



KENT DIOCESAN AREA JUSTICE AND PEACE GROUP
OUR CONCERN— Prayer Peace Prisoners Persecution Poverty Pollution

SOLLICITUDO REI SOCIALIS

A Study Guide to the Encyclical Letter

S O C I A L C O N C E R N

This summary was prepared in the Kent Area to try to make the encyclical's teaching more accessible to interested Christians.

We trust that it will lead you on to read the full text and to live according to its teaching.

The views expressed are those of the author and may not necessarily always coincide with those of the Kent Diocesan Area Justice and Peace Group.

A study guide to the papal encyclical.

1. Some questions to bear in mind while reading the encyclical with a view to doing something about it.
2. A summary, quoting extensively from the original text, but reducing it from 20,000 words to 3,000.
3. The “Presentation” of the Encyclical, sent from the Vatican to mark its issue.

The Pope's new "little green book" has prompted great interest among Christians who are active for justice and peace. Hopefully this summary and its questions will encourage an active reading of the text, and its use in future work.

Colin Vaughan. June 1988.

SOME QUESTIONS TO BEAR IN MIND

A framework for evaluating the papal encyclical on Social Concern

Paragraph 4 of the encyclical ends: "the aim of the present reflection is to emphasise, through a theological investigation of the present world, the need for a fuller and more nuanced concept of development, according to the suggestions contained in the encyclical. Its aim is also to indicate some ways of putting it into effect".

An evaluation might look for answers to the questions which arise from this statement of aims:

◆ In relation to the first aim:

- How does this theological investigation conceptualise the world?
- Does it emphasise a fuller concept of development?
- Does it emphasise a more nuanced concept of development?
- Which of its suggestions do these things?

◆ In relation to the second aim:

- How is this concept to be put into effect?
- Which suggestions indicate how it is to be put into effect?
- As a Christian peacemaker, how can I use it

- | | |
|-----------------------------|---|
| (i) at home | |
| (ii) at work | in my relationships with others, in Justice and Peace |
| (iii) in religious activity | work, in exposing hypocritical justifications of |
| (iv) as a citizen | oppression, in resisting war preparations? |

◆ How does it help me to live my baptismal vocation as:

- (i) "priest": orienting my religious observations towards peacemaking so that any "News" I may bring to the poor is Good News for them;
- (ii) "prophet": reading the signs of the times in the light of scripture;
- (iii) "king": free and responsible participant in democracy, and citizen of the world;

and how does it help me to understand the effects of my life on others?

- ◆ Does it promote principled thinking, or merely encourage appeals to authority?
- ◆ What are its principles?
- ◆ Does it tend to educate our faith?

A SUMMARY OF THE PAPAL ENCYCLICAL ON SOCIAL CONCERN

After a preamble relating the new encyclical to existing teaching, the Church's social doctrine is expounded.

Paragraph 9: As individuals and as nations we have a moral obligation to act in ways which recognise their EFFECT on the poor. True development cannot be the accumulation of wealth at the expense of the masses.

Paragraph 10: The demand for justice can be satisfied only on a worldwide level. But the resources needed to achieve this are used instead to enrich people or to stockpile weapons. WAR AND MILITARY PREPARATIONS ARE THE MAJOR ENEMY of the integral development of peoples.

When selfishness is the principal motivation, conflict arises (Js 4:1-2). INSTEAD OF SEEKING INDIVIDUAL PROFIT WE SHOULD WORK FOR THE COMMON GOOD OF ALL, bringing justice and thereby making REAL peace possible.

SURVEY OF THE CONTEMPORARY WORLD

Paragraph 13: An innumerable multitude of real and unique human beings are suffering the intolerable burden of POVERTY.

Paragraph 14: Deprived of hope, their situation has worsened and THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN RACE is seriously compromised; and with it the Church.

Paragraph 15: In BOTH Marxist and capitalist countries there is a tendency to enforce absolute dependence, which provokes frustration or desperation, and predisposes people to opt out of national life.

Paragraph 17: In developed countries many are HOMELESS.

Paragraph 18: UNEMPLOYMENT has risen from 3% to 8% since 1979, to 29 000 000 in 1987.

Paragraph 19: Poor countries are forced to export THE CAPITAL THEY NEED if they are to develop.

Paragraph 20: The political CAUSE of all this is the existence of two blocs, each suspicious and fearful of the other's domination. The tension between them takes the forms of cold war and war by proxy; IT KEEPS PEOPLE'S MINDS IN SUSPENSE AND ANGUISH BY THE THREAT OF OPEN AND TOTAL WAR.

Paragraph 21: Both concepts of the development of individuals and peoples are imperfect, and in need of radical correction. THE CHURCH IS CRITICAL OF BOTH LIBERAL CAPITALISM AND MARXIST COLLECTIVISM. Each has a tendency towards imperialism.

Paragraph 22: The two blocs frequently act in imperialist ways towards other countries. They also have an UNACCEPTABLY EXAGGERATED CONCERN FOR SECURITY, which deadens the impulse towards united cooperation by all for the common good of the human race. Thus the present division of the world is a direct obstacle to development.

Paragraph 23: Resources spent on arms production should be used to alleviate the misery of the poor. This requires that we end the opposition between the two blocs. In reality what is happening is that these RESOURCES ARE BEING USED TO ENABLE THE BLOCS TO OVERTAKE EACH OTHER IN SEARCH OF SECURITY.

This fundamentally flawed distortion keeps leading nations from their duty, the duty of solidarity with developing nations. But a leadership role can be justified only by wide and generous contribution to the COMMON GOOD.

Paragraph 24: ARMS PRODUCTION IS A SERIOUS DISORDER, diverting the means which are capable of satisfying true human needs.

TRADING IN ARMS, also, is blameworthy. This meets none of the barriers that are met with by attempts at cooperation between nations. Arms of whatever origin circulate freely, unlike economic aid and development plans.

Added to the above, THE STOCKPILING OF ATOMIC WEAPONS LEADS US TOWARDS DEATH RATHER THAN TOWARDS A MORE HUMAN LIFE.

As a result of this state of affairs we see A FESTERING WOUND, the tragedy of multitudes reflected in the hopeless faces of refugees: men, women and children who can no longer find a home in a divided and inhospitable world.

Another painful wound is terrorism, THE INTENTION TO KILL PEOPLE AND DESTROY PROPERTY INDISCRIMINATELY, AND TO CREATE A CLIMATE OF TERROR AND INSECURITY, often including the taking of hostages. WHAT CHRISTIANITY FORBIDS IS TO SEEK SOLUTIONS BY THE WAYS OF HATRED.

Paragraph 26: A hopeful sign is the more lively concern that HUMAN RIGHTS should be respected and the more VIGOROUS REJECTION OF THEIR VIOLATION. In this, the influence of the UN Declaration of Human Rights has to be acknowledged.

There is also a realisation that we are linked by a common destiny which is to be constructed together if catastrophe for all is to be avoided, demanding effort and commitment on the part of all. Peace is something that is built up day after day, in the pursuit of an order intended by God, which implies a more perfect form of justice among people. And peace is indivisible. It is either FOR ALL OR FOR NONE. It demands justice, and fair distribution.

Another positive sign is a greater realisation of the NEED TO RESPECT THE INTEGRITY AND THE CYCLES OF NATURE.

Paragraph 27: THE LOOMING ATOMIC PERIL has replaced hope of progress with a well-founded anxiety for the fate of humanity.

Paragraph 28: Consumerism, the accumulation of goods and services, makes people slaves of "possession" and of immediate gratification. Both for nations and for individuals, avarice is the most evident form of MORAL UNDERDEVELOPMENT. A crass materialism fails to satisfy deeper aspirations, because of the distinction between "being" and "having". And it accompanies the injustice of the poor distribution of the goods and services originally intended for all. The extremes of having and not having prevent people from "being": from realising their basic human vocation.

Paragraph 29: The first man was placed in the Garden with the duty of cultivating and watching over it, within the limits imposed by God. We are to subordinate the possession of things, to our vocation of being in image and likeness of God. And the sharing in this from the beginning by a man and a woman shows that THIS REALITY IS FUNDAMENTALLY SOCIAL.

Paragraph 30: This is the scriptural basis which shows that the notion of development is the modern expression of an essential dimension of each person's vocation. Each of us has the seed and the requirement of a special task to accomplish within the framework of obedience to the divine law. WHEN SOMEONE DISOBEYS GOD AND REFUSES TO SUBMIT TO HIS RULE, NATURE REBELS AND NO LONGER RECOGNISES THEM AS MASTER. After sin, man's dominion becomes difficult and full of suffering. But like Cain in Genesis 4 we continue in response to the divine vocation, which is constantly endangered by reason of infidelity to the Creator's will, and especially by THE TEMPTATION TO IDOLATRY. Man is always the protagonist of development, and our urgent duty is to work together for the full development of others, the development of the whole human being and of all people.

Paragraph 31. JESUS GUIDES US IN THE TASK OF COLLABORATION because all things hold together in him. Part of the divine plan is our own history, marked by our personal and collective effort to raise up the human condition and to overcome the obstacles which are continually arising along our way. Problems of authentic human development are a duty of the Church's pastoral ministry, as a sacrament of the unity of the whole human race. The Church is obliged to relieve the misery of suffering not only out of "abundance" but also out of "necessities". Faced by cases of need one cannot ignore them in favour of superfluous church ornaments and costly furnishings for divine worship; on the contrary it could be obligatory TO SELL THESE GOODS IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FOOD, DRINK, CLOTHING AND SHELTER FOR THOSE WHO LACK THESE THINGS. HERE WE ARE SHOWN A HIERARCHY OF VALUES: the right to property is subordinate, especially when the "having" of a few is at the detriment of the "being" of many others. This teaching is SERIOUS AND URGENT.

Paragraph 32: If people try to achieve collaboration in human development IN ONE PART OF THE WORLD ONLY, they do so at the expense of others, and consequently their own development becomes exaggerated and misdirected.

Collaboration must respect cultural identity, it is not an excuse for IMPOSING ON OTHERS ONE'S OWN WAY OF LIFE OR RELIGIOUS BELIEF.

Paragraph 33: Development must not be purely economic. It must respect human rights, not subject the human person and their deepest needs to the demands of economic planning and selfish profit. When we do not see a rigorous RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF EACH PERSON AND THE PROPER IDENTITY OF EACH COMMUNITY, material well-being will prove unsatisfying and in the end contemptible (Mt 16:26). Development implies the right of every individual to benefits offered by science and technology, to be seated at the table of the common banquet instead of lying outside the door like Lazarus (Lk 16:21). It must promote the relationships between individuals and society.

Paragraph 34: Creation is not to be exploited regardless of the natural order. ALL THINGS ARE CONNECTED, RESOURCES ARE LIMITED, POLLUTION IS TO BE AVOIDED. These limits on dominion are symbolised by the prohibition not to eat of the fruit of the tree. We are subject not only to biological laws but also to moral ones, which cannot be violated with impunity.

A THEOLOGICAL READING OF MODERN PROBLEMS

Paragraph 35: Decisions which accelerate or slow the development of peoples are political. The political will has been lacking. The obstacles to development will be overcome only by essentially MORAL decisions.

Paragraph 36: A world divided into blocs, sustained by rigid ideologies, and in which instead of interdependence and solidarity different forms of imperialism hold sway, can only be a world subject to structures of sin. These structures are the sum of individual sins, including taking refuge in THE SUPPOSED IMPOSSIBILITY OF CHANGING THE WORLD or sidestepping the effort and sacrifice involved. God requires clearcut attitudes which express themselves in actions or omissions towards one's neighbour. Avoiding this offends God and causes harm to others, beyond the actions and brief lifespan of an individual.

Paragraph 37: The all-consuming desire for profit, and the thirst for power with the intention of imposing one's will on others, are two typical structures of sin. Hidden behind certain decisions, apparently economic or political, are real forms of IDOLATRY: of money, ideology, class, technology.

To diagnose the evil which affects development as a moral evil identifies precisely the path to be followed in order to overcome it.

Paragraph 38: This path is long and complex, requiring courage to set out and to go on to the end. We need to change the spiritual attitudes which define our relationships, in pursuit of the full development of the whole individual and of all people. For us, this is "conversion", whereby the Spirit transforms hearts of stone into hearts of flesh. A sign of this is when people feel personally affected by injustices and violations of human

rights committed in distant countries. This moral recognition of the reality of interdependence is called solidarity. It is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress, but a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; based on the solid conviction that what is hindering full development is the desire for profit and the thirst for power. These are conquered only by their opposites: a commitment to "lose oneself" for the sake of the others instead of exploiting them, and to serve each one of them instead of oppressing them for one's own advantage.

Paragraph 39: The Church feels called to take her stand beside the poor, to discern the justice of their requests, and to help satisfy them, without losing sight of the good of groups in the context of the common good. The goods of creation are meant for all. Another person or nation must not be seen just as some kind of instrument, with a work capacity and physical strength to be exploited at low cost and then discarded when no longer useful, but as our neighbour, our helper (Gen 2:18-20), to be made a sharer on a par with ourselves in the banquet of life to which all are equally invited by God.

Thus the exploitation, oppression and annihilation of others are excluded. The division of the world into opposing blocs combines these facts to produce the danger of war and an excessive preoccupation with personal security, to the detriment of weaker nations within the so-called areas of influence or safety belts.

World peace is inconceivable unless the world's leaders come to recognise that interdependence in itself demands the abandonment of the politics of blocs, the sacrifice of all forms of economic, political or military imperialism, and the transformation of mutual distrust into collaboration.

Paragraph 40: In the light of faith in Jesus, solidarity seeks to go beyond a fundamental equality to where one's neighbour takes on the image of God, and must therefore be loved even if an enemy with the same love with which the Lord loves him or her, even to the ultimate sacrifice. This new criterion for interpreting our vision of the world is what we mean by communion, which is the soul of the Church's vocation to be a sacrament of the unity of the whole human race. Structures of sin can be overcome only by the exercise of this solidarity, to which the Church calls us.

SOME PARTICULAR GUIDELINES

Paragraph 41: In this the Church fulfils its first duty, to evangelise, by proclaiming the truth about Jesus and humanity, and applying it to a concrete situation. The instrument for this is social doctrine, the set of principles for reflection, criteria for judgement and directives for action which can DEFINE THE PROBLEMS BEING FACED AND THE BEST SOLUTION TO THEM. It can be seen that the problems are moral ones. The Church does not propose a third way between liberal capitalism and Marxist collectivism, or an alternative to other less radically opposed solutions, but a different category of its own. Its main aim is to interpret the realities of human existence, determining their conformity with or divergence from the Gospel teaching on mankind and their vocation, and thus to guide Christian behaviour. It is therefore not ideology but moral theology.

Paragraph 42: The option for the poor affects the life of each Christian in imitating the life of Christ, but also in our social responsibilities: our manner of living and decisions on the ownership and use of goods. To ignore this would be like pretending not to know Lazarus (Lk 16:19-31). Leaders must give precedence to the scandalous growth of poverty in more developed nations as well as less developed ones. THE GOODS OF THIS WORLD WERE ORIGINALLY MEANT FOR ALL. The right to private property does not nullify this principle. Private property has an intrinsically social function, justified precisely by the universal destination of goods.

Paragraph 43: CONCERN FOR THE LORD'S POOR MUST SHOW IN ACTIONS leading to reforms. Besides local priorities, there are international ones: the trade system, whereby articles produced at low cost in countries without effective labour laws are sold elsewhere at considerable profit; the financial system, with its fluctuating exchange and interest rates which aggravate the debts of poorer nations; technological exchanges, whereby poorer nations are denied needed technologies or sent useless ones; the International Organisations, affected by political rivalries and the desire to manipulate these Organisations; the framework of an international juridical order, at the service of the whole world.

Paragraph 44: The development of peoples begins and is most appropriately accomplished in THE DEDICATION OF EACH PEOPLE TO ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT, in collaboration with others in the same situation. Developing nations should favour the self-affirmation of EACH citizen through literacy and basic education. Some nations must increase food production to achieve self-sufficiency. Others need to reform unjust structures – the health of a political community, expressed in the free and responsible participation of all citizens in public affairs, in the rule of law and in respect for and promotion of human rights, is the necessary condition and sure guarantee of the development of the whole individual and of all people.

Paragraph 45: None of all this can be done without the collaboration of all in a solidarity which begins with the most neglected. Also nations near to each other need to collaborate to become less dependent on richer ones. ACKNOWLEDGING THEIR INTERDEPENDENCE ENABLES THEM TO DEVELOP THEIR POTENTIAL WITHOUT OPPOSING ANYONE. This solidarity demands readiness to accept sacrifices for the common good.

CONCLUSIONS

Paragraph 46: Liberation and development are intimately connected in the noble and legitimate aspiration to freedom from all forms of slavery affecting the individual and society. Purely ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MERELY ENSLAVES PEOPLE FURTHER. Human beings – and societies – are totally free only when they are completely themselves, in the fullness of their rights and duties.

Sin and the structures it produces are the obstacle to authentic liberation, which takes shape in the love and service of one's neighbour, especially the poorest: where truth and love are missing, the process of liberation results in the death of a freedom which will have lost all support.

Paragraph 47: Just as one may sin through SELFISHNESS AND THE DESIRE FOR EXCESSIVE PROFIT AND POWER, one may also be found wanting through FEAR, INDECISION AND COWARDICE. The present dangers – world economic crisis, a war without frontiers, without winners or losers – do not distinguish rich from poor except to put GREATER RESPONSIBILITY ON THOSE WHO HAVE MORE and can do more.

At stake is the dignity of the human person, whose defence and promotion are entrusted to us by the Creator. EVERY INDIVIDUAL IS CALLED ON TO CAMPAIGN PEACEFULLY TO SECURE DEVELOPMENT IN PEACE, TO SAFEGUARD NATURE ITSELF AND THE WORLD ABOUT US. Christians are called on to preach the good news to the poor (Lk 4:18-19) as WITNESSES AND AGENTS OF JUSTICE AND PEACE.

Paragraph 48: All temporal achievements merely reflect the glory of the kingdom that will come at the end of history, when our Lord will come again. But THAT EXPECTATION CAN NEVER BE AN EXCUSE FOR LACK OF CONCERN FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR CONCRETE PERSONAL SITUATIONS AND IN THEIR SOCIAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LIFE, since the former is conditioned by the latter. However imperfect or temporary our efforts, NOTHING WILL BE LOST OR HAVE BEEN IN VAIN. We will find them once again, cleansed this time from the stain of sin, illumined and transfigured.

Through the Eucharist – sacrament and sacrifice – Jesus sends us united into the world to bear witness through faith and works, preparing AND ANTICIPATING the coming of the kingdom.

Paragraph 49: Mary's concern extends to both personal and social aspects of our life on earth: "he casts the mighty from their thrones and raises the lowly; he fills the starving with good things and sends the rich away empty".

Lord, by sharing the good things you give us, may we secure justice and equality for every human being, an end to all division and a human society built on love and peace.

COLIN VAUGHAN

June, 1988.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR: Colin is an Educational Psychologist who spent several summers working with traumatised young victims of war in Central America, helping them to become able to communicate again, and equipping local people with the skills needed to continue this work. At home, he has been particularly concerned over issues raised by possession of nuclear weapons and in action to raise public awareness of these matters.

***Presentation of the Encyclical Letter of
His Holiness Pope John Paul II***

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis

The following text was sent from the Vatican to mark the encyclical's issue.

As already announced by His Holiness Pope John Paul II, his seventh encyclical, entitled Sollicitudo Rei Socialis, is being published on 19 February 1988.

The Holy Father himself has indicated the occasion and the basic content of the new Encyclical. Speaking to the Cardinals and Prelates of the Roman Curia on 22 December last, he introduced it in this way: "I would like to take the opportunity offered by this occasion to announce officially the imminent publication of an Encyclical Letter commemorating the twentieth anniversary of Pope Paul VI's Populorum Progressio ... Recalling the continuing relevance of that great document, the forthcoming Encyclical will also seek to highlight new themes and to respond to the new problems which, concerning the same subject, confront the conscience of modern man: for this purpose, the Encyclical is meant to follow the same lines as Populorum Progressio, as its ideal continuation and development" (No.7).

Again on 9 January, speaking to the Diplomatic Corps accredited to the Holy See. His Holiness stressed the true concept of development "In its economic, but also its cultural, moral and spiritual dimensions" and its relationship to peace: "I shall return to this capital theme in a forthcoming Encyclical on the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Populorum Progressio".

The Pope is thus taking the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of Pope Paul VI's Encyclical (26 March 1987) to offer to the universal Church and to all men and women of good will a new Encyclical, the purpose of which is to commemorate Paul VI's Encyclical but also to update its teaching.

I. General Presentation of the Encyclical

As in the case of Populorum Progressio, it is the problem of development which is at the centre of the Holy Father's concern.

The Encyclical, in fact, after an introductory chapter (Chapter One) indicating the occasion and the objectives of the document, devotes a whole chapter (Chapter Two) to an analysis of the "originality" of Populorum Progressio in the sphere of teaching on development.

This provides the Pope with two of the basic themes of this document. On the one hand, the quite dramatic situation of the modern world, precisely from the point of view of the absence of development; and on the other hand the meaning, conditions and requirements of a development that is worthy of mankind.

To the first of these themes the Holy Father devotes an entire chapter (Chapter Three), which examines the most striking characteristics of present-day under-development and also indicates the political causes of this lack of progress in development.

Also indicated is the progress made in the field of development in the last twenty years, however uncertain and limited.

To the second subject mentioned above, namely the nature of true development, the Holy Father devotes a whole chapter (Chapter Four). This chapter states, above all, the difference between "Indefinite progress" and development. It also insists that the latter cannot be limited to the multiplication of goods and services. Thus the chapter seeks to outline clearly the moral nature of true development.

Following the same line of the present problem of development, the Holy Father then turns his attention to an analysis of the obstacles of a moral nature impeding or even making impossible really effective decisions in this field. This is the fifth chapter, which refers to "structures of sin" as the major obstacle in the way of development.

Though these guidelines too are of the moral order, as are the obstacles which they are meant to overcome, the Holy Father does not fail to indicate other specific ways of facing the present situation of underdevelopment – economic, cultural and moral – in the different parts of the world. This is the subject of the sixth chapter, which insists once more on the importance of the Church's social doctrine at the present moment and the importance of its teaching and diffusion.

The next step is the indication of certain more urgently needed reforms, both in the world's present economic set-up and its organization, and also in the actual developing countries.

The final chapter (Chapter Seven) broadens the vision to the relationship between development and liberation, in view of the relevance and value of this notion in the present thinking of the Church. It then addresses an urgent appeal to everyone, an appeal for even greater commitment to this very decisive task of development in order to meet man's needs, and this also in the sphere of ecumenical and interreligious collaboration.

The Encyclical ends by entrusting to the Blessed Virgin Mary, in this year dedicated to her, this desired response to the challenge posed by poverty and underdevelopment to the true good of the human race. All this is expressed in a final prayer.

II. Some New Aspects in the Encyclical's Teaching

A comparison of the present document with the Encyclical Populorum Progressio reveals the following original elements, among others.

1. The Holy Father makes an in-depth analysis of the present economic and political situation insofar as it creates obstacles to development. The division of the world into two opposing blocs, East and West, is shown to be one of the major causes of under-

development, precisely through its consequences in the relationship between North and South.

2. In the same context, the Holy Father refers to the production and accumulation of arms and to the arms trade as extremely negative factors in the problem of development.

3. Among the positive factors of the last twenty years, the Holy Father points to the increased awareness of interdependence between individuals and peoples, as well as an increased respect for the integrity of nature.

4. The Holy Father carefully analyzes the idea of development and makes a point of affirming the moral character of true development and the requirements flowing therefrom. A special section is devoted to the biblical and patristic basis of commitment to development.

5. The relationship between respect for human rights and development is explicitly stressed, with a special allusion to the right to religious freedom, as well as to a number of social and political fights, the negation of which is directly contrary to authentic development.

7. The relationship between ecological concern and development is fully presented and developed.

8. The analysis of the obstacles of a moral nature to development leads the Holy Father on to a theological reading of the present problems of purely material development (superdevelopment) and the underdevelopment which is its opposite. Here the document dwells particularly upon the all-consuming desire for profit and the thirst for absolute power, as personal sins which lead to "structures of sin", themselves the cause of other sins: all of which sometimes make very difficult the true change of outlook or conversion demanded by true development.

9. A careful examination of solidarity – as a moral duty rooted in the fact of the interdependence of individuals and peoples, and its relationship with the theological virtue of charity – indicates the way to be followed in order to overcome the moral obstacles referred to above.

10. The Holy Father does not fail to point out a number of specific areas in which reforms are urgently needed, as for example: reform of the world monetary and financial system, the transfer of technologies, and certain aspects of the International Organizations, the great merits of which over the years are duly recognized.

11. With regard to the developing countries, the Pope asks for the affirmation of the autonomy and full development of every individual, the true sharing by each person in political processes, and solidarity between the poor nations, especially those belonging to the same geographical area.

12. An affirmation of the Christian meaning of commitment to development in relation to the Kingdom of God and to the celebration of the Eucharist illustrates and completes the Encyclical's concluding appeal.

III.

The Encyclical Sollicitudo Rei Socialis thus hinges on the notion of development, insofar as this notion was developed by the Encyclical Populorum Progressio, in its many dimensions – cultural, moral and universal, as well as economic. It is in the light of the ever valid teaching of that Encyclical that the Pope has wished to examine, twenty years later, the world situation under this aspect. His intention has been to bring up to date and study still further the notion of development, but his main purpose has been to point out to everyone, both Christians and others, the urgent moral need for solidarity and commitment to a development worthy of man. This is the only way in which individuals and peoples will realize the vocation to which they are called from the beginning of creation and for which we are all responsible before God.

Sollicitudo Rei Socialis is published in a Catholic Truth Society edition price £3.50 (CTS no. S400, ISBN 1860822274, paperback, A5, 14.8cm by 21cm, 64 pages).

It has been uploaded to the Vatican website and can be accessed via:

[http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0223/ INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0223/INDEX.HTM)