking away from the labor they contribute to society’s greater good, which is a contribution we need.

Just two weeks ago, we had a large conference here in New York City on the immigration issue, and there was special reference to our City. One of the things we learned was that the work force in New York City is practically fifty percent foreign born. We are, still, a city of immigrants. We have become—though we have always been—more and more a city of immigrants as immigration has increased with time. We are a city where much of the work force is foreign born, and where certain industries—such as construction—are almost completely dominated by immigrants. This has always been the case, to some extent, but it is even more so today. Immigrants are the ones building everything here in New York City. “Documented” or “undocumented,” the immigrant character of our work force is what our work force is all about. When we look at the population of New York City, the overwhelming births are to foreign-born women—again, documented and undocumented alike. If it were not for that fact, the population of New York City would actually be declining.

So, as we try to delve deeper into the question, we recognize that there is a real connection between work, immigration, and the common good. Clearly, if you look outside the windows here in Queens, Brooklyn, and the rest of New York City, this is the life we live—and it certainly is the case in other dioceses too; but this is particularly the situation that we find in this City. The question of work and immigration are intimately connected.

Unfortunately, on a national policy level, we have disconnected the two issues. We are disconnected from the fact that we live in a globalized world. This globalized world means we are constantly, with little impediment, moving goods and services between nations. We have trade agreements like NAFTA, which has taken down the barriers to trade in goods between Mexico, the United States, and Canada; but the other barrier—recognizing that we have a common labor market too—is not understood. Yet we really live in a world that is a global village with a common labor market, whether we accept it or not. Labor comes when there is work to be done; and whatever laws might be on the books will not alter that exchange. The fact is, where there is a labor void it will be filled by people who work and who contribute to the common good—the key to the social question.²⁵

Clearly, the issue of work, human labor, and immigration are very much connected to the

²⁵ See, e.g., *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, *supra* note 7, at ¶ 25 (connecting “[t]he mobility of labour” in the global marketplace with the concept, “the primary capital to be safeguarded and valued is man, the human person in his or her integrity”); see also *id.* ¶ 62 (“[F]oreign workers, despite any difficulties concerning integration, make a significant contribution to the economic development of the host country through their labour, besides that which they make to their country of origin through the money they send home. Obviously, these labourers cannot be considered as a commodity or a mere workforce. They must not, therefore, be treated like any other factor of production. Every migrant is a human person who, as such, possesses fundamental, inalienable rights that must be respected by everyone . . .”).

common good—again, the key to the social question. I just wanted to insert that reality into the discussion today. In a globalized world, there are globalized labor markets.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Thank you. Bishop Herzog?

MOST REV. HERZOG: I am Bishop Herzog, from Alexandria, Louisiana, and ever since I received the invitation I have been trying to figure out why I received it. I only found out this morning that maybe the reason was the fact that I also knew Monsignor Leonard Fick, who was on the faculty of the Pontifical College Josephinum when I was a student there.

Since so much of the philosophical and theological foundations have already been touched, what I thought I might do is give you just a few practical examples to show how diverse questions like these really are, because so many places are so different.

Central Louisiana is basically rural. The City of Alexandria's population is about fifty-thousand-plus. The number of Catholics in the entire thirteen civil parishes—we call counties “parishes” from the French tradition—is about thirty-six thousand, probably less than you would find in a square block in Brooklyn. In the northern part of the diocese, it might be two percent, so the Church has a different role there than it might have elsewhere.

And that is both good and bad. Because our population is not heavily Catholic, there is not a lot of baggage that keeps getting dumped on the Church, no matter what happens around the area. But by the same token, the Church is also largely unknown. And Louisiana—you are here presumably because of your pursuit of a legal career, so you already know—is the only state that

really takes its legal model not from English, but French law, so it has a very different perspective. Also, again, the fact that it is largely rural adds a different dimension, such that labor issues do not come up in the same way.

Also, Louisiana is a right-to-work state, which is not necessarily bad, but it certainly does change the entire parameter in which people live and work. An employer need not have some major legal proof to fire an employee. It only has to say, "I no longer need you," and somebody could be out of a job. But its positive side is that, because it is a relatively small, rural population, people depend less on variables that are affected instantly by a change in the economy—though they are there.

I can't help but consider what has been mentioned as far as meetings between bishops and legislators because, after all, it has been said that all politics are local; yes, and national politics are the ones we know do not work very efficiently. And we don't have to be too observant to realize that some of the clichés are true, but on a state level, especially in less populated states—we have seven dioceses in Louisiana—local political interaction has a different character. Moreover, Alexandria is dead center in the state. In South Louisiana, you have much larger Catholic populations in locales like Baton Rouge, Lafayette, and New Orleans. So, on a statewide basis, one half of the members of both legislative bodies are Catholic.

Now, I did not actually realize the percentage was that high, and you might expect it in the New Orleans area because it does have a rich Catholic history. But, even looking at just the Diocese of Alexandria—thirteen civil parishes—somewhere between a third and a half of the legislators are

Catholic. Though it is interesting that even among those who are not Catholic, they often have Catholic family ties.

And another thing, because you always have both political and personal beliefs showing up in law, especially in immigration issues, while we do not often speak of immigration as a problem in Louisiana, if you were look at the state as a whole, you would not find a friendly attitude toward it—let's just be honest. It does not come up frequently even though we, collectively, as the bishops of the state, have constantly urged its consideration. That is because it is not a uniquely-Louisianan problem. The problems that happen in other states would be inevitable because that is what the climate is. This universality is what makes it a quintessentially federal issue.

I mention immigration because for quite a number of years—at least once a year at the beginning, or close to the beginning, of the legislative session—the bishops of each diocese invited the legislators from the districts within that diocese to an informal gathering, a luncheon, at a bishop's house. Initially, it was just Catholic legislators, as the bishops figured nobody else would be interested. I am in an area where most of the legislators are not Catholic, and the same thing would be true in the northern part of the state—in Shreveport even more so.

Who says that because someone does not have the same faith affiliation they do not have the same values? So not only did I expand it—and that has become the policy throughout the state—so that all are invited, but I actually do it twice. State conference full-time employees and lobbyists also attend the spring gathering, which we just completed. We invite lobbyists who work for the

issues we are concerned about—issues we believe relate to the common good—so that they have an opportunity to express what the Church can do; we, likewise, have a forum of our own in which to express our observations, knowledge, and concerns to the lobbyists about such issues.

And as for the legislators—let's be honest—I am sure in every state there are so many bills filed every year that nobody follows them all individually, and legislators depend on what they consider good advice. So it also has been interesting to provide legislators with the opportunity amicably to speak with each other; and, with them present, we do not have to be the ones to present all of the ideas, just the forum in which they feel comfortable speaking with one another.

I mention that example particularly because so much of what happens, and we want to see happen, has legal implications not just in this one special area. What happens concretely is the result of laws that are made or at least proposed and the legislatures' policy choices. The Church has a greater opportunity in the ways and means to have its say in such proposals.

I really think that I am very fortunate to be in a small diocese. We do not have the income or the population or the influence in many ways, but we have the opportunity of getting to know our elected representatives on a one-on-one basis. That relationship means that if there is an issue of concern, I am not just a name in a book somewhere—I am somebody that has talked with them, met with them and, therefore, may have just that little bit of influence that can matter when it counts.

These are just a few very simple examples from a *practical* standpoint. They do not reach the substance of the issues, but demonstrate how the issues can be solved practically—that is, on the ground and with real people. The Church not only can, but does have a great opportunity; and I see, at least by looking at the things that have happened, that we have some chance of success.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Thank you. Bishop Pepe?

MOST REV. PEPE: It is always dangerous to be the last man in line because everybody has mentioned everything that you are going to talk about. To begin with, though, I would like to discuss what has happened in Las Vegas—problems really critical for our community.

As you know, Las Vegas is a gaming community directed almost totally to tourism—another aspect is mining—but tourism is really central to the Las Vegas area.

What has happened there is a tremendous cataclysmic change in the whole environment. Just near the Cathedral area where my diocesan building is located—as 2008 approached—I recognized that there would be five billion dollars' worth of construction on the nearby lots. Today, those lots are empty. One of them was supposed to be a two-billion-dollar project, and the developer hopes to sell parts of that property off eventually. A building just up the street from ours—about a block or two—is seventy-five percent complete. That developer could not continue making payments on his \$778 million mortgage each month—it is phenomenal, that number—and that particular building will never be completed as long as I am Bishop, and I have eight to ten more years.

This is a story of Las Vegas. We in Las Vegas are at a critical moment: looking at where we are going and how we are going to finance ourselves, because eleven percent of our income comes from the gaming industry. In this environment of economic downturn it has become critical to understand how we can effect change, tremendous change, in the environment and in the community, and some of that change will be, obviously, about the person who works.

I am struck by, as I go around the parishes, even in this very, very demanding and challenging time for people, the sincerity and the depth of parishioners' commitment in faith. Amazingly, even though our collections are down, our Churches are packed. We still get probably, actively—and I only have thirty-two churches for about 500,000 Catholics—about 7,000 to 8,000 families that are pretty active and fill those churches on Sunday.

In light of that, this morning I will reflect on the papal documents regarding the person. What strikes me as I read these documents is that they are both timeless and timely. They exhibit a progressive unfolding of the truth of humanity at its defining moments. They are a flowering of the prominence of man and woman, and the plan of God—His vision for their future.

As I reflected on the meaning of what I read from Leo XIII in *Rerum Novarum*²⁶ to Benedict XVI in *Caritas in Veritate*,²⁷ there was only one focus, one central image: the human person in all his or her dignity and prominence in the eyes of God and, therefore, in the eyes of the leading Church. For

²⁶ See generally *RERUM NOVARUM*, *supra* note 6.

²⁷ See generally *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, *supra* note 7.

we, as believers, are here to receive and respond to the full Revelation of God. We are man and woman, his most eminent creation.

It seems as I go through the period of prayerful reflection in my own life, that I recognize the need, if you will, of appreciating the primal Grace, the existential leap, of man and woman's formation in the Garden of Eden. There is, as it were, almost a fundamental call within all of us to go back and savor that time of Grace, peace, and happiness. This call is, paradoxically, a desire to capture a self-defining experience and purpose so that we may move *toward our future* and the promise of fulfillment.

Within this context, we encounter in the encyclicals and the teachings of the Church the foundational concept and purpose of work. Work belongs to the human person because it is a fundamental expression of his or her likeness to God—something, in fact, that God understood in terms of work. We call it the “work week,” and although we may use this terminology—an anthropological description of God's creation—that wording does not take away from the Catholic believer. In fact, it is acknowledging the story of Genesis and the manner in which God wished to reveal Himself, to reveal His inner wisdom.

In this revelation, God's purpose and plan for the human person was that he or she set forth to increase and multiply and to see that all is good that is of God. God's creative plan had its final moment in the creation of man and woman, in His only image, in life. And then, we are told, God rested.²⁸

²⁸ See *Genesis* 1:26–2:3 (New Revised Standard).

And God's great design for the human person was to be reflected, in turn, by man's subduing and dominating the earth.²⁹

It is, then, at this essential and foundational level where the ethical and moral order of work has its focus, care, and concern. So it is in the Church's eyes, in its prophetic role as teacher of the dignity of work and the preeminence of the worker—the person defined, fulfilled, and finally transformed by his or her work, both on the natural and supernatural level.

The composite that, according to Benedict XVI, is the authentic human person: a complex of physical, emotional, social, and spiritual or transcendental facets, to name just a few, that can never be separated or disjointed without elemental destruction, even sacrilegious violation, of that which we call man and woman.³⁰

It is on this evident basis that, through the popes, the Church, and our teachings from the nineteenth to the twenty-first century, emerges a deep and profound reflection and dialogue on the meaning of the worker and his or her work, environment, and glory. Through the prophetic provinceness of these teachings, I believe that all of us encounter the significance of who we are, why we are here, and where we are going.

It is through the eyes of these men—the pontiffs, the vicars of Christ and the ministers of the mysteries of God—that our own eyes open to the challenges of each generation to transfigure and transform the image of the human into its likeness to God.

²⁹ See *id.* at 1:28–30.

³⁰ See generally, *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, *supra* note 7, at ¶¶ 1–9.

This, however, can only be done in Jesus Christ, who was the model worker—an exemplar of work in his long years of carpentry in Nazareth³¹—and in his ultimate salvific work upon taking the weight of the cross. And that cross is a cataclysmic moment for both man and woman in recapturing that primal meaning of Eden and experience: the grace lost and work lost in sin, and now reclaimed by the toil of the Son of God.

In the end, the prophetic role of popes through the decades of the modern and post-modern periods puts on our shoulders the proclamation of the truth—that of the dignity of work and the value of workers. Yet as urgent and as important as this message may be, we are reminded that the burden is life itself. Because our assertions and declarations are ones of hope in Christ's Kingdom of peace and justice as we await fulfillment in God.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Are there questions that the audience wants to address to the panel?

SIMONS: I have a question.

In your pastoral roles, you are preachers of Catholic social teaching, but you are also employers, sometimes on a large scale. Now you find yourselves employers in tight economic times, as the Bishop discussed.

What challenges do you face in trying to serve those dual roles, both in living out Catholic social teachings and still running your diocese in a way that is economically feasible and prudent?

³¹ See *LABOREM EXERCENS*, *supra* note 19, at ¶ 3.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Any volunteers?

MOST REV. HERZOG: Representing probably the smallest diocese here, one of the things that I have tried to stress in my six years in Alexandria is practicing what I preach—doing so, at least, in matters over which I have direct control. We are in the precise situation of similar dioceses. The problem, clearly—and I have no solution to it—is that, especially in certain parts of the diocese’s employment, salaries—in the educational setting, teachers’ salaries, obviously—are probably never going to be what they would be in a public setting, and they are drastically inadequate to the point of injustice.

There have been some targets that have been set. We are trying to work toward them, but we are a long way away from arriving at our goals. It is hard to convince even dedicated people who—I guess—do not experience the same philosophical apprehension; but there is some concern that, if we do implement these changes, we will lose all our people, and then we will have to close.

Thus, to some degree, and unfortunately—though maybe it is not voiced—the most important priority is keeping the doors open. I am not sure that is the full truth, but it certainly is there.

We actually had to, in effect, restructure and almost do away with the full-time staff in our retreat center—not so much because of the economy, but rather, we actually had to do it before the downturn because one of the institutions that we have at the diocese was running such a tremendous deficit that we could not absorb the cost. Much to our surprise, however, it is being

utilized more now than when we provided a full staff, so you never know what will happen when you make changes. But, yes, it is a challenge.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Bishop Pepe?

MOST REV. PEPE: I have found that we must follow the principles of solidarity that Benedict XVI has discussed.³² I was struck by his last encyclical—the notion that we really have to have a very, very deep empathetic sense of where our people are so we can be in dialogue with them. That is really the issue—in other words: to be in dialogue.³³

So, what we try to do in the diocese is have a very sophisticated level, and sensitive level, of human resources for our thousand workers, because we are all under a corporation in the diocese, so we pretty much take care of the needs of the employees. We try to understand our employees' plight and to help them understand where we are coming from in terms of the diocese's needs and the challenges, restrictions, and restraints it faces in this economy.

So, working together, we have found a way to forge ahead. Sometimes our employees do not get exactly what they want, at this point, as far as their compensation is concerned. But we work toward a mutual understanding that, for the diocese to continue in its ministry, we have to, unfortunately, make some sacrifices.

³² See, e.g., *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, *supra* note 7, at ¶ 32 (“The dignity of the individual and the demands of justice require, particularly today, that economic choices do not cause disparities in wealth to increase in an excessive and morally unacceptable manner, and that we continue to *prioritize the goal of access to steady employment for everyone.*”).

³³ See *id.* ¶¶ 59, 76.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Bishop Blaire?

MOST REV. BLAIRE: I think that we have to do the same thing we ask our government to do. We have to approach our budgets as moral documents. We have to look at our mission as a Church, as a diocese, as parishes, and then we have to line up our priorities. Sometimes we do have to make cuts, and some dioceses have had to make very serious cuts. But it is not for ultimately financial reasons. Rather, we are trying to bring the budget or finances in line with what the priorities are, and it is not easy.

We have tried very hard to provide good benefits. Most of our people are paid lower salaries than what they could get elsewhere, so we have struggled in our diocese to maintain the benefits. We think that is very concerning—when people are not paid salaries that are great salaries. We try to look at the overall compensation package. But, yes, we have to struggle like everyone else. I think it is imperative that budgets be looked at as moral documents.

It is the same thing happening on Capitol Hill, and going to our state legislators. Right now in the Church, the bishops are fighting on behalf of the poor and the marginalized, trying to prevent cuts and balancing budgets on the backs of the poor. We have to try to do the same thing ourselves in terms of our own internal situations.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Is there another question?

LUGO: Good morning, my name is Betty Lugo, and I am the founder of the first Hispanic women's law firm in New York. I am also a devout Catholic and a member of the Catholic Lawyers of New York and Kings County.

My question relates to two issues: one about undocumented workers and the other about equal pay for women. What role, if any, does the Catholic Church play in lobbying for those two issues? In terms of immigration reform, for example, do they testify in Congress? Do they get involved in any way in politics? What role does the Catholic Church play?

MOST REV. DIMARZIO: I will take that.

The Catholic Church has been a very much pro-immigration voice in congressional testimony. Bishop Pepe and myself, Bishop Blaire, we are all on different committees at the United States Bishops' Conference, immigration committees—as are other bishops too. So, that issue—I certainly mentioned in my comments the issue of undocumented citizens—has been a concern of ours for a long time, and I think our record on that is fairly clear.

On the issue of equal pay for women: In the Diocese of Brooklyn, the majority of our workers are probably women. Given the constraints we work under, I do not think women would work if they were not satisfied that their pay was not—at least within the Church structure, a nonprofit structure—equal to what men receive. So, I do not think there is anything about equal pay for women, in my experience, that has been a major problem for us.

Moreover, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has argued in favor of equal employment and pay for women, and testimony was also given in Congress advocating for it, so I think our record is also pretty clear on that issue.³⁴

³⁴ See, e.g., UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS, *Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* 41

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Bishop Pepe.

MOST REV. PEPE: On a local basis, right, now you mentioned the immigration issue and undocumented workers.

We actually have a bill that we are very carefully looking at in Nevada to make sure they make some considerable changes to. Despite that we are a little state—just we have reached the sophisticated level of having a man who can help lobby, that can keep an eye on the 352 bills they put out. We have a gentleman—former legislator—and every other year we meet, and when we get together at the beginning of January we have to figure out every little bill that they have.

Here is an example of a bill that would change everything in the Church. Someone in Reno decided that there had been a fire in a private establishment—a hall maybe—resulting from candles. So, we have a bill now that forbids any private establishment from having candles in the building.

Do we have a problem? It gives you an idea of what we have to keep an eye on.

As far as the women and employment, we do not have any bills presently on that issue, but we are concerned, particularly, about discrimination against women on all levels. In the diocese

(1986) ("Wage discrimination against women is a major factor behind . . . high rates of poverty. Many women are employed but remain poor because their wages are too low. Women who work . . . earn only [sixty-one] percent of what men earn. . . . [M]ost new jobs for women are in areas with low pay and limited chances of advancement. Many women suffer discrimination in wages, salaries, job classifications, [and] promotions, . . . find[ing] themselves in jobs that have low status, little security, weak unionization, and few fringe benefits. Such discrimination is immoral and efforts must be made to overcome the effects of sexism in our society.").

itself, we have become highly sensitive in our human relations, ensuring that people are paid appropriately.

We try to keep within the limits of what would be expected. And we have been able to meet what could be expected for anybody that is employed in any level of our work. So, for example, our teachers are paid pretty close to what public school teachers get. We are lucky enough to do that because of the income that we have. I do not know what is going to happen in the future, but right now we are able to pay salaries around ninety-seven percent of what public school teachers receive.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: Professor Gregory?

GREGORY: For those people who are lucky enough to have work—especially lawyers—everyone is working, it seems, seventy, eighty, ninety hours per week. One of the most startling experiences I have had in scheduling this Conference is how hard all of you work. Many bishops—for the audience's benefit—are booked two years in advance. And it is important to have a sense of leisure. Woe to those who work for billable hours against downtime. Downtime is not good. Billable hours are good. St. Francis de Sales said, "When you are really busy, spend even more time in prayer." How do you daily find time to have that time? How do you find time to make time?

MOST REV. HERZOG: I guess I do not have that problem. That is one of the advantages of the smaller diocese.

I tell people—and I mean it—I could be gone for a week and nobody would know. But, I think it is like anything else. We choose how we do things, and while some things may be more urgent, I do

not know that I would say many of them are so totally controlling that you cannot do the things that you need. Just like people have stresses with their jobs, they also have a family, and they are going to place priorities there. Working twenty-four-seven does not have to rule.

MOST REV. DIMARZIO: Some people make the error that spiritual life is all pleasure, but spiritual life is also work, so you have to put it into your workday. There has to be a time for everything, so I think that is how I handle it. There is a place and time for everything.

I got up about five this morning to get here by eight thirty. So you have to work. You have to put it into place, and that effort is also part of the work ethic and the sacredness of work. It is part of our spiritual life also.

MOST REV. CONLON: I would ask the lay person working sixty hours a week, "When do you find time to pray?" One needs to do it every bit as much as we do. It has to be part of our integrated life.

AUDIENCE SPEAKER: When the bishops interpret and apply Catholic social thought regarding unions or collective bargaining, do they take Original Sin into account—that anything human can be corrupt?

More specifically, it is documented that unions, in some cases, protect incompetent employees, which negatively impacts the populations that unions serve; and immigration itself might produce injustices. What would it mean to the bishops if it were plausibly established that, under present economic circumstances, unions actually contributed to economic collapse, and were disastrous for all?

Do the bishops consider these issues, which reflect Original Sin in human nature, when applying Catholic social teachings to contemporary problems?

MOST REV. BLAIRE: I will take a stab at that.

The Church presents principles. We say that people and workers have the right to organize and workers have a right to form associations. That does not mean that we canonize everything that unions do. Rather, unions have to examine their actions in relation to the common good as much as anyone else does.

You might take, for example, the family. The Church is very, very outspoken in promoting family life, but we have many family situations in this country that are deeply disruptive. That does not mean we suddenly say, “Well, families are so deteriorated that we are no longer going to support them.”

As bishops in the Church, we promote people’s and workers’ right to organize. That promotion is not the same as canonizing everything that unions do. Furthermore, eliminating a labor organization on the premise that it is not going to help the economic recovery of this country—that is exactly the point that Pope Benedict XVI addressed in his encyclical: We cannot undermine justice for economic utility.³⁵

³⁵ See *CARITAS IN VERITATE*, *supra* note 5, at ¶ 37 (“The Church’s social doctrine has always maintained that *justice must be applied to every phase of economic activity*, because this is always concerned with man and his needs. Locating resources, financing, production, consumption and all the other phases in the economic cycle inevitably have moral implications. *Thus every economic decision has a moral consequence*. . . . Hence the canons of justice must be respected from the outset, as the economic process unfolds, and not just afterwards or incidentally.”).

AUDIENCE SPEAKER: In response, I just reiterate the warning to bishops about proposing a specific policy that is subject to dispute; and that there can be unintended consequences to concrete, specific proposals that really should be more thoroughly debated or left to experts.

MOST REV. BLAIRE: Let me just say something, and maybe the other bishops might also respond.

I think that is a very legitimate distinction. When it comes to actual, technical application, that is the role of government and unions. Though there is not always a clear line because it is possible to speak principles and not see the tire hit the road; but at the same time particular solutions may be far beyond our teaching role. That is why our congregations, our people, can be made up of people of various political persuasions.

Would somebody else like to speak to this?

MOST REV. PEPE: Benedict the XVI addresses that topic, interestingly, in *Caritas in Veritate*, saying that these associations have to be very careful about directing themselves away from that central image I discussed—the human person—because that is the value we protect.

That person is central to anything that is going on, and the two things that he was very, very concerned about were what he termed egoism—in other words, self-serving and politicizing. He said that, when we get into politics we start losing the human person. That is, when the association loses its ability and becomes corrupt, and starts corrupting, because everybody becomes a commodity. You become a money source, not a

person. So, associations are not perfect, but those are issues that we definitely would be concerned about in any dealing with associations.

MOST REV. BOTEAN: I am going to exercise my moderator's prerogative by having the last word. You know, one of the things that I have a particular issue with is when the hierarchy goes about the business of describing in detail—telling the world how to be the world.

We have always got a lot more to do in terms of the pastoral care of our Catholic people. That is much more important. But when it comes to the criticisms that you bring up—and I think fairly—about unions, there are other social institutions about which the same could equally be said, and among them I would include government and enterprise.

I appreciate everyone's attention. I know we have to regroup and finish off. We have to go on and have our coffee.

SIMONS: Our bishop-panelists have been extraordinarily generous in sharing their time and teaching with us this morning. Please join me in thanking them.