

# The Reign of God: Transforming Our World

## *Links and Resources*

### **Scripture**

(Passages cited in the text are from *New Revised Standard Version Bible, Catholic Edition*, Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1993.)

Genesis 18:19	By doing justice, Abraham will receive from the Lord what he has promised him.
Deuteronomy 10:18	The Lord carries out justice for the fatherless and widow, loving sojourners and giving them clothing and food.
Deuteronomy 16: 20	Follow justice in order to live and inherit the land God gives you.
Deuteronomy 32:4	God's work is perfect and all God's ways are just. God is faithful and without iniquity, just and right.
1 Kings 3:28	Israel stood in awe of Solomon, the king, because the Israelites saw that because God's wisdom was in him, he rendered justice.
Job 37:23	God is great in justice and will not violate righteousness.
Psalms 33:5	The Lord loves righteousness and justice. The earth is full of God's love.
Psalms 89:14	Righteousness and justice are the foundation of God's throne.
Psalms 99:4	The Lord has established equity and executed justice in Jacob.
Psalms 103:6	The Lord vindicates and acts in justice for all the oppressed.
Proverbs 21:3	"To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the LORD than sacrifice."
Isaiah 5:16	The Lord exalts in justice; God shows himself holy through righteousness.
Isaiah 30:18	"The Lord is a God of justice."
Isaiah 42:4	"He will not fail or be discouraged till he has established justice in the earth; and the coastlands wait for his law."
Jeremiah 9:24	"Let him who glories glory in this, that he understands and knows me, that I am the LORD who practice steadfast love, justice, and righteousness...."
Ezekiel 34:16	I will seek the lost, bind the crippled, strengthen the weak. "I will feed them in justice."
Hosea 2:19	"I will betroth you to me in righteousness and in justice, in steadfast love, and in mercy."
Micah 6:8	"What does the LORD require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"

Matthew 13:24–30	Parable comparing the reign of God to gathering the good seed and the weeds, and separating them at the harvest
Matthew 13:33	Parable comparing the reign of God to yeast that leavens the bread
Matthew 24:32–33	As we learn to read the sign of when the fig tree will bloom, so we can learn to read the sign of when the Lord is near.
Matthew 25:1–13	The reign of God is like the ten bridesmaids who took their lamps and went forth to meet the bridegroom.
Matthew 25:31–46	“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.”
Mark 1:14–15	“The kingdom of God has come near; repent and believe in the good news.”
Mark 4:3–8	The parable of the sower
Mark 4:30–32	The parable of the mustard seed
Luke 12:35–38	Be alert and ready for the Lord’s coming.
Luke 12:54–56	If we know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and sky, why do we not know how to interpret the present time?
Luke 14:28–32	Those who build a tower or wage a war first plan their venture in order to carry out their task successfully.
Luke 15:3–7	The parable of finding the one lost sheep
Luke 15:8–10	Just as there is joy in finding one lost silver coin, so there is joy over one sinner who repents.
Luke 18:2–8	Just as the judge gives a hearing to the persistent widow, so God will grant justice to those who cry out to him.

## Conciliar Documents

*Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (Gaudium et spes)*

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_cons\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)

- 1: Solidarity of the Church with the whole human family.
- 2: The Council addresses all of humanity.
- 4: The Church has the responsibility to read the signs of the times and interpret them according to the gospel.
- 39: In the present time, the reign of God is mysteriously present; when the Lord comes again, it will enter into its perfection.
- 43: What the Church offers to human activity through its members.

### *The Dogmatic Constitution on the Church (Lumen gentium)*

[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_const\\_19641121\\_lumen-gentium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html).

- 5: The Church receives the mission of proclaiming and establishing the reign of God.

## **Papal Documents**

*At the beginning of the new millennium (Novo millennio ineunte)* (January 6, 2001, Pope John Paul II.

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_apl\\_20010106\\_novo-millennio-ineunte\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte_en.html).

Apostolic letter, of Pope John Paul II, written at the close of Jubilee Year of 2000, describing the effects of the year and challenges for the future.

*On Evangelization in the Modern World (Evangelii nuntiandi)* (December 8, 1975), Pope Paul VI

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/apost\\_exhortations/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_exh\\_19751208\\_evangelii-nuntiandi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_p-vi_exh_19751208_evangelii-nuntiandi_en.html)

The Church exists to continue Christ's mission of evangelization. As members of the Church, we are called to be evangelizers in everyday life. We evangelize through proclamation, witness, and our actions for charity and social justice.

*On Social Concern (Sollicitudo rei socialis)* (December 30, 1987), Pope John Paul II.

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_30121987\\_sollicitudo-rei-socialis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis_en.html)

Commemorates the twentieth anniversary of Pope Paul VI's *Populorum progressio* and reaffirms the continuity of the Church's teaching on social doctrine.

*As the Third Millennium Draws Near (Tertio millennio adveniente)* (November 14, 1994),

John Paul II.

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/apost\\_letters/documents/hf\\_jpii\\_apl\\_10111994\\_tertio-millennio-adveniente\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/apost_letters/documents/hf_jpii_apl_10111994_tertio-millennio-adveniente_en.html))

Calls for a renewed commitment to the teachings of Vatican II as the best preparation for the new millennium. Reflects on the goal of unity among all Christians and the need for the Church to ask forgiveness.

## **Catechism of the Catholic Church**

For paragraphs cited in the *Catechism* below, click on the following:

<http://www.vatican.va/archive/catechism/p4s2a3.htm#II>.

- #2816 Descriptions of the reign of God
- #2818 The reign of God comes at the end of time, but also commits us to mission in the present.
- #2819 We live in the end times that began with the outpouring of the Holy Spirit at the first Pentecost.
- #2820 Our call to eternal life reinforces our duty to do justice and peace in this world.
- #2821 The petition "thy kingdom come" in the Lord's Prayer bears the fruit of new life, in keeping with the Beatitudes.

## United States Conference of Catholic Bishops' Documents

*The Challenge of Peace: God's Promise and Our Response*, U.S. Catholic Bishops (1983).

*Communities of Salt and Light: Reflections on the Social Mission of the Parish*. Approved by U.S. Catholic Bishops at their General Meeting (November 1993). <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/saltandlight.htm>. These reflections bring together the principles of the bishops' social teaching along with local pastoral experience in an overall orientation and general framework for parish social ministry.

*Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice*, U.S. Catholic Bishops (November 1999). <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/everyday.htm>.

A pastoral reflection on lay discipleship for justice in a new millennium.

*Faithful Citizenship: Civic Responsibility for a New Millennium*, U.S. Catholic Bishops (September 1999). <http://www.usccb.org/faithfulcitizenship/citizenship.htm>.

Jubilee Year 2000 is a "time...to shape a society more respectful of human life and dignity, and more committed to justice and peace" (p. 1). Presents the seven themes of Catholic social teaching and moral priorities for public life.

*Go and Make Disciples: A National Plan and Strategy for Catholic Evangelization in the United States*, U.S. Catholic Bishops (November 1992). To order:

<http://www.usccb.org/evangelization/publications.htm>

The National Conference of U.S. Catholic Bishops proposes three goals for evangelization: inspiration to share our faith in Jesus Christ, invitation to others to hear and respond to Christ's message of salvation, and transformation of society by the saving power of Christ through action for justice and mercy.

*Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions*, U.S. Catholic Bishops (June, 1999).

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/socialteaching/contents.htm>.

The Church's social teaching as integral to Catholic identity and mission. Expresses the bishops' search for "a renewed commitment to integrate and to share the riches of the Church's social teaching in Catholic education and formation at every level" (p. 9).

*Sharing the Tradition and Shaping the Future: A Faith Sharing Experience for Christian Communities* (2001).

This booklet, prepared by The Catholic Campaign for Human Development, is intended to enable adults to enter into and grow in awareness of the social justice tradition of the Catholic Church.

This is done through weekly segments that highlight the seven themes chosen by the U.S. Catholic bishops. Each session begins with a gospel reading, followed by reflection, focus questions for group discussion, and suggested actions.

### ***Small Christian Communities: A Vision of Hope for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century***

pp. 27–29

Highlights some of the statements regarding the Church's social mission since Vatican Council II and illustrates how the parish, through small communities, can help people relate these statements to real-life issues.

p. 40

Describes the connection between relationships and the reign of God—particularly, as experienced in small Christian communities.

pp. 44–45

Describes the importance of moving toward a “one-world view” of spirituality, in which the divine and the temporal worlds are naturally interconnected.

pp. 109–110

The “communal style [of meeting in small Christian communities] is in itself a way for the reign of God to be realized in our midst.”

pp. 246–249

We are all called to live out the reign of God in our everyday lives, and to engage in social action.

## Books

Brueggemann, Walter, Thomas H. Groome, and Sharon Parks. *To Act Justly, Love Tenderly, Walk Humbly*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1986. This agenda for ministers is a practical reflection on doing justice in the context of ministry, based on the three elements of the prophet Micah’s guidelines for authentic religious behavior.

Cordaro, Tom. *Reading the Signs of the Times: The Challenge of Peace Continues*. Erie, PA: Pax Christi USA, 1992. A Pax Christi USA reflection process on the moral challenges of the Post-Cold War world in light of the U.S. Catholic bishops’ peace pastoral.

Cordaro, Tom, and Madelyn Gould, writers; Dorothy Stoner, OSB, editor. *Jubilee Justice: The Times Call Us*, Volumes I and II. Erie, PA: Pax Christi USA, 1999. A Pax Christi USA jubilee study guide and resources for the millennium. Part I: Jesus as proclaimer of Sabbath and model of forgiveness; Part II: Jesus as proclaimer of liberation and justice and our joy.

DeBerri, Edward P.; Peter J. Henriot, and Michael J. Schultheis. *Our Best Kept Secret: The Rich Heritage of Catholic Social Teaching*. Washington, DC: Center of Concern, 1987. A slim volume that provides a highly readable overview of papal documents that are part of Catholic social justice teaching; also outlines and explains the dominant themes of social justice tradition.

Dorr, Donal. *Spirituality and Justice*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1984. Out of print. Available through John David Graham (owner), Born Again Used Books, 4836 Flintridge Drive, Colorado Springs, CO 80918 USA. See [www.bibliofind.com](http://www.bibliofind.com) Underscores how spirituality and the doing of justice are integrally linked in Christian thought and practice.

Egan, Eileen, and Kathleen Egan, OSB. *Suffering into Joy: What Mother Teresa Teaches about True Joy*. Ann Arbor, MI., 1994. In this book, Mother Teresa shares the secret of finding joy in the midst of even the greatest sorrow.

Harris, Maria. *Proclaim Jubilee! A Spirituality for the Twenty-first Century*. Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1996. Offers a compelling argument that living Jubilee every day is actually a comprehensive spirituality that will have a positive political, economic, and moral impact.

Henriot, Peter, SJ, and Joe Holland. *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*. Washington, DC: Center of Concern, 1980. A clear outline and explanation of the faith-praxis cycle of experience, analysis, reflection, and action for living out our faith through the doing of justice.

Hug, James, SJ, ed. *Tracing the Spirit: Communities, Social Action, and Theological Reflection*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1983. Places the doing of justice as flowing out of a context of faith and reflection, and underscores the importance of doing justice not simply as individual Christians but as a Christian community.

Hug, James, SJ, and Rose Marie Scherschel. *Social Revelation*. Washington, DC: Center of Concern,

1987. Names history as the continual unfolding of God's revelation to us, and echoes Vatican II's call to read the signs of the times as we reflect on contemporary social movements.

*Justice in the World*. International Synod of Bishops, 1971. Locates action for justice at the heart of Jesus' teaching, and names it as a constitutive element of the gospel.

Kownacki, Mary Lou, OSB. *Love Beyond Measure: A Spirituality of Nonviolence*. Erie, PA: Benet Press, 1993. A Pax Christi USA reflection piece of five sessions, each with prayer ritual, related readings, and questions for individual reflection or group sharing on nonviolence.

Lindsey, William D. *Singing in a Strange Land: Praying and Acting with the Poor*. Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1991. Grounded on the premise that spirituality and action for justice are necessarily linked in Christian faith, this slim volume contains seven first-person narratives, practical suggestions for action, and biblical reflections and prayers from world religions.

Morley, Janet, ed. *Bread of Tomorrow: Prayers for the Church Year*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1992. This anthology of 175 prayers—based on the liturgical Church year—is thematically centered on poverty and ministry to the poor.

## Periodicals

Catholic Charities USA. *Social Thought: The Social Teachings of Pope John Paul II*. Spring/Summer, 1987. An overview of the dominant themes of Pope John Paul II's writings, including the dignity of the human person, parish social ministry, respect for life, and the spiritual transformation of modern culture.

## RENEW International Resources

*RENEW 2000 & Beyond/Core Community Handbook*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997. (To order: tel. 1-800-218-1903; fax: (201) 825-8345; e-mail: [paulistp@pipeline.com](mailto:paulistp@pipeline.com))

*RENEW 2000 & Beyond/Leadership Book*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997. (To order: tel. 1-800-218-1903; fax: (201) 825-8345; e-mail: [paulistp@pipeline.com](mailto:paulistp@pipeline.com))

Kleissler, Thomas A., Margo A. LeBert, Mary C. McGuinness. *Small Christian Communities: A Vision of Hope for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, revised and updated. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1997. (To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/voh.html>)

## IMPACT Series

Clark, Betsy, SSJ. *Discipleship of Nonviolence*. RENEW International, 1996. A look at a way of following Jesus that works to transform violence within oneself as well as within society (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/discimp.html>

Duncan Collum, Danny. *Beyond Black and White*. RENEW International, 1999. Explores what the Catholic faith has to say about the racial issues facing our society, offering them the opportunity to reach and forge common bonds with people of all races (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/bbw.html>

Dwyer Castano, June. *Make Media Work for You*. RENEW International, 1998. Examines what is the media and how does it work, putting media into perspective as a communication tool. Explores unifying our spiritual beliefs with our standards for media (six sessions).

- Jeselson, Mary Ann and Steve. *Civic Responsibility: What's It All About?* RENEW International, 1996. Explores what it means to be a civic leader, encouraging participants to pursue creative solutions to a wide range of human concerns (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/civicimp.html>
- Mannion, Michael T. *Embracing Life*. RENEW International, 1999. All Catholic social teaching grows out of the conviction that each one of us has inalienable value because we have been made in God's own image. This booklet, written for small faith-sharing communities, offers lively, inspirational reflections on a vision of life that holds each person and all creation sacred (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/embrcimp.html>
- McGuinness, Mary C., Miriam Therese MacGillis. *Our Origin Story: Foundations for Ecological Responsibility*. Revised and Updated Edition. RENEW International, 1999. Promotes a journey of personal transformation that will lead to the transformation of all which threatens the very life of the planet earth (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/originimp.html>
- McGuinness, Mary C., Thomas A. Kleissler. *Beginnings: Human and World Issues*. *Beginnings* explores the integration of faith and action — Christian responsibility — through reflection on a variety of topics including God's love, family, work, media, cherishing life, hunger, political responsibility, and ecology (eight session). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/beginimp.html>
- Prejean, Helen , CSJ, & Lucille Sarrat. *Reflections on "Dead Man Walking."* This exploration promises to help today's Christian in uncovering the facts and dispelling the myths of the death penalty in the light of the gospel of Jesus and Catholic teaching. Perfect for any ministry, group, or small community, these six faith-sharing reflections also look at the emotional sufferings of victim's families (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/reflecimp.html>
- Simon, Art. *Hunger in God's World*. RENEW International, 1996. Offers concrete steps to address the contradiction between God's intention for the world and widespread hunger (six sessions). To order: <http://www.renewintl.org/Resources/Pages/hungimp.html>

## Web Site Links

<http://www.usccb.org/cchd/index.htm>

Catholic Campaign for Human Development is an anti-poverty program established in 1969 by the National Conference of Catholic Bishops. Its philosophy emphasizes empowerment and participation for the poor.

<http://www.catholic evangelization.org>

The National Council for Catholic Evangelization, founded in 1983, exists to affirm, motivate, and network Catholic evangelization efforts throughout the United States.

<http://www.usccb.org>

The programs of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) include Catholic concerns that range from prayers and worship to the state of the economy, from revitalizing parishes to averting nuclear war, from promoting vocations to protecting life at all stages.

<http://www.nonviolence.org/pcusa>

Pax Christi USA, with the help of its bishop members, strives to create a world that reflects the peace of Christ by exploring, articulating, and witnessing to the call of Christian nonviolence.

<http://www.coc.org>

"The Center of Concern's thoughtful, provocative analysis and visionary economic and social alternatives have helped grassroots leaders, academics, and decision-makers worldwide gain clarity on what is needed to create a more just future." (David Beckmann, *Bread for the World*)

<http://www.catholicrelief.org>

Catholic Relief Services was founded in 1943 by the Catholic bishops of the United States to assist the poor and disadvantaged in more than eighty countries around the world.

<http://www.habitat.org>

Habitat for Humanity International is a nonprofit, nondenominational Christian housing organization. Habitat welcomes all people to join them in building affordable houses in partnership with those in need of adequate shelter.

<http://www.thehungersite.com>

The Hunger Site, founded in June 1999, focuses the power of the Internet on a specific humanitarian need—the eradication of world hunger.

<http://www.ipj-ppj.org>

The Institute for Peace and Justice (IPJ) is an independent, interfaith, nonprofit organization, begun in 1970, as a response to the realities of war, racism, and global economic injustice.