

POPE JOHN PAUL II'S PAPAL ENCYCLICAL
ON HUMAN LABOR, SOLIDARITY'S
BLUEPRINT

A dissertation submitted to the Caspersen School of Graduate Studies
Drew University in partial fulfillment of
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ABSTRACT

Pope John Paul II'S Papal Encyclical

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Blueprint

Doctor of Letters Dissertation by

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Throughout the history of humanity the great writings of great leaders have led to great causes for the benefit of humanity. In 1983 Pope John II wrote his third and most influential papal encyclical, *On Human Labor* (Laborem Exercen) which contains the Christian virtue solidarity which became the blueprint for the ant-communist labor union co-founded by His Holiness and devoted Polish Roman Catholic, Solidarity leader, and electrician Lech Walesa.

Solidarity's ten million members struck against the Polish Communist Government successfully winning support from the international community. Their non-violent approach in fighting communism paid off when they finally defeated the Soviet-backed regime in Poland in a 1989 election.

Pope John Paul II's *On Human Labor* provided an intellectual framework for Solidarity which was a mass yet vague movement. Scholarly research has demonstrated that there is a direct connection between the Holy Bible, *On Human Labor*, and solidarity.

Modern Roman Catholic liberal academic scholars Rocco Buttiglione and Taduew Maowiecki as well as modern Roman Catholic conservative academic scholars Czeslaw Mikosz and Jozef Tischner have credited Pope John Paul II with bringing down communism in Poland and Eastern Europe by being the spiritual inspiration behind its downfall and a catalyst for a “peaceful resolution” in Poland through his papal encyclical *On Human Labor*. Lech Walesa credited His Holiness with giving Poles the courage to rise up.

According to Walesa: “Before his pontificate, the world was divided into blocs. Nobody knew how to get rid of communism. In Warsaw, Poland in 1979, he simply said: ‘Do not be afraid’ and later prayed: ‘Let your Spirit descend and change the image of the land...this land’” (Walesa, *The Road to Hope*, 100).

On Human Labor confronts communism directly and challenges its role in the modern world. It questions its existence and stresses its need to conform to a higher standard of values based upon the spiritual teachings of the word of God contained in the Holy Bible. The Roman Catholic Church’s first and only Polish Pope was more zealous in His crusade against communism than any other Pontiff in the Church’s rich and long history.

Dedication

To my wife, my professors,
my students, my friends, my colleagues,
His Holiness Saint Pope John Paul II,
and Almighty God.

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Chapter One:

The Biography of Jozef Karol Wojtyla

“I am the voice of someone shouting in the desert. Make a straight path for the Lord to travel” (John 1:23 NAB).

Introduction

His Holiness Pope John Paul II reigned as the 264th Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church and the Sovereign of Vatican City from October 16, 1978 until his death on April 2, 2005. He was Pope for twenty six years and 168 days. His reign was the second longest documented pontificate. Pope Pius IX served the longest (thirty two years). Saint Peter the Apostle, who served as the first pope, is reported to have served for more than thirty years. However, documentation is insufficient to definitely support this. Pope John Paul II has been the only Polish Pope and Slavic Pontiff to date. He was also the first non-Italian Pope since Pope Adrian VI in 1522. His Holiness was also a diocesan, one of the few popes that did not belong to a religious order. He took the name John Paul II in honor of Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Paul the Apostle, revered by the Roman Catholic Church for being eloquent speakers as well as gifted writers (Mokrzycki 17). He admired their important literary contributions to the Holy Bible together with their powerful preaching. The Pope was also a persuasive speaker and influential writer. He has inspired other speakers and writers. Solidarity’s co-founder electrician Lech Walesa was one of them. The Pope’s third papal encyclical *Laborem Exercens (On Human Labor)* motivated him to co-write the blueprint for the free trade labor union Solidarity.

Both leaders understood the vital connection between the Holy Bible, *On Human Labor*, and Solidarity where the defense of the rights of laborers is the common thread that runs through these components. Solidarity is a Christian virtue that has its roots in the Holy Bible which unites humanity with Almighty God by means of labor. Holy God creates therefore people labor. The Lord rested on the seventh day therefore people rest on the Sabbath. Solidarity unites laborers who share a common bond. The Lord Jesus Christ's apostles labored for the salvation of souls just as the Lord himself did. His apostles were united to Him by faith, hope, and love. *On Human Labor* became the blueprint which not only combined traditional Roman Catholic Social Teaching into a laborer's doctrine but also explained its mission. Its pro-Christian/anti-communist theme clearly set the tone for Solidarity's political and social agenda. It proved itself to be a successful tool in eliminating Soviet Communism from both Poland and Eastern Europe that today is a standard model for the defense of not only laborers, but also animals, and even the environment among many other related humane causes.

John Paul II has been recognized as one of the most influential leaders as well as one of the most important writers of the twentieth century. He equally excelled as a speaker, essayist, playwright, and poet. His personal views on the sanctity of human freedom and the rights of workers was the one subject that he discussed in greater depth with reference to the Holy Bible than any other topic that he wrote. *On Human Labor* stood out as his most convincing literary work. It is the culmination of his devoted Roman Catholic Christian faith, his sincere love for Almighty God and humanity, and his scholarly understanding of the Holy Bible (Renchan and Schlesinger 25).

His third papal encyclical has been credited by both Roman Catholic conservative and liberal scholars, such as Rocco Buttiglione, for having been the driving force in eliminating communism in his native Poland and all of Eastern Europe including the former Soviet Union. His Holiness' preaching and writings have also significantly improved the Roman Catholic Church's relations with the Anglican Communion, the Eastern Orthodox Church, Islam, and Judaism through open dialogue and exchanged letters. He has been criticized as well as praised for his steadfast, orthodox Roman Catholic stance in his opposition to the use of contraception, opposition to the ordination of women as deacons, priests, bishops, archbishops, cardinals, and popes, opposition to same sex marriage as a church sacrament, and his support for the Second Vatican Council and its reform of the Liturgy. Liberal Roman Catholic academic scholars, such as Tadeuz Masowiecki, have agreed that the Pope's *On Human Labor* has greatly strengthened the Roman Catholic Church's mission against communism in Poland. They also agree that his papal letter has weakened Polish Communism's role as a political organization.

Pope John Paul II was one of the most-travelled important world leaders and pontiff in world history. He visited 129 countries during his pontificate. He spoke thirteen languages fluently: Croatian, English, Esperanto, French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, and Ukrainian. He personally translated *On Human Labor* into those thirteen languages by rewriting them so the messages would not be lost in translation (Greene 15). His Holiness' writing skills helped earn him a Doctor of Theology Degree (Th.d). He also beatified 1,340 Christians and canonized 483 saints, more than the combined tally of his predecessors during the last five century.

He was declared “Venerable” by his papal successor Pope Benedict XVI on December 19, 2009 (Stoughton 50).

Pope John Paul II’s *On Human Labor*, which inspired other leaders such as Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev (*Perestroika: New Thinking for Our Country and the World*, 1987), US President Ronald Reagan (*An American Life*, 2003), and Solidarity’s Lech Walesa (*The Road to Hope*, 1987), was the major reason for Pope Benedict XVI’s decision to venerate him so quickly (Krolak 5).

Pope John Paul II was an amazingly gifted and intellectually versatile mature man. His Holiness was deeply admired and highly respected by people from all walks of life. Among his loyal followers were ordinary, unknown poor people as well as famous, wealthy, and powerful individuals. He was one of the most beloved and popular Pontiffs of all times. Most of all, he was a very conservative and truly humble person. His strong faith in God, intellectual wisdom, and talent for writing letters which motivated the faithful masses were rare and unique traits. He possessed similar humane qualities in common with other spiritual leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This Polish high ranking man of the cloth’s benevolent contributions to the well being of humankind are historical facts. His unselfish and sincere love for The Lord and his fellow man won the admiration and respect of both Christians and non-Christians.

Numerous books have been written about the late Pope John Paul II’s role as a political and spiritual leader as well as a writer. His passion for writing began when he was a little boy. Before he became the Pope, Karol Jozef Wojtyla wrote and published poetry (*Stone of Light*, 1949), plays (*The Jewelers Shop*, 1950), and essays (*The Acting Person*, 1969), under both his real name as well as his pen name.

Wojtyla was popular with both Christian and non-Christian readers. He seriously considered a career as a professional writer before becoming a priest, and continued writing throughout his entire religious life (O’Keefe 176). The Pope was very successful at writing especially his sermons and his church papal encyclicals to the bishops of the Roman Catholic Church known as encyclicals. The Pontiff wrote fourteen of them. All of those encyclicals reflected his strong anti-communist agenda. Some of them dealt with communism directly and others indirectly. *On Human Labor* dealt with communism directly with the emphasis on the need to defend the rights of laborers through the application of non-violent resistance. He was motivated to write it based upon his belief that Almighty God had not only allowed him to experience communism in his beloved Poland, but had also given him the spiritual gift of discernment to interpret Sacred Scripture and the vocation of Pope to fulfill his destiny to help eliminate the Eastern European Communist Empire (Greene 15). Unlike his other papal encyclicals which were written specifically for Roman Catholics, his third papal letter was written for both Roman Catholics and non-Roman Catholics, such as Roman Catholic Lech Walesa and non-Roman Catholics Mikhail Gorbachev and Ronald Reagan. His third papal encyclical explained how the Soviet-backed Polish Government’s application of communism was in direct conflict with the traditional Roman Catholic Social Teachings of the Holy Bible. His Holiness explained that it is morally wrong for any political system to violate basic human rights, such as the freedom of speech and laborers’ benefits. Human beings have the God-given right to protest non-violently against any leader or any government that opposes people’s free will. *On Human Labor* became the

blueprint for the creation of the anti-communist free trade labor union known as Solidarity.

The ten million member organization became an anti-communist Polish Roman Catholic movement. It led a political opposition that sparked semi-free elections. Its outcome created a Solidarity-led coalition government. Communism was finally defeated. Democracy was eventually restored in Poland.

Roman Catholic and conservative academic scholars such as Czeslaw Mikosz have credited Pope John Paul II's triumph over communism in Poland to *On Human Labor*. They have also compared his academic writing style to influential Roman Catholic Church theologians like Saint Augustine of Hippo and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Furthermore, they claim that Solidarity could never have existed without the Pontiff's encyclical that gave birth to the concept of a self-governing federation. *On Human Labor* was based upon the roots of traditional Roman Catholic Church Doctrine. The Biblical writings of both Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Paul the Apostle served as a major source of inspiration. The Pope's encyclical was powerfully influential. It provided the Polish people with the opportunity to live their Roman Catholic faith the way it was meant to be practiced with hope and without fear. No one understood this concept better than Solidarity's co-founder Lech Walesa. According to Walesa: "Before his pontificate, the world was divided into blocs. Nobody knew how to get rid of communism. In Warsaw, Poland in 1979, he simply said: 'Do not be afraid', and later prayed: 'Let your Spirit descend and change the image of the land...this land'" (Walesa, *The Road to Hope*, 100). Without Pope John Paul II, there would never have been *On*

Human Labor. Without *On Human Labor*, there would be no Solidarity. Without Solidarity, there would be no freedom in Poland from communism.

Pope John Paul II's ability to connect with the Polish people earned him the title "The Great Communicator" (Walsh 98). His age and soft-spoken speech gave him a warm grandfatherly image that enhanced his popularity.

In response to such a beautiful complement, His Holiness argued: 'I won the nickname the great communicator. But I never thought that it was my style that made the difference. It was the content. I was not a great communicator, but I communicated great things' (qtd. in Dziwisz and Svidercoschi 36). His modesty complemented his genius creating the right balance of human personality traits.

Other Roman Catholic conservative academic scholars, such as Jozef Tischner, have attributed the Pope's *On Human Labor* contribution towards the creation of Solidarity. They have given credit to Solidarity's role in the elimination of communism in Poland. However, they also held other factors responsible that caused not only the Polish communist regime's termination, but also the Eastern European Soviet-ruled satellite countries together with the USSR. Polish Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar, first non-communist prime minister, and Solidarity assistant, Tadeuz Masowiecki claims: "Soviet-based Communism was a self-destructive monster destined to fail" (Masowiecki 55). Human error, implementation of bad politics, lack of support from various sources, too many obstacles at one time and in too many places, an underestimation of the power of their enemy (the Roman Catholic Church and the Polish People), and a weak economy led to communism's defeat in Eastern Europe.

Polish author, Roman Catholic conservative scholar, and winner of the 1980 Nobel Prize for Literature Czeslaw Mikosz states: “Many Roman Catholic conservative and liberal academic scholars agree that Pope John Paul II has been the most influential pope since Pope Gregory the Great (Saint and Doctor of the Church 540-604 AD)” (Mikosz 42). He left his positive imprint on culture, diplomacy, economics, history, politics, and religion.

Pope John Paul II rehabilitated conservatism, turned the Roman Catholic Church to the right, practiced a considerable pragmatic conservatism that balanced ideology and the constraints of politics, revived faith in the papacy and in universal human self-respect, and contributed to victory in the Cold War. *On Human Labor*’s blueprint for Solidarity has permitted this once Polish anti-communist movement to expand into a global equal rights pro-freedom movement to protect the rights of all human beings, animals, and even the planet from all types of abuse.

Polish Roman Catholic conservative academic scholar and philosopher Jozef Tischner argues: “The fall of the Soviet Communist Empire in Eastern Europe is an event on the same scale of historical importance as the fall of the Roman Empire” (Tischner 75). Despite Lech Walesa’s, Ronald Reagan’s, and Mikhail Gorbachev’s contributions, many Roman Catholics agree that the real hero of the Cold War was Pope John Paul II.

Some of the greatest leaders in history have also been some of the greatest writers in the world. Their ability to communicate their message to the masses has inspired other leaders to also write for the purpose of contributing ideals to benefit humanity.

Pope John Paul II's *On Human Labor* has given credibility to his reputation as a great leader and a great writer. Solidarity's blueprint has been a standard tool proven to be successful against political oppression.

Man on a Mission

"My devotion to your house, O God, burns in me like fire" (John 2:17 NAB).

Pope John Paul II firmly believed in the Word of God. He voluntarily accepted God's Will. Contrary to popular belief, The Pontiff did not take the name John Paul II after his predecessor Pope John Paul I. He took the name John after Saint John the Divine who was one of the Lord Jesus Christ's original apostles and his personal favorite. His Holiness also took the second name Paul from Saint Paul the Apostle who preached the Christian religion more than any other apostle up to that time. Both servants of God were gifted writers and persuasive speakers. Therefore, the Pope became the second John and the second Paul, thus John Paul II. He was inspired to do so by two passages in the Holy Bible. The first one that motivated him was: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him, to show his servants what must happen soon. He made it known by sending his angels to his servant John, who gives witness to the Word of God and to the testimony of Jesus Christ, by reporting what he saw" (Revelations 1:1-3 NAB). The second passage that motivated him was: "But the Lord said to him, Go for this man is a chosen instrument of mine to carry my name before Gentiles, kings, and Israelites, and I will show him what he will have to suffer for my name" (Acts 9:15-16 NAB).

Pope John Paul was convinced more than anyone else in the world that God called him to be a modern day Christian apostle.

He believed that his mission was to preach to the whole world the hopeful message of God's Love for humankind and the special need to love God above all things as well as to love one another. He also believed that his mission included writing about such good news and sharing it with everyone.

Early life: 1920-1946

"I am telling you the truth; no one can see the Kingdom of God unless he is born again"
(John 3: 3 NAB).

Karol Jozef Wojtyla was born on May 18, 1920 in Wadowice near the city of Krakow in southern Poland. He was named after his father, a former officer in the Austrian Habsburg army. His mother was Emilia Kaczorowska. Emilia used to tell her friends and neighbors that her son would be "a great man one day." Karol was called Lolek by his family and friends when he was a child. Lolek was a friendly and well-behaved little boy. He enjoyed reading books and loved writing poems and short stories (Pigozzi 1).

Emilia died in 1929 while giving birth to her son, Karol's baby brother, when Karol was only nine years young. When he heard of his mother's death, he calmed himself and said, "It was God's Will." After Emilia's death, his father did most of the housework. He was an intensely religious man and young Karol's role model. He raised his son to be religious and studious. Olga, Karol's only sister, died in infancy two years before Karol was born in 1920 (Pigozzi 2).

Karol also had an older brother named Edmund whom he nicknamed Mundek. He grew very close to him. Edmund graduated from the Jagiellonian University in Krakow. He became a physician and practiced medicine in Wadowice. There was an epidemic of scarlet fever during the winter of 1932. He contracted the disease from one of his patients and died four days later on December 5th of that same year. Karol was only twelve years young. He was profoundly affected. Karol reflected upon this incident fifty years later when he delivered a speech as Pope John Paul II at the Jagiellonian University: “There are events that became deeply engraved in my memory, my brother’s death perhaps even deeper than my mother’s death, equally because of the special circumstances, one may say tragic ones, and in view of my greater maturity at the time” (Pigozzi 3). His holiness’ personal losses helped him gain more wisdom to understand other peoples’ suffering.

As a teenager Karol was influenced by various contacts with the prosperous and vibrant Jewish community of Wadowice. He often played soccer as a goal keeper. He was also a supporter of the Polish club Cracovia. School soccer games were often organized between Catholic and Jewish teams. Due to the anti-Semitism during that time, there was a potential for events to sometimes become unpleasant. However, Karol would cheerfully offer himself as a substitute goalkeeper on the Jewish side if they were short of players (Stanley 11).

Around this time young Karol developed his first serious relationship with the opposite sex. He became close to a young girl named Ginka Beer. He described her as a “Jewish beauty with beautiful blue eyes, jet black hair, and a slender figure.” She was also a superb actress (Stanley 12).

While in high school, Karol joined the “Society of Mary.” This was a lay society, not to be confused with the popular Catholic Marianists. He soon became its president (Stanley 13).

When Karol was fifteen years young, a young man playfully pointed a gun at him not realizing that it was loaded. The young man pulled the trigger and the gun narrowly missing Karol. He would escape from other near fatal death incidents later on in life as a young seminarian and eventually as the Pope (Stanley 14).

University

“No one can have anything unless God gives it to him” (John 3: 27 NAB).

Karol finished studies at the Marian Wadowita High School in Wadowice. He and his father left Wadowice. They moved to Krakow, which was the former capital of Poland, in the summer of 1938. He enrolled at the Jagiellonian University in the autumn semester and studied Old Church, philosophy, the Polish language and literature, Russian, and Slovanic. He also studied French by taking private lessons and worked as a volunteer librarian. He underwent mandatory military training in the Academic Legion. However, he refused to hold and fire any weapons. He played Sagittarius in a fantasy fable called the Moonlight Cavalier at the end of the 1938-1939 academic semester which was produced by an experimental theater troupe (Noonan11).

Karol was an actor, athlete, poet, and playwright during his youth. He learned to read, speak, and write fluently as many as thirteen languages during his life.

By the time he became the Pope, he already spoke ten languages fluently: English, French, German, Greek, Italian, Latin, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish. He learned to read, speak, and write three more languages fluently: Croatian, Esperanto, and Ukrainian while living in the Vatican. Pope John Paul II translated *On Human Labor* into these thirteen languages during his pontificate. Life in Poland was peaceful for Karol and the rest of his fellow Poles until World War II broke out in 1939 (Noonan 12).

The Second World War

“Do not work for food that spoils; instead work for the food that lasts for eternal life”
(John 6: 27 NAB).

Germany invaded Poland in September 1939. The Polish nation was occupied by both German and Soviet forces. Karol and his father along with thousands of other Polish citizens fled eastward from Krakow. Sometimes they found themselves in ditches trying to protect themselves from Luftwaffe aircraft aerial attacks. After having walked 120 miles, they discovered that the Soviets had invaded Poland. They were obligated to return to Krakow. One hundred and eighty-four Jagiellonian University students were arrested for praying. The University was closed and religion was banned by the Soviets. All healthy males had to be working at a job or would be sent to prison (O'Connor 24).

Karol worked as a messenger in a restaurant during the first year of the war. Since this was light work, he was able to continue both his education and theatrical career. Karol practiced his Christian faith through secret prayer groups and also intensified his study of the French language. Karol worked for almost four years as a

manual laborer in a limestone quarry since the beginning of autumn in 1940. He was well paid. Karol lived with his father, who died from a heart attack in 1941.

Then twenty one years young, Karol, without any living relatives, seriously thought about becoming a Roman Catholic priest. Saint Mary became his spiritual mother. Almighty God became his spiritual father. The Lord Jesus Christ became his spiritual brother. They all were his spiritual family. Karol was not alone. In 1942 he entered the underground seminary in 1942 which was run by Cardinal Adam Stefan Sapicha the Archbishop of Krakow (O'Connor 25). However, he was undecided at that time whether to become a Roman Catholic Brother, Deacon, or Priest determined to serve Almighty by living a religious life.

One cold winter night Karol was accidentally struck by a German troop transport truck while walking home from work at the quarry on February 29, 1944. The German officers assisted him by immediately. They commanded a passing truck to be used as an ambulance for their unconscious patient. This unexpected act of kindness was in sharp contrast to the harshness that was normally expected from the occupying forces during the war. He spent two weeks in the hospital. Karol had suffered numerous cuts, a severe concussion, and a shoulder injury. Merciful God had taught him the true meaning of divine and human mercy. This accident along with his recovery and survival confirmed his desire to pursue a priestly vocation. The Warsaw uprising took place in August 1944. The Gestapo took over the city of Krakow on August 6th, an event was known as "Black Sunday." They imprisoned young men in order to avoid a similar rebellion. Karol escaped by hiding behind a door as the Gestapo searched the house where he lived. He

fled to the Archbishop's home, where Karol remained until after the war was finally over (Allegri 35).

The Germans abandoned the city on the night of January 17, 1945. The seminarians reclaimed their old seminary. It was in ruins. Karol and another seminarian volunteered for the unpleasant task of chopping up and removing piles of frozen excrement from the bathrooms. He also helped a fourteen year old Jewish refugee girl named Edith Zierer. Escaping from a Nazi labor camp in Czestochowa, in southern central Poland, she had collapsed from the cold and physical exhaustion on a train station platform in Jedrzejow, in south western Poland. He was the only person who tried to help her. Karol gave her some hot tea and food after carrying her to a train and accompanied her to Krakow. She credited him for having saved her life that day. They were separated during the chaos of post-war Poland. She did not hear of her benefactor again until she discovered that he had been elected Pope in 1978. B'nai B'rith and other Jewish Congregations have confirmed that Karol had helped many other Polish Jews to escape from the Nazis (Allegri 36). This personal experience helped him become more aware and sensitive to the needs and suffering of other human beings. It influenced his writings on the defense of not only laborers but of all oppressed people in *On Human Labor*.

Priesthood

“Every high priest is chosen from his fellow men and appointed to serve God on their behalf to offer sacrifices and offerings for sins” (Hebrews 5: 1 NAB).

Karol was ordained a Roman Catholic priest on November 1, 1946 by the Archbishop of Krakow Adam Stefan Sapicha. The young priest was twenty six years at the time of his ordination. Father Karol celebrated his first Mass the next day at Wawel Cathedral in Krakow.

He then travelled to Rome to begin his doctoral studies in the Pontifical Athenaeum of Saint Thomas Aquinas, commonly known as the *Angelicum*. Becoming well educated in politics and theology, Father Karol studied the phenomenology of Max Scheler, the teachings of Saint John of the Cross, and the written works of Pope Gregory I. Father Karol also studied the works of Yves Congar, who was an important theoretician of ecumenism. He lived in Rome for two years in the Belgian College. The college was small with only twenty two resident seminarians and student priests: among them were five Americans. Father Karol was able to improve his French and practice his German in that multicultural environment which he learned to appreciate. He also began to study English and Italian. Father Karol emphasized the personal nature of human beings encounter with God in his doctoral dissertation that was entitled *The Doctrine of Faith According to Saint John of the Cross*. His doctoral work was unanimously approved in June 1948. However, he was denied the degree because he could not afford to have the text of his dissertation printed, which was one of the *Angelicum* requirements. A revised text of his dissertation was approved by the theological faculty of Jagiellonian

University in Krakow. Father Karol was finally awarded the doctoral degree on December 16th of that same year (Weigel 63).

Father Karol returned to Poland in the summer of 1948. His first pastoral assignment was to the village of Niegowic which was just 15 miles from Krakow. The first thing that he did was to kneel down and kiss the ground when he first arrived there during harvest time. This famous gesture would soon become one of his trademarks during his Papacy. However, he did not originate that means of expression. He admitted that he had borrowed it from a nineteenth century French saint named Jean Marie Baptiste Vianney (Weigel 64).

Father Karol was transferred to Saint Florian's parish in March 1949. He taught ethics at the Jagiellonian University in Krakow and he eventually taught at the Catholic University of Lublin, Poland, where he organized a group of about twenty young people. They began to call themselves the "Little Family." They met to discuss philosophy, to help the blind and sick, and to pray together, and they continued to grow in membership. His young friends began to call him uncle in order to avoid outsiders from guessing that he was a priest on outside trips (Weigel 65).

As his followers grew, their bond deepened. Several weddings occurred in the group. Eventually there were some 200 people in his circle, and they came to be called the "Environment." He and his group went on both kayaking and skiing trips every year. Father Karol used to have races consisting of two teams. The others would join him for conversation and spiritual guidance. He would celebrate Mass by using an overturned kayak as an altar with the paddles as the cross. The kayakers took part in an international competition through the gorge on the Dunajec River in southern Poland which runs

through the Pieniny Mountains. Because Father Karol's kayak was punctured, it sank at the finish line. He also wrote a series of articles in Krakow's Catholic newspaper *Universal Weekly* which dealt with contemporary church issues (Weigel 66).

Father Karol's literary work flourished in his first dozen years as a priest. Life during communion, pastoral duties, and war all became themes for his plays and poems with the focus on Almighty God's Love and Forgiveness for every sinner.

He had them published under two pseudonyms: Andrzej Gruda and Andrzej Jawien.

He used these fictitious names to differentiate his literary from his spiritual writings which were published under his own name. Father Karol also did this so that his literary work would be recognized on its own merit rather than as religious curiosities (Lepak 135).

Father Karol earned a second degree in 1954 by evaluating the feasibility of a Roman Catholic ethic based upon the ethical system of phenomenologist Max Schuler. His research paper was called *An Evaluation of the Possibility of Constructing a Christian Ethics on the Basis of the System of Max Schuler*. However, he was denied the degree upon earning it because the communist government prohibited the faculty at the Jagiellonian University from awarding the degree. He was finally granted the Doctor of Philosophy degree (Ph.d) in 1957 from the Catholic University of Lublin. Previously, he had already become the chairperson of its Ethics Department in 1956 (Kubik 184).

Bishop and Cardinal

“This saying is trustworthy; whoever aspires to the office of bishop desires a noble task” (1 Timothy 1: 1 NAB).

Father Karol received a letter ordering him to report immediately to Cardinal Wyszyński who was the primate in Poland on August 5, 1958. This happened while he was on a kayaking trip on the Lyne river in northeastern Poland with his group of followers. As soon as he arrived at the primate’s office, the cardinal gave him the good news. Father Karol had been nominated as an auxiliary bishop to Archbishop Eugeniusz Baziak who was the apostolic administrator of the Archdiocese of Krakow.

The archdiocese had become a vacant seat upon the death of Cardinal Sapicha. Father Karol gladly accepted the nomination and went straight to the Ursuline Convent. He knocked on the door asking if he could go inside to pray. He fascinated the nuns by lying on the floor down for a long time in that position in front of the tabernacle. Father Karol wrote about this and many other similar experiences in his book entitled *Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way* in 1958. Bishop Baziak once said out loud, “We have a pope” when Father Karol entered a room full of priests. That remark was made following the news of his appointment as Auxiliary Bishop. Bishop Baziak suggested that such a statement could have been interpreted as prophecy regarding future events that were to take place in Roman Catholic Church history. Father Karol became the youngest bishop in Poland at the age of thirty eight. Archbishop Baziak made him a bishop on September 28, 1958, the feast of Saint Wenceslaus, in Wawel Cathedral in Krakow. Father Karol’s dedicated pastoral record, his books on Roman Catholic Church issues, and his Doctoral Degree in

Philosophy had a lasting impression on Archbishop Baziak. These are just a few of the reasons that Father Karol was promoted to the next rank in the Roman Catholic Church (Cornwell 120).

The newly appointed Bishop Karol Jozef Wojtyla started an annual custom in 1959. He celebrated the Midnight Christmas Mass in an open field in Nowa Huta, Poland which was a new industrial town, not far from Krakow, that was built by the Polish Communist Government. It is not far from Krakow. Strangely enough it was the first town in Polish history that was deliberately built without a church of any Christian denomination.

However, the persistent pressure by the devoted Polish Roman Catholics paid off when a Roman Catholic Church was finally built in Nowa Huta, Poland in 1977 (Cornwell 121).

Archbishop Baziak died in June 1962. On July 16th of that same year, Bishop Wojtyla was elected as temporary administrator of the Archdiocese of Krakow in Poland until a new archbishop could be appointed. Bishop Wojtyla departed for Rome in order to participate in the Second Vatican Council on October 5, 1962. He ranked relatively low in the Roman Catholic hierarchy. Bishop Wojtyla sat next to the door of Saint Peter's Basilica. He had submitted an essay to the commissioners that he had prepared for the Council recommending that the world wanted to know the Roman Catholic Church's viewpoint on the human person and the human condition. Bishop Wojtyla also added this question, "What was the Roman Catholic Church's response to modernity's widespread despair about any and all human existence?" (Cornwell 122).

Bishop Wojtyla also made important written contributions to two of the most historic and influential products of the council. One of them was entitled the *Decree on Religious Freedom*, and the other one was entitled *The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (Cornwell 123).

Bishop Wojtyla published his influential theological book called *Love and Responsibility* in 1960. It was a defense of the traditional Roman Catholic Church teachings on marriage and sex from a new philosophical position. Pope Paul VI appointed him Archbishop of Krakow, Poland in 1960. He was very instrumental in writing the Roman Catholic Church Encyclical entitled *Vital Human*. It deals with the value of each human being as an individual person God created and also forbids abortion and artificial birth control.

Archbishop Wojtyla made an important impression on Pope Paul VI with both his inspirational book as well as with his brilliant literary skills in the creation of a new Roman Catholic Church Encyclical. His strong Christian Faith, his natural modesty, and his spiritual wisdom motivated Pope Paul VI to promote him again on June 24, 1967 to the position of Roman Catholic Cardinal of Poland (Szulc 100).

Election to the Papacy

“I will give you the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven; what you prohibit on earth will be prohibited in Heaven, and what you permit on earth will be permitted in Heaven” (Matthew 16: 19 NAB).

The Roman Catholic Church Papal Conclave of October 1978 was motivated by the surprise death of Pope John Paul I on September 28th of that same year. His Papacy

only lasted thirty three days. The Roman Catholic Cardinals that elected him on August 26th expected his reign to last for at least a decade. Surprisingly they found themselves having to elect his successor within six weeks (Bernstein and Politi 81).

The doors of the Sistine Chapel were sealed. The Roman Catholic Church Conclave began ten days after the funeral of Pope John Paul I on October 14th. It was divided among two particularly important candidates of the Roman Catholic Church Papacy. One candidate was the liberal Archbishop of Florence, Italy Giovanni Benelli who was a close friend of former Pope John Paul I. The other candidate was the conservative Archbishop of Genoa, Italy Giuseppe Siri (Bernstein and Politi 82).

Archbishop Benelli's supporters were confident that he would be elected. Benelli came close with nine leading votes.

However, the scales of opposition to both Roman Catholic Church candidates meant that neither one was likely to receive the two-thirds plus one votes that are needed for winning the election. The influential and widely respected Cardinal of Vienna, Austria Franz Konig individually suggested to his fellow voters a third suitable candidate for the Papacy. That candidate was someone who had highly impressed Konig. He also knew him quite well. That candidate was none other than the Polish Cardinal Karol Jozef Wojtyla (Bernstein and Politi 83).

Archbishop Siri's supporters were the same cardinals who also supported Cardinal Wojtyla. Among them was Archbishop Stefan Wyszynski from Poland along with the majority of the American Cardinals that were led by Cardinal John Krol as well as other conservative cardinals. Cardinal Wojtyla eventually defeated Archbishop Benelli. He was actually the supposed candidate for whom Wojtyla had voted on the

eighth ballot on the third day along with ninety nine votes from the participating voters. The Roman Catholic Cardinals that voted for him did so for several important reasons. Cardinal Wojtyla's educational background was exceptionally impressive. His gift as a writer was unique in every sense of the word. However, most of all his clerical record spoke on his behalf. He had not only succeeded and survived under a communist regime, but he had stood up to its government without making any compromises as a true follower of The Lord Jesus Christ. Father Karol did it with self-confidence and unshakable faith in Almighty God.

Pope John Paul II also made Roman Catholic Church History by becoming the first Polish Pope. He accepted his unexpected victory with humble words: 'With obedience in faith to Jesus Christ, my Lord, and with trust in the mother of Jesus Christ and the Church, in spite of great difficulties, I accept' (qtd. in Buttiglione 156).

He paid tribute to his two of his favorite saints, Saint John the Evangelist and Saint Paul the Apostle, by taking the name of John Paul II. He became the first non-Italian Pontiff since the Dutch Pope Adrian VI who reigned from 1522 to 1523 (Bernstein and Politi 84).

The traditional white smoke rose from the chimney of the Sistine Chapel at 6: 18 p.m. This notified the crowd that was gathered in Saint Peter's Square that a new pope had been selected. Senior Cardinal Deacon Pericle Felici gave the traditional Latin announcement for Wojtyla's victory in the balcony of Saint Peter's Basilica, 'I have an important announcement. We have a pope. His Eminence Reverend Karol Most Holy Cardinal Wojtyla is now Pope John Paul II' (qtd. in Bernstein and Politi 85).

Some members of the crowd thought that the aged Dean of Cardinals, Carlo Confalonieri had been elected. He was a non-participant in the conclave because he was over the age of limit. Other members thought that the new pope was of African origin or even Japanese origin upon hearing his surname. There was further confusion when a few members thought that the new Pontiff was the Vicar of Rome, Ugo Poletti. This was attributed to an Italian news reporter announcing the word Polish in Italian which sounds like the Vicar of Rome's name. Pope John Paul II appeared on the balcony at 7:15 p.m. He changed papal tradition by giving a brief speech before his first public blessing while gripping the railings on the posts: 'I don't know if I can express myself well in your Italian language, but if I make a mistake, you will correct me' (qtd. in Bernstein and Politi 86). He was cheered by the faithful crowd of Roman Catholic followers with applauses and kind words of praise.

The new Pontiff began his pontificate by creating a lasting impression of humility and sincerity that gave hope for the future and helped to reaffirm faith in the Roman Catholic Church under the new leadership of a true disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Time Magazine Senior Correspondent John Allen wrote that a member of the Roman Curia requested that the new Pope end his speech after he had begun delivering it. Nevertheless, Pope John Paul II ignored the request. Continuing to speak to the crowds, he did make an outstanding impression on Italian listeners. (At first they were nervous at the prospect of having a foreign Pope). This misconception was due also to an international error that was made by the newly elected Pope during his speech that he had given in the Italian language. That mistake quickly won the applause of the crowd. It eased the tension of the event as soon as he said, 'If I make a mistake, you will correct

me' (qtd. in Brighenti, Tobowsky, and Tirglio 96). This Christian meekness easily won the respect of his audience as the true Vicar of Jesus Christ on earth. It was a distinguishable personal trait that became evident in all of his writings, especially in *On Human Labor*.

Pope John Paul II became the 264th Roman Catholic Pope according to the chronological list of pope. The first non-Italian Pope in 455 years, the new Pontiff was only fifty eight years of age. He was also the youngest Pope to have been elected to the papacy since Pope Pius IX in 1846 who was only fifty four years of age. Pope John Paul II was the only Pope who came from a communist country. He disregarded the traditional Roman Catholic coronation just like his former predecessor. His Holiness chose to receive ecclesiastical investiture with the simplified papal inauguration on October 22, 1978. All of the Roman Catholic Cardinals knelt before him to take their vows of obedience and kiss his ring according to the Church's tradition.

However, he stood up when the Polish Prelate Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński knelt down in front of him. His Holiness prevented him from kissing his ring and then embraced him in a brotherly hug. His Holiness took possession of the Basilica of Saint John Lateran, which became his Cathedral Church as the new Bishop of Rome on November 12, 1978. The election of a cardinal from a communist country nation to the Papacy reminded many Roman Catholics of the plot in the popular 1963 book by Australian author Morris West and 1968 film *The Shoes of the Fisherman* by Warner Brothers Pictures starring American actor Anthony Quinn. This was also the last Roman Catholic Church conclave of the twentieth century. The next election for a new Pope did

not occur until after Pope John Paul II's death on April 2, 2005 (Burton, Crimp, and Honiegosky 112).

His Holiness

“None of you will ever believe unless you see miracles and wonders” (John 4: 48 NAB).

Pope John Paul II's election as the Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church in 1978 earned him an international following. In retrospect, his reputation intimidated the communist government in Poland. “Be not afraid” became his motto. Addressing the United Nations General Assembly in 1979, he challenged all of the nations of the free world to defend human rights. Shortly afterwards, he embarked on a courageous yet dangerous nine-day public pilgrimage to “strengthen his brethren in Poland.” There he warned the communist authorities that his papacy would watch them very closely. The Pontiff also reminded them of their responsibility “before history and before your conscience.” His loyal followers responded to his visit with strong loyalty that was borne of many years of shared suffering.

The banners with the communist party slogan “The Party is for the People” also publically displayed the daring addition, “But the people are for the Pope” (Alison 120).

According to Pope John Paul II: ‘Communism was a secular failure because it failed to deliver the material benefits that it rejected concerning the truth about the human person’ (qtd. in Oder 142). The state under socialism treats the individual, not with dignity, but as a molecule within the social organism, so that the good of the individual is completely subordinated to the functioning of the socioeconomic mechanism. He preached that Secular opposition to capitalism, including doctrinaire socialism to the type

of soft democratic collectivism that is known as ‘liberalism’ in modern times, has always derived from one basically inaccurate idea. This indicates that private property and its productive use to make money exploits other people.

The Polish Communist Government persecuted Poland’s laborers by imprisonment, torture, and execution. It outlawed labor unions, prohibited freedom of religion and speech, and denied laborers standard benefits, such as health insurance, paid holidays, pension plans, and pay raises. The Soviet method of enforcing communist laws in Poland employed brutal military force to dominate the Poles which included Marxist propaganda to create fear and produce oppression. Communism in Eastern Europe was just another violent revolution which became one more dictatorship. History has demonstrated that every evil empire, including communist and non-communist, has collapsed due to its biggest mistake: the attempt to enslave humankind’s most precious God-given gift, free will. People who love and obey Almighty God will sacrifice their lives for their freedom and the right of their fellow human beings to liberty. *On Human Labor* clearly explains the conflict between freedom and slavery and its outcome.

It criticizes Soviet Communism’s failure to satisfy its people needs due to its radical departure from Frederick Engels and Karl Marx’s *Communist Manifesto*. Though Marxism was beneficial to laborers in theory, Soviet Communism was detrimental to laborers in practice especially when the Soviet Communist Government misused its authority by depriving laborers their well-deserved rights.

History has demonstrated that Pope John Paul II played a vital role in promoting the ideals of the traditional Christian Doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church and Solidarity through his preaching and writing in his Polish homeland. His considerable

moral authority laid an important framework for the eventual breaking down of the Iron Curtain and reuniting Eastern Europe with Western Europe. Of course the fall of the Berlin Wall cannot be attributed to one person, but the influence of the Pope was significant in promoting this ideal of non-violent reunion. However, His Holiness modestly refused to accept the well deserved credit that he has rightfully earned and yet that he has given to other key players such as Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, US President Ronald Reagan, and Solidarity's Lech Walesa in the mission to eliminate the Eastern European Communist Empire.

According to Pope John Paul II: "I could say that Divine Providence caused the fall of Communism, in a certain sense as a system it fell by itself as a consequence of its own mistakes and abuses proving to be a medicine more dangerous than the disease itself" (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 102). He explained that communism did not bring about true social reform, yet it did become a powerful threat and challenge to the entire world falling by itself, because of its own inherent weakness.

He elaborated upon how Warsaw, Moscow, Budapest, Berlin, Prague, Sofia, and Bucharest have become stages in a long pilgrimage toward liberty. It is admirable that in these events, entire people spoke out: women, young people, men, overcoming fears, their irrepressible thirst for liberty speeded up developments, made walls tumble down and open gates. Soviet Communism's worst mistake was its exclusion of freedom of choice. Eastern Europeans did not vote for a communist government. It was forced upon them by brutal force just like other forms of dictatorships including the Nazi regime. Their basic rights were stolen from them for which Solidarity guided by *On Human* Labor challenged Polish Communism, defeating it in the ultimate battle for freedom, a

national election by which the people won by voting against it to recapture their freedom. Historically, every evil empire that has ruled people on this earth has collapsed due to its own destructive wicked nature. History has repeatedly demonstrated that humanity will not tolerate oppression from the oppressor for long before rising up against all odds to achieve humankind's most precious God-given blessing, freedom. Pope John Paul II's third papal encyclical reiterates this valuable historical lesson that serves as a warning to the oppressor and hope for the oppressed. Throughout the course of history great leaders have written great writings that have become blueprints in the struggle against social injustice. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s *I Have a Dream* speech was instrumental in achieving equal rights for minorities in the USA. *On Human Labor* was instrumental in acquiring freedom and other benefits for laborers in Poland as well as the rest of the Soviet Satellite countries of Eastern Europe.

Despite the collapse of Communism, Pope John Paul II did not assert that this implied victory of Capitalism.

He remained committed to a Christian vision of social justice, an ideal that Capitalism failed to achieve. The Roman Catholic Church has been skeptical of capitalism throughout history. It was not because of what the pursuit of profit did to exploit other people, but instead of how the pursuit of profit frequently corrupted individuals. It made them avaricious, envious, and materialistic.

Pope John Paul II wrote *On Human Labor* in 1983 exposing both misconceptions. He wrote: 'When a firm makes a profit, it means that productivity has been properly employed and corresponding human needs have been duly satisfied' (qtd. in Buttiglione 190). The Pope explained that Profitability is not the only indicator of a firm's condition,

it is possible for the financial accounts to be in order and yet for the people, who make up the firm's most valuable asset, to be humiliated and their dignity offended. He mentioned that besides being morally inadmissible, this will eventually have negative repercussions on the firm's economic efficiency. In fact, the purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit, but is to be found in its very existence as a commodity of persons who in various ways are endeavoring to satisfy their basic needs and who from a particular group are at the service of the whole society.

Pope John Paul II's bold critique of socialism as well as unenlightened capitalism left democratic individualism together with free markets, enlightened and guided by the spiritual teachings of the Roman Catholic Church, as the sole practical way of organizing human action, through the process of elimination.

His papal encyclical *On Human Labor* simultaneously reconciled the Church's historical anxiety that capitalism as well as free markets breed evil among the faithful followers of Jesus Christ with beneficial social outcomes that only human liberty and its expression through private property along with free markets can produce. Communism eliminates the rights of laborers while democracy turns it against them by legally downsizing personnel hiring part time laborers who are not entitled to few if any benefits, and sending jobs overseas.

Pope John Paul II wrote: 'Earthly property as well as human despair are not the product of exploitation of labor, private property and the pursuit of profit through the operation of free markets but instead are the complete opposite' (qtd. in Buttiglione 191). The Pope explained that it is when human beings are excluded from ownership, lack the opportunity to develop job skills, and are denied the freedom to take part in free

enterprise that individuals suffer. He mentioned that if actually exploited, they are to a great extent marginalized; economic development takes over their heads, so to speak, when it does not actually reduce the already narrow scope of their old subsistence economies.

Some of the common failures of Soviet Communism are the violation of the God-given right to possess private property and selection of job career. *On Human Labor* speaks out against the prohibition of certain liberties and speaks in favor of the benefits that laborers rightfully deserve.

Pope John Paul II's third and most influential papal encyclical *On Human Labor* has been has been one of the most powerful tools that has ever been used as a blueprint for accomplishing the incredible task of literally wiping out not only the Polish Communist Government, but every communist government in the Eastern European hemisphere including the former Soviet Union. His words of inspiration were powerful weapons of faith and hope that armed his numerous devoted Roman Catholic followers with deeply rooted Christian values as well as international secular leaders who were convinced that something had to be done to do away with what he labeled a "historical political mistake and unnecessary social evil" (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 100).

Traditional Roman Catholic social teaching is based upon the Christian virtues contained in the Holy Bible. Pope John Paul II elaborated upon them in *On Human Labor*. Each one is explained in detail and how they relate to the defense of the rights of laborers. Solidarity is just one of them which inspired a political and social anti-communist movement. His Holiness explained that there is a connection between the

teachings of the Holy Bible and his third papal encyclical involving the concept of Solidarity which is connected by the defense of the rights of laborers.

Liberal Roman Catholic academic scholar, philosopher, and writer Dr. Rocco Buttiglione praised Pope John II's *On Human Labor* in his book *The Man Who Became Pope John Paul II* (2007). He has written several books on the philosophy of certain Roman Catholic Church leaders and writers including His Holiness. Buttiglione agrees, as do many other experts on Jozef Karol Wojtyla's papacy, that there is a direct connection between *On Human Labor* and the Holy Bible.

Buttiglione and other scholars maintain that *On Human Labor* enabled His Holiness to articulate and refine his ideas through the development of his philosophical style. It is the papal encyclical of his spiritual maturity. In it he confronts what he considered the greatest dangers of modern times: atheism and agnosticism. Atheism rejects all religious beliefs and denies the existence of God. Agnosticism questions the existence of Almighty God in the absence of material proof and in unwillingness to accept supernatural revelation. *On Human Labor* marked a new beginning for Pope John Paul II. For the first few years of his papacy the problem was communism in Eastern Europe. The next problem was agnosticism in the Western World during the following years of his papacy. Pope John Paul II has often said, "Freedom has to be related to truth. Democracy without truth is doomed to fail" (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 101). He borrowed this Christian concept from the Holy Bible: "The truth will set you free" (John 8: 32 NAB). Numerous Roman Catholic Church doctors have also explained in detail the value of this ideal such as Saint Augustine of Hippo and Saint Thomas Aquinas (Buttiglione 192).

Buttiglione states: “The Roman Catholic Church has produced some of the world’s greatest intellectual thinkers including Saint Augustine of Hippo and Saint Thomas Aquinas. Pope John Paul II belongs in that same category. No other pontiff has ever written a papal encyclical that has contributed so much to benefit mankind” (Buttiglione 193). *On Human Labor* became the blueprint for Solidarity which began as a trade union and defeated the Polish Communist Government in a national election as a Roman Catholic Social Movement. It turned Communism’s weakness against it making easier to be defeated by Solidarity which rightfully seized the opportunity to do so.

Pope John Paul II has often said, ‘Communism was a rotted tree that was planted wrong and needed to be cut down so I did it with the help of my friends’ (qtd. in Buttiglione 193). Lech Walesa, Mikhail Gorbachev, and Ronald Reagan not only agreed with him, but also assisted him in various ways to eliminate the Soviet Communist Empire in Eastern Europe.

Chapter Two:

On Human Labor

“The Helper the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name will teach you everything and make you remember all that I have told you” (John 14: 26 NAB).

Pope John Paul II wrote fourteen papal encyclicals during his reign as Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. The word encyclical comes from the word encyclia in Latin. In Greek it means “general” or “encircling.” This was a circular letter sent to all of the churches of a particular area in the ancient Christian Church. In the modern Roman Catholic Church, a papal encyclical, in the strictest sense, is a letter that is sent by the Pope which is explicitly addressed to Roman Catholic bishops of a particular part of the world. It usually deals with some area of Roman Catholic doctrine. A papal encyclical is generally used for significant issues. It is second in importance only to the highest ranking document which is now issued by the Pope known as an Apostolic Constitution. The papal encyclical’s title is usually taken from its first few words (Styczen 14).

On Human Labor (Labor Excercen) is Pope John Paul II’s third papal encyclical which was published on September 14, 1981. It is part of a larger body of Christian doctrine known as Roman Catholic Social Teaching. The Biblical book of Genesis served as the major source of inspiration for His Holiness’ most popular and most important influential work (Styczen 15).

Pope John Paul II continued his predecessors Pope Leo XIII, Pope Pius XI, and Pope John XXIII mission of developing the body of Roman Catholic Social Doctrine. *On Human Labor* was of particular importance to the Roman Catholic Church (Styczen 16).

According to His Holiness: “On one hand there is a growing moral sensitivity alert to the value of every individual as a human being without any distinction of nationality, political orientation, race, or social class. On the other hand these proclamations are contradicted in practice” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 100).

His Holiness questioned, how can these solemn affirmatives be reconciled with the widespread attacks on human life and the refusal to accept those who are elderly, just conceived, needy, or weak? These attacks go directly against respect for life; they threaten the very meaning of democratic coexistence and our cities risk becoming societies of people who are marginalized, oppressed, rejected, and uprooted instead of communities of people living together. The Roman Catholic Church does not endorse any political agenda. It does hold that Roman Catholic Social Teaching is applicable in the public political realm not just the private one (Styczen 17).

On Human Labor qualifies the teaching of private ownership in relation to the common use of goods that all people, as Almighty God’s children, are entitled to without any reservation. The Roman Catholic Church has always understood this right within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole creation (Styczen 18). The right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everybody.

Solidarity as defined in *On Human Labor* is a Christian virtue. It seeks to go beyond itself to total forgiveness, gratitude, and reconciliation. Solidarity leads to a new vision of the unity of humankind (Styczen 19).

It is a reflection of Almighty God's Trinity: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Solidarity is an organization that binds members of a group together. All the people on the planet belong to one human family. Everyone must become their brother's keeper even though they may be separated by culture, distance, or language. The Lord Jesus Christ taught that everyone must love their neighbor as themselves. In the parable of the Good Samaritan, everyone can see that their compassion should extend to all people (Luke 10: 29-37 NAB). Solidarity includes the Biblical call to welcome the stranger among them as including immigrants seeking work, a safe home, education for their children, and a decent life for their families. Solidarity at the international level primarily concerns the global community. Charity to individuals or groups must be accompanied by transforming unjust structures.

On Human Labor has done more for humanity than any other papal encyclical in Roman Catholic Church history. It became the blueprint for a historical social movement known as Solidarity which began as a Christian virtue then transformed into a labor union (Styczen 20). The Solidarity blueprint nonviolently struggled for certain laborers' rights which today have become the standard role model for all international labor unions. Solidarity members demanded: freedom of speech including freedom of the press, health insurance, paid holidays, pay raises, pension plan, protection by law against all types of abuse, promotions, sick days, the right to a fair hearing before a review board, the right to negotiate a fair contract at a bargaining table, the right to strike, and the right to

guaranteed written benefits. Solidarity members were respected and supported by the international community for their courage and faith in the right to struggle for human dignity and self-respect.

The international community condemned the Communist Governments of Eastern Europe for abusing human rights and using inhuman methods such as imprisonment, torture, and murder to control its oppressed citizens. According to Pope John Paul II: “The Communists Governments of Eastern Europe tried to establish an artificial, perfect, and Godless system of government where only the Devil was the ruler of this man-made Hell” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 101). However, all Christians know Satan’s kingdom is a divided one that cannot stand such as communism which was destined to fail like any other system.

Pope John Paul wrote *On Human Labor* to defend the rights of laborers against all morally abusive political systems, companies, and organizations that deal with laborers and posed a threat to Christian faith and Polish patriotic anti-communist agenda is a common bond that appears in his third papal encyclical (Styczen 21). The Pope’s personal experience with communism gave him an advantage over his predecessors that never came close to learning about it the same way that he did while living in Poland. His Holiness’ mission was a personal goal even though he followed his predecessors’ footsteps in carrying out the Roman Catholic Church’s Social Teaching agenda to defend the rights of laborers.

Pope John Paul II’s *On Human Labor* is both similar in His Holiness’ vital message with his predecessors’ main theme (Styczen 22). However, the Pope’s writing style is totally radical from any traditional Roman Catholic Church papal encyclical.

Traditionally, Roman Catholic Popes wrote their papal encyclicals specifically for the cardinals to instruct his bishops on certain vital Church issues which were then taught to their parish priests to preach to their parishioners. His Holiness wrote all of his papal encyclicals for all different kinds of audiences, clergy and parishioners, Roman Catholics and Protestants, and professionals as well as ordinary working class citizens. He wrote his message directly to them and for them to understand, especially his most popular papal encyclical *On Human Labor*. His Holiness had it printed and distributed to every person in Poland. It became the second most widely read book in Poland next to the Holy Bible which is still number one. Every member of the clergy, from the Polish Cardinal to the altar boys, helped deliver the books to every corner of the Polish nation. The Poles read *On Human Labor*, the clergy explained its message, and the Polish laborers were inspired to unite for their nation's just cause to defend their rights from the Polish Communist Government. Solidarity was born; Lech Walesa, its co-founder, led millions of Polish laborers in a non-violent struggle against the evil Polish anti-Roman Catholic Political Regime; and every Polish citizen supported the righteous yet outlawed labors union's cause with prayers, food, money, clothing, shelter, and even manpower when necessary.

Pope John Paul II drastically changed the way a Roman Catholic papal encyclical was written. Each Pontiff wrote in Latin using Church terminology, according to tradition, that was normally understood only by the clergy. By the time it was preached to the parishioners, the original message was usually lost in translation. In order to avoid this problem, His Holiness first wrote all of his papal encyclicals in his native Polish, then in all of the other several languages that he understood.

On Human Labor's powerful message helps support not only the creation of Solidarity, but also its existence through the availability of the Pope's third papal encyclical throughout the world to all Roman Catholic parishioners. Even US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev received a copy of it and provided support in various ways. Reagan responded with political sanctions against Poland, the USSR, and the other Soviet Satellite nations of Eastern Europe, as well as aide to Solidarity, including money and technology. Gorbachev responded by creating and implementing a plan to reform communism throughout Poland, the USSR, and the Soviet Satellite nations of Eastern Europe, which called for more freedom and rights for laborers (Styczen 23).

The Pope also wrote his papal encyclical in the style of a scholarly form of research, very much similar to academic scholarship. *On Human Labor* contains five chapters and twenty seven sections and an introduction which the Pope wrote under the heading of Blessing, an abstract of the papal encyclical and not a traditional prayer written by previous Pontiffs in their church letters. His Holiness' papal encyclical was published as a book with only one hundred pages easy enough to be read and understood by faithful Polish and non-Polish Roman Catholics (Styczen 24). The Pope's book allowed its readers to understand the meaning of human labor interpreted by a spiritual and political leader who was not only a gifted intellect but also a humble individual who shared a common bond with every laborer both Roman Catholic and non-Roman Catholic. He was one of them, one who has experienced their suffering and one who has shared their faith and hope for triumph against Communism.

His Holiness' book helped strengthen Roman Catholic's faith in Almighty God and in the Roman Catholic Church, Solidarity, and in humanity. Christian and non-Christian Churches and charitable organizations donated money, food, and clothing to Solidarity after its leaders and members read *On Human Labor*. The Polish Communist Government labeled the Pope's book "anti-communist propaganda" and banned it in Poland. Under Polish Communist law, any person caught with possession of the Pope's book was imprisoned. The Polish Communist Government tried in vain to confiscate over one hundred thousand copies of *On Human Labor* that circulated throughout Poland (Styczen 25). It became the Polish and Eastern European Roman Catholic laborers spiritual reference manual. It outlined the rights of all employees, the laborers, and the obligations of government and industries, the employers. His Holiness' book realistically portrayed the Polish Roman Catholic laborer as the oppressed and the Polish Communist Government as the oppressor.

The Pope possessed a unique gift for applying common sense to his advantage in both religious as well as political matters. He wrote all of his fourteen papal encyclicals, especially *On Human Labor*, with references contained in the Holy Bible to confirm his message as having validity which made sense to his loyal readers. His third papal encyclical stood out, though not the only one, as the most anti-communist piece of literature that he has written (Styczen 26). He exploited the Polish Communist Government's weaknesses in failing to provide laborers with certain necessary benefits and protecting their rights. *On Human Labor* was an embarrassment to every communist government in Eastern Europe especially in Poland where it was challenged the Polish Communist Government's dreaded fears.

It exposed their falsehood, their radical departure from the roots of Marxism, and their abuse of civil rights with anti-Godly cruelty. Communism in Eastern Europe, especially in Poland, made and broke its own rules, cheating to win every election and the acceptance of other governments around the world. However, when it was challenged to fight fair, using fair rules that both sides had to abide by, it obviously lost. Lech Walesa stated: “Communism was a big bully that met its match when Solidarity challenged it to fight clean and lost by a unanimous decision” (Walesa, *The Road to Hope*, 98).

Blessing

Pope John Paul II wrote:

Through labor man must earn his daily bread and contribute to the continual advance of science and technology and, above all, to elevating unceasingly the cultural and moral level of the society within which he lives in community with those who belong to the same family. And labor means any activity by man, whether manual or intellectual, whatever its nature or circumstances; it means any human activity that can and must be recognized as labor, in the midst of all the many activities of which man is capable and to which he is predisposed by his very nature, by virtue of humanity itself. Man is made to be in the visible universe an image beginning therefore he is called to labor. Labor is one of the characteristics that distinguish man from the rest of the creatures, whose activity for sustaining their lives cannot be called labor. Only man is capable of labor, and only man labors, at the same time by labor occupying his existence on earth. Thus labor bears a particular mark of man and humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And this mark decides its interior characteristics; in a sense it constitutes its very nature. (Pope John Paul II OHL 1)

Pope John Paul II's papal encyclical *On Human Labor* (Laborem Exercens), issued on September 14, 1981, is explicitly based upon the record of humanity's creation in Almighty God's own image and likeness (Genesis 1: 26-28 NAB).

It is of great interest to modern biblical creationist Christians of all denominations of Christianity. The contents of this papal encyclical are closely

connected with and intended to elaborate upon traditional Roman Catholic Social Teaching in the area of human labor and social relations. This teaching is contained in Pope Leo XIII's *Serum Novarum* (Of Revolution, 1894), Pope Pius XI's *Quadragesimo Anno* (In the Fourtieth Year, 1931), Pope John XXIII's *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher, 1961), the Second Vatican Council's *Gaudium et Spes* (Joy and Hope, 1966), and pertinent statements by Saint Thomas Aquinas in the *Summa Theologia* (Complete Theology, 1273) (Styczen 27).

Introduction

1. Human Labor on the Ninetieth Anniversary of *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution)

According to Pope John Paul II:

Since 15 May of the present year 1981 was the ninetieth anniversary of the publication by the great Pope of the “social question”, Leo XIII, of the decisively important Encyclical which begins with the words *Rerum Novarum* (*Of Revolution*) I, Pope John Paul II wish to devote this document to *On Human Labor* (OHL) and, even more to man in the vast context of the reality of labor. As I said in the Encyclical *Redemptor Hominis* (Redeemer of Man), published at the beginning of my service in the See of Saint Peter in Rome, man “is the primary and fundamental way for the Church”, precisely because of the inscrutable mystery of Redemption in Christ; and so it is necessary to return constantly to this way and to follow it ever anew in the various aspects in which it shows all the wealth and at the same time all the toil of human existence on earth. (Wojtyla OHL 1)

It had become customary for Roman Catholic Popes to publish new writings on social issues on ten-year anniversaries of *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution) in order to keep the teaching relevant to the current times.

On Human Labor was written in honor of the ninetieth anniversary, and makes references to *Rerum Novarum* (*Of Revolution*) and to several of the subsequent writings. Pope John Paul II was not able to issue the document on time for the May 15 anniversary

because of an assassination attempt on his life on May 13, 1981. He published *On Human Labor* a few months later in September 14, 1981 (Styczen 28).

Some of the trends mentioned by His Holiness in his third papal encyclical have been explained in great detail. He wrote about the increased use of technology, especially information technology, which the Pontiff predicted would bring changes comparable to the industrial revolution of the previous century. He wrote about environmental issues, noting that some resources, particularly oil, were becoming scarce and the need to protect the environment was becoming apparent (Donders 24). He also wrote in *On Human Labor* that people in the developing world wanted to become more involved in the global economy. His Holiness welcomed this trend, but feared it would bring unemployment for many skilled laborers as labor was distributed more widely.

2. In the Organic Development of the Church's Social Action

Pope John Paul II wrote:

It is certainly true that labor, as a human issue, is at the very center of the "social question" to which, for almost a hundred years, since the publication of the above-mentioned Encyclical, the Church's teaching and the many undertakings connected with her apostolic mission have been directly directed. The present reflections on labor are not intended to follow a different line, but rather to be in organic connection with the whole tradition of this teaching and activity.

At the same time, however, I am making them, according to the indication in the Gospel, in order to bring out from the heritage of the Gospel "what is new and what is old". Certainly, labor is part of "what is old"- as old as man and his life on earth. Nevertheless, the general situation of man in the modern world, studied and analyzed in its various aspects of geography, culture and civilization, calls for the discovery of the new meanings of human labor. It likewise calls for the formulation of the new tasks that in this sector face each individual, the family, each country, the whole human race, and finally, the Church herself. (Wojtyla OHL 2)

Pope John Paul II's papal encyclicals and other writings have often been longer than those of previous Roman Catholic Pontiffs. In a sense, he has created a body of labor which is a consciously interrelated statement of the Roman Catholic Faith. He himself often points out the connection of one dogma with another, for example, the relationship between the Roman Catholic Church's doctrine of the nature of human beings and her doctrine of humankind's rights and duties in society as explained in *On Human Labor*. Roman Catholic Social Teaching's body of doctrine developed by the Roman Catholic Church includes issues of economics, poverty, social organization, solidarity, role of the state, and wealth. Its foundations are widely considered to have been laid by Pope Leo XII's 1891 Papal Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution), which advocated economic Distributism and condemned both Capitalism and Socialism, although its roots can be traced to the writings of Roman Catholic thinkers such as Saint Thomas Aquinas and Saint Augustine of Hippo, and is also derived from concepts present in the Holy Bible (Donders 25).

According to Pope Benedict XVI: 'Its purpose is simply to help purify reason and to contribute, here and now, to the acknowledgement and attainment of what is just' (qtd. in Duffy 265). He emphasized that the Church has to play its part through rational argument and has to reawaken the spiritual energy without which justice cannot prevail and prosper.

According to Pope John Paul II: "Its foundations rest on the threefold corner stones of human dignity, solidarity and subsidiarity" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 102). These concerns echo elements of Jewish law and the prophetic books of the Old

Testament, and recall the teachings of The Lord Jesus Christ recorded in the New Testament.

According to Pope Francis: ‘Whatever I do for one of my brothers and sisters, Christians and non-Christians, I do it all for the love of our Heavenly Father who loves all of His Children’ (qtd. in Duffy 266). The Roman Catholic Church’s current Pontiff, in keeping with his two predecessor’s consistent goals on teaching its faithful laborers the Church’s doctrine on defending the rights of laborers, is also preaching the same message that is contained in *On Human Labor*.

Pope John Paul II’s third papal encyclical is distinctive in its consistent critiques of modern social and political ideologies both of the left and of the right: atheism, capitalism, communism, fascism, feminism, liberalism, Nazism, and socialism have all been condemned, at least in their pure forms, by several Roman Catholic Popes since the late nineteenth century.

On Human Labor’s message is still preached today by the Roman Catholic Church to defend the rights of all laborers from abusive systems of government and organizations that pose a threat to those basic human rights. This is why the Church has refused to compromise with communist governments and inhumane dictatorships. It is a tradition that the Church has upheld successfully almost two thousand years since its foundation by the Lord Jesus Christ. In 1981 Pope John Paul II rightfully criticized the United States Government shamefully doing business with the Communist Government of China, a country that is notorious for its extensive historical record of violations of human rights especially concerning laborers (Donders 25). The US Government has greatly helped improve China’s economy by hiring them to produce commodities to be

sold in the USA while at the same time creating unemployment for American laborers. It is an insult to take their jobs away from them and export their livelihood to the enemy of human rights homeland. American manufacturing corporations reap enormous profits by providing rightful benefits to American laborers who in turn are helping those companies stay in business by purchasing their foreign made products. Democratic nations and communist nations share nothing in common politically, therefore should not do business together for the simple reasons that laborers in both countries suffer abuse of civil rights and lose what little they have gained.

3. The Question of Labor, the Key to the Social Question

According to Pope John Paul II:

In the midst of all these processes—those of the diagnosis of objective social reality and also those of the Church’s teaching in the sphere of the complex and many-sided social question—the question of human labor naturally appears many times. This issue is, in a way, a constant factor of both social life and of the Church’s teaching. Furthermore, in this teaching attention to the question goes back much further than the last ninety years. In fact the Church’s social teaching finds its source in the Sacred Scripture, beginning with the Book of Genesis and especially in the Gospel and the writings of the Apostles.

From the beginning it was part of the Church’s teaching, her concept of man and life in society, and especially, the social morality which she worked out according to the needs of the different ages. This traditional patrimony was then inherited and developed by the teaching of the Popes on the modern “social question”, beginning with the Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution). In this context, study of the question of labor, as we have seen, has continually been brought up to date while maintaining that Christian basis of truth which can be called ageless. (Wojtyla OHL3)

On Human Labor is a sustained reflection on the meaning of human labor, which Pope John Paul II considers to be a key, probably the essential key, to the whole social question. In this document he is more interested in looking at social teaching in the light of the concept of labor, than in formulating new norms for a changed social situation.

Labor is, as has been said, an obligation, that is to say, a duty, on the part of humanity (Donders 26). Human beings must labor, both because the Creator has commanded it and because of people's own humanity, which requires labor in order to be maintained and developed. Humankind must labor out of regards for others, specially its own family, but also for the society people belong to, the country of which it is a child and the whole human family of which it is a member, since it is the heir to the labor of generations and at the same time a sharer in building the future of those who will come after next in the succession of history. All of these blessings are rights, together with the needs for the laborers themselves to secure them and give rise to yet another right: the right of association, that is, to form associations for the purpose of defending the vital interests of those people employed in the various professions. These associations are called labor or trade unions, such as the famous Solidarity.

II. Labor and Man

4. In the Book of Genesis

Pope John Paul II wrote:

The Church is convinced that labor is a fundamental dimension of man's existence on earth. She is confirmed on this conviction by considering the whole heritage of the many sciences devoted to man: anthropology, palaeontology, history, sociology, psychology, and so on; they all seem to bear witness to this reality in an irrefutable way. But the source of the Church's conviction is above all the revealed word of God, and therefore what is a conviction of the intellect is also a conviction of faith. The reason is that the Church-and it is worthwhile stating it at this point-believes in man: she thinks of man and addresses herself to him and not only in the light of historical experience, not only with the aid of many methods of scientific knowledge, but in the first place in the light of the revealed word of the living God. Relating herself to man, she seeks to express the eternal designs and transcendent destiny which the living God, the Creator and Redeemer, has linked with him. (Wojtyla OHL 4)

The Roman Catholic Church finds in the very first pages of the book of Genesis the source of her conviction that labor is a fundamental dimension of human existence on earth. *On Human Labor's* analysis of these texts makes Christians and non-Christians, as well as scholars and non-scholars, aware that they express the fundamental truths about humankind in the context of the mystery of creation itself. These truths are decisive for humanity from the very beginning and at the same time they trace out main lines of its earthly existence, both in the state of original justice and also after the breaking, caused by sin, of the Creator's original covenant with creation in humankind.

When humanity has been created "in the image of Almighty God, male and female," hear the words: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it" (Genesis 1: 28 NAB), even though these words do not refer directly and explicitly to labor, beyond any doubt they indirectly indicate it as an activity for humankind to carry out in the world. Indeed, they show its very deepest essence. Humankind is the image of Almighty God partly through the mandate received from its Creator to subdue, to dominate, the earth. In carrying out this mandate, humanity, every human being, reflects the very action of the Creator of the universe (Donders 27). *On Human Labor* captures the essence of Pope John Paul II's doctrine about the origins of human labor and humankind's commandment to labor. Since it is connected with Almighty God's creation of humanity, it is also with what human beings are, with how they were originally constituted by their Creator. In other words, Christians cannot understand labor unless they first understand humanity, and since humankind was created by Almighty God, by seeing the original plan for humanity, as revealed in the opening of the

book of Genesis, they can get some insight into humankind's nature and purpose. It is there that His Holiness sees human being's call to labor.

5. Labor in the Objective Sense: Technology

According to Pope John Paul II:

This universality and, at the same time, this multiplicity of the process of subduing achieved in and by means of labor. There thus emerges the meaning of labor in an objective sense, which finds expression in the various epochs of culture and civilization. Man dominates the earth by the very fact of domesticating animals, rearing them and obtaining from them the food and clothing he needs, and by the fact of being able to extract various natural resources from the earth and seas.

But man "subdues the earth" much more when he begins to cultivate it and then to transform its products, adapting them to his own use. Thus agriculture constitutes through human labor a primary field of economic activity and an indispensable factor of production. Industry in its turn will always consist in linking the earth's riches-whether nature's living resources, or the products of agriculture, or the mineral or chemical resources-with man's labor, whether physical or intellectual. This is also in a sense true in the sphere of what are called service industries, and also in the sphere of research, pure or applied. (Wojtyla OHL 5)

Pope John Paul II recognized technology as a great benefit in *On Human Labor*, provided it is regarded as a tool and not as a master. However, technology also presents some risks. Understood in this case not as a capacity or aptitude for work, but rather as a whole set of instruments which humankind uses in its labor, technology is undoubtedly humanity's ally. It facilitates its labor, perfects, accelerates and augments it. It leads to an increase in the quality in the things produced by labor, and in many cases improves their quality (Donders 28). However, it is also a fact that, in some instances, technology can cease to be humankind's ally and become almost its enemy, as when the mechanization of labor supplants humanity taking away all personal satisfaction and the incentive to creativity and responsibility, when it deprives many laborers of their

previous employment, or when, through exalting the machine, it reduces a person to the status of its slave.

6. Labor in the Subjective Sense: Man as the Subject of Labor

Pope John Paul II wrote:

In order to continue our analysis of labor, an analysis linked with the word of the Bible telling man that he is to subdue the earth, we must concentrate our attention on labor in the subjective sense, much more than we did on the objective significance, barely touching upon the vast range of problems known intimately and in detail to scholars in various fields and also, according to their specializations, to those who labor. If the words of the Book of Genesis to which we refer in this analysis of ours speak of labor in the objective sense in an indirect way, they also speak only indirectly of the subject of labor; but what they say is very eloquent and is full of great significance. (Wojtyla OHL 6)

Pope John Paul II makes a distinction in *On Human Labor* that will be important throughout his entire argument, the difference between objective and subjective labor. Labor in the objective sense is simply the external aspects of labor, the actual job one does, with its necessary tools or machines. Obviously labor in this sense has changed drastically over the centuries, and differs considerably from one laborer and one kind of job to another. But labor in the subjective sense is something different; it is humankind itself, the person as laborer and the subject of labor (Donders 29). As a person he or she labors, he or she performs various actions belonging to the labor process; independently of their objective content, these actions must all serve to realize their humanity, to fulfill the calling to be a person that is his or her reason of their humanity.

7. A Threat to the Right Order of Values

According to Pope John Paul II:

It is precisely these fundamental affirmations about labor that always emerge from the wealth of Christian truth, especially from the very message of the “Gospel of Labor”, thus creating the basis for a new way of thinking, judging and acting.

In the modern period, from the beginning of the industrial age, the Christian truth about labor had to oppose the various trends of materialistic and economic thought. For certain supporters of such ideas, labor was understood and treated as sort of “merchandise” that the laborer-especially the industrial laborer-sells to the employer, who at the same time is the possessor of the capital, that is to say, of all the working tools and means that make production possible. This way of looking at labor was widespread especially in the first half of the nineteenth century. Since then, explicit expressions of this sort have almost disappeared, and have given way to more human ways of thinking about labor and evaluating it. The interaction between the laborer and the tools and means of production have given rise to the development of various forms of capitalism - parallel with various forms of collectivism - into which other socioeconomic elements have entered as a consequence of new concrete circumstances, of the activity of laborers associations and public authorities, and of the emergence of large transitional enterprises. Nevertheless, the danger of treating labor as a special kind of “merchandise”, or as an impersonal “force” needed for production (the expression “labor force” is in fact in common use) always exists, especially when the whole way of looking at the question of economics is marked by the premise of materialistic economism. (Wojtyla OHL7)

In the modern world there are many situations that tend to degrade the dignity of labor. Pope John Paul II called these “threats to the right order of values” in *On Human Labor*. For example, when labor is treated as a product to be sold, or when laborers are considered as an impersonal “labor force,” then human beings are treated as instruments, and not as the subject of labor. Other violations of dignity include unemployment; underemployment of highly skilled laborers; inadequate wages to support life; inadequate job security; and forced labor. His Holiness emphasized in the encyclical that any such approach, by which free persons are in a sense equated with the material factors of production, is rooted in materialism and is what he calls “economism,” which is the error of considering human labor solely according to its economic purpose.

This is to look only at the objective aspect of labor - the kind of job to be done or the economic value of the job rather than at the subject of the labor, a person the laborer. The social question arose in the last century as a reaction against the degradation of people as the subject of labor, and against the unheard-of-accompanying exploitation in the field of wages, laboring conditions and social security for the laborer. Thus it is the neglect of the subjective aspect of labor, people themselves, and exclusive emphasis on its objective aspect that has led to the social question (Donders 30). As illustrated in *On Human Labor* anyone can see that in the question of wages; for example, if anyone looks only at the type of labor being done or its place in the national economy, anyone might conclude that certain labor is worth very little. However, on the other hand, if anyone looks at who is doing the labor, free persons made in the image of Almighty God, then anyone would have to grant them what is their due because of their humanity, namely, the ability to live in human dignity, regardless of the low social status or economic value of their objective labor.

8. Laborer Solidarity

Pope John Paul II wrote:

When dealing with human labor in the functional dimension of its subject, that is to say, the human person doing the labor, one must make at least a summary evaluation of developments during the ninety years of *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution) in relation to the subjective dimension of labor. Although the subject of labor is always the same, that is to say humanity, nevertheless wide-ranging changes take place in the objective aspect. While one can say that, by reason of its subject, labor is one single thing (one and unrepeatable every time), yet when one takes into consideration its objective directions one is forced to admit that that there exist many labors, many different sorts of labor.

The development of human civilization brings continual enrichment in this field. But at the same time, one cannot fail to note that in the process of this development not only do the new forms of labor appear but also disappear. Even

if one accepts that on the whole this is a normal phenomenon, it must still be seen whether certain ethically and socially dangerous irregularities creep in, and to what extent. (Wojtyla OHL 8)

Pope John Paul II made it clear in *On Human Labor* that materialistic and economic ideologies arose with the beginning of the industrial age. Labor came to be understood as merchandise sold by the laborer to the employer, or as an impersonal force needed for production. This was a reversal of Christian values anchored in Biblical creation. Labor solidarity, exercised through labor unions, was a reaction against the degradation of humanity and justified from the point of view of social morality. However, solidarity must never mean being closed to dialogue and collaboration with others. The rights of the poor, who may be laborers harmed as a result of the violation of the dignity of human labor, include especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the laborer and his or her family (Donders 31). Mentioned throughout his third papal encyclical, as Pope John Paul II addressed the question of labor, was the foundation of Solidarity, an independent trade union with strong Roman Catholic roots, in Gdansk, Poland on August 31, 1980.

His Holiness knew Lech Walesa, Solidarity's co-founder, and had met with him more than once during a homecoming visit in 1979.

9. Work and Personal Dignity

According to Pope John Paul II:

Remaining within the context of man as the subject of labor, it is now appropriate to touch upon, at least in a summary way, certain problems that more closely define the dignity of human labor. In doing this we must always keep in mind the Biblical calling to "subdue the earth" in which is expressed the will of the Creator that labor should enable man to achieve that "dominion" in the visible world that is proper to him. God's fundamental and original intention with regard to man,

whom he created in his image and after his likeness, was not withdrawn or cancelled out even when man, having broken the original covenant with God, heard the words: “In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread”. These words refer to the sometimes heavy toil that from then onwards has accompanied human labor; but they do not alter the fact that labor is the means whereby man achieves that “dominion” which is proper to him over the visible world, by “subjecting” the earth. Toil is something that is universally known, for it is universally experienced. It is familiar to those doing physical labor under sometimes exceptionally laborious conditions. It is familiar to not only agricultural laborers, who spend long days laboring upon the land, which sometimes “bears thorns and thistles”, but also to those who labor in mines and quarries, to steel-laborers at their blast furnaces, to those who labor in builders’ yards and in construction labor, often in danger of injury or death. It is likewise familiar to those at an intellectual labor bench; to scientists; to those who bear the burden of grave responsibility for decisions that will have a vast impact on society. It is familiar to doctors and nurses, who spend days and nights at their patients’ bedside. It is familiar to women, who, sometimes without proper recognition on the part of society and even of their own families, bear the daily burden and responsibility for their homes and the upbringing of their children. It is familiar to all laborers and, since labor is a universal calling, it is familiar to everyone. Without this consideration it is impossible to understand the meaning of the virtue of industriousness, and more particularly it is impossible to understand why industriousness should be a virtue: for virtue, as a moral habit, is something whereby man becomes good as man. (Wojtyla OHL 10)

The Roman Catholic Church finds in the first pages of the Book of Genesis her conviction that labor is a fundamental of human existence on earth. When humanity, who had been created in the image of Almighty God, male and female (Genesis 1: 27 NAB) apply these words: “Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it” (Genesis 1: 28 NAB), even though these words refer indirectly to labor, they directly indicate it as an activity for humanity to carry out in the world.

Labor was not a result of Adam’s sin, but was given to humanity from the moment of creation. Pope John Paul II draws from this passage the conclusion that labor is essential to human nature, and that humankind is the subject of labor. Humanity has to subdue the earth and dominate it, because as the image of Almighty God human beings

are people, that is to say, a subjective being capable of acting in a planned and rational way, capable of deciding about himself, and with a tendency to self-realization. As a people, human beings are therefore the subject of labor. His Holiness makes a distinction between labor and toil in *On Human Labor*. Labor is an integral part of human nature; while toil, according to Genesis, was a consequence of sin (Genesis 3: 17-18 NAB). The two cannot be separated now, but anyone can still find the uplifting aspect of labor, which the Pope names industriousness. Almighty God's fundamental and original intention with regard to humanity, whom he created in His Image and His Likeness (Genesis 1: 26-27 NAB), was not withdrawn or cancelled out even when humankind, having broken the original covenant with Merciful God, heard the words: "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread" (Genesis 3: 19 NAB). These words refer to the sometimes heavy toil that from then onwards has accompanied human labor (Donders 32). His Holiness, however, in spite of all this toil, perhaps, in a sense, because of it, believed that labor is a good thing for humankind. He explained in *On Human Labor* that through labor human beings not only transform nature, adapting it to their own needs, but they also achieve fulfillment as human beings and indeed, in a sense, become more human.

10. Labor and Society: Family and Nation

Pope John Paul II wrote:

Having thus confirmed the personal dimension of human labor, we must go on to the sphere of values which are necessarily linked to labor. Labor constitutes a foundation for the formation of family life, which is a natural right and something that man is called to. These two spheres of values—one linked to labor and the other consequent on the family nature of human life—must be properly united and must properly permeate each other. In a labor is a condition for making it

possible to found a family, since the family requires the means of subsistence which man normally gains through labor. Labor and industriousness also influence the whole process of education in the family, for the very reason that everyone “becomes a human being” through, among other things, labor, and becoming a human being is precisely the main purpose of the whole process of education. Obviously, two aspects of labor in a sense come into play here: the one making family and its upkeep possible, and the other making possible the achievement of the purposes of the family, especially education. Nevertheless, these two aspects of labor are linked to one another and are mutually complementary in various points. (Wojtyla OHL11)

Pope John Paul II emphasized in *On Human Labor* that in the ancient world physical labor was deemed unworthy of free human beings. Christianity, taking its cue from the manual labor done by the Lord Jesus Christ as a carpenter, bestowed dignity upon all labor, manual or intellectual, done by everyone as a person. Class differentiations are thereby eliminated. In addition, labor is for humankind and not humankind for labor. Labor is the means by which human beings exercise dominion over nature, adapts it to its needs, and helps their fulfillment as human beings (Donders 33). His Holiness reiterated in *On Human Labor* that industriousness is a virtue, as a moral habit, is something whereby humankind becomes as close to being as God-like as humanly possible. Labor helps establish the family, the nation, and the whole human family, all the people living in the world which are part of the sphere of values that benefit humanity.

III. Conflict Between Labor And Capital In The Present Phase Of History

11. Dimensions of the Conflict

According to Pope John Paul II:

The sketch of the basic problems of labor outlined above draws inspiration from the texts at the beginning of the Bible and in a sense from the very framework of

the Church's teaching, which has remained unchanged throughout the centuries within the context of different historical experiences. However, the experiences preceding and following the publication of the Papal Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (*Of Revolution*) form a background that endows that teaching with particular expressiveness and the eloquence of living relevance. In this analysis, labor is seen as a great reality with a fundamental influence on the shaping in a human way of the world that the Creator has entrusted to man; it is a reality closely linked with man as the subject of labor and with man's rational activity. In the normal course of events this reality fills human life and strongly affects its value and meaning. Even when it is accompanied by toil and effort, labor is still something good, and so man develops through love for labor. This entire positive and creative, educational and meritorious character of man's labor must be the basis for the judgments and decisions being made today in its regard in spheres that include human rights, as is evidenced by the international declarations on labor and the many labor codes prepared either by the competent legislative institutions in the various countries or by organizations devoting their social, or scientific and social, activity to the problems of labor. One organization fostering such initiatives on the international level is the International Labor Organization, the oldest specialized agency of the United Nations Organization. (Wojtyla OHL12)

In *On Human Labor*, Pope John Paul II established two basic priorities as a framework for discussing issues of labor, capital, and property ownership. Labor takes precedence over capital. People are more important than things. For contrast, he named two ideas he considered to be errors: materialism and economism. Materialism subordinates people to property; while economism regards the value of human labor only according to its economic purpose. His Holiness recommends instead a philosophy of personalism, a shift of attitude which could be achieved in a socialist system.

The person who labors desires not only due remuneration for persons who labor; they wish that, within the production process, provision be made for them to be able to know that in their labor, even on something that is owned in common, they are laboring for themselves. This awareness is extinguished within that person in a system of excessive bureaucratic centralization, which makes the laborer feel that he or she is just a cog in a huge machine moved from above. In a modern labor space it becomes very

complex to establish ownership rights. Natural resources must be acknowledged as gifts of Almighty God, belonging to all. Any tools of technology used build on prior labor by countless generations, and continue to be influenced by those who use them in the present day. If it is true that capital, as a whole of the means of production, is at the same time the product of labor of generations, it is equally true that capital is being unceasingly created through the labor done with the help of all these means of production, and these means can be seen as a great labor bench at which the present generation of laborers is working day after day (Donders 34). Based upon this view, His Holiness proposed a flexible and dynamic view of ownership and economics, and commended arrangements in which laborers share in the ownership, such as shareholding by laborers, joint ownership, and profit sharing.

12. The Priority of Labor

Pope John Paul II wrote:

The structure of the present-day situation is deeply marked by many conflicts caused by man, and the technological means produced by human labor play a primary role in it. We should also consider here the prospect of worldwide catastrophe in the case of a nuclear war, which would have almost unimaginable possibilities of destruction.

In view of this situation we must first of all recall a principle taught by the Church: the principle of the priority of labor over capital. This principle directly concerns the process of production: in this process labor is always a primary efficient cause, while capital, the whole collection of means of production, remains a mere instrument or instrumental cause. This principle is an evident truth that emerges from the whole of man's historical experience. (Wojtyla OHL13)

On Human Labor explains how Pope John Paul II deduces an important principle of Roman Catholic social doctrine, a principle that has always been taught by the Roman

Catholic Church: the principle of the priority of labor over capital. This principle is true because it is based on the fact that humankind is an efficient cause in the process of production, while capital, the whole collection of means of production, remains a mere instrument or instrumental cause. One can see from this, though, that His Holiness is not using capital in this case as a short hand for capitalists. Rather he means anything, whether money, natural resources, tools or machines, with which human beings labor. These things are placed at human beings' disposal. However, these resources can serve humanity only through labor. Without humankind and without labor, these lifeless things would not serve their purpose and be means to fulfill the commandment to subdue the earth (Donders 35). *On Human Labor* sees humankind's labor as an essential ingredient of humanity's likeness to Almighty God in that it differentiates human beings from the rest of creation. Labor is one of the characteristics that distinguish humankind from the rest of creatures, whose activity for sustaining their lives cannot be called labor.

Humanity's mandate to subdue the earth is itself part and parcel of humankind's created likeness to Merciful God. Humankind is the image of Almighty God partly through the mandate received from its creator to subdue, to dominate, the earth. In carrying out this mandate, all human beings reflect the very action of the creator of the universe by which the Roman Catholic Church gives labor priority over capital. Humanity was not compelled to labor as punishment for its sins in the Garden of Eden; rather from the beginning, it was called to labor (Genesis 2: 15 NAB). In order to distinguish between the nature of humanity's labor as instituted by Merciful God at humankind's creation, and as altered after the fall, His Holiness explained that Almighty God's fundamental and original intention with regard to humankind, whom God created

in his divine image and his likeness was not withdrawn or canceled out even when humanity, having broken the original covenant with Merciful God, heard the words: “In the sweat of your face, you shall eat bread” (Genesis 3: 19 NAB). These words refer to the sometimes heavy toil that from then onward has accompanied human labor; but they do not alter the fact that labor is the means whereby humanity achieves that dominion which is proper to it over the visible world. The role of toil as part of the curse that sin brought with it is more fully outlined in the last section of the Pontiff’s third encyclical. Reference is made to Genesis 3: 17-19 (NAB) one more time (Donders 36). Furthermore, His Holiness stressed that an arduous good is inherent in the sweat and toil imposed upon humankind because of its sin. The good is described as the possibility of sharing lovingly in the labor that the Lord Jesus Christ came to do.

By enduring the toil of work in union with the Messiah crucified for humanity, human beings prove themselves to be God’s true disciples by carrying the cross in its turn every day in the activity that they are called upon to perform. In the creation mandate to humanity to subdue the earth, *On Human Labor* understands not only the planet earth but also by extension the whole visible world insofar as it comes with the range of humankind’s influence and of its striving to satisfy its needs. Included are all the resources which through the conscious activity of human beings can be discovered and used for their ends. Yet humankind remains within the creator’s original ordering due to the fact that humankind was created in the image of Almighty God (Donders 37). Pope John Paul II explained that technology is understood as the set of instruments used by humanity in its labor and thus an extension of humankind’s fulfillment of the creation

mandate. However, it may become almost an enemy to humankind, especially when though exalting the machines it reduces a person to the status of its slave.

13. Economics and Materialism

According to Pope John Paul II:

In the light of the above truth we see clearly, first of all, that capital cannot be separated from labor, in no way can labor be opposed to capital or capital to labor, and still less can be actual people behind these concepts be opposed to each other, as will be explained later. A labor system can be right, in the sense of being in conformity with the very essence of the issue, and in the sense of being intrinsically true and also morally legitimate, if in its very basis it overcomes the opposition between labor and capital through an effort at being shaped in accordance with the principle put forward above: the principle of the substantial and real priority of labor, of the subjectivity of human labor and its effective participation in the whole production process, independently of the nature of the services provided by the laborer. (Wojtyla OHL14)

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* how the opposition arose, the disagreement on fair wages, health benefits, paid holidays, pension plan, etc., between those who contribute labor to the production process (the employees), and those who contribute capital (the employers). This happened because of the error of economism, the error of considering human labor solely according to its economic purpose. In a time of the birth of industrialization, in which what was mainly seen was the possibility of vastly increasing material wealth, humankind, that should be served by this wealth, was ignored. It was this practical error that struck a blow first and foremost against human labor, against the laboring person, and caused the ethically just social reaction already spoken of above (Donders 38). In other words, because of the greed provoked by the opportunities for the unprecedented profits that the industrial revolution brought about, humanity, the subjective and most important factor in labor, was relegated to a subordinate role based

on the supposed economic value of its contribution to the production process. The fact that absolutely no production of any kind could take place without humanity, people who invent, design and operate machinery, were hardly noticed. This was a viewpoint caused by a practical materialism that resulted in economism as emphasized in *On Human Labor*.

14. Labor and Ownership

Pope John Paul II wrote:

This historical process briefly presented here has certainly gone beyond its initial phase, but it is still taking place and indeed is spreading in the relationships between nations and continents.

It needs to be specified further from another point of view. It is obvious that, when we speak of opposition between labor and capital, we are not dealing only with abstract concepts or “impersonal forces” operating in economic production. Behind both concepts there are people, living, actual people: on the one side are those who labor without being the owners of the means of production, and on the other side those who act as entrepreneurs and who own these means or represent the owners. Thus the issue of ownership or property enters from the beginning into the whole of this difficult historical process. The Papal Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution) which has the social question as its theme, stresses this issue also, recalling and confirming the Church’s teaching on ownership, on the right to private property even when it is a question of the means of production. The Papal Encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (Mother and Teacher) did the same. (Wojtyla OHL 15)

Pope John Paul II was certainly aware that in the conflict between capital and labor it is not impersonal forces, but actual living people who are involved, and that on the one side are those who labor without being the owners of the means of production, and on the other side those who act as entrepreneurs and who own these means or represent the owners. This fact then raises the issue of property ownership, its rights, duties and morality. His Holiness restates the teaching of his predecessors as to

humankind's right to the ownership of private property, even when it is a question of the means of production. He also notes that this teaching diverges radically from the program of collectivism as proclaimed by Marxism. However, he also notes an important fact about Roman Catholic teaching. At the same time it differs from the program of capitalism practiced by liberalism and by the political systems inspired by it. In the latter case, the difference consists in the way the right to ownership or property is understood. Roman Catholic tradition has never upheld this right as absolute and untouchable, "They would sell their property and possession and divide them among all according to each one's need" (Acts 2: 45 NAB).

On the contrary, it has always understood this right within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole of creation. The right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone (Donders 39). His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* and directed to the bishops of the United States of America to call attention to the basic idea of these principles, which consists of the assertion of the unquestionable need that the goods, which were created by Almighty God for all human beings, should flow equally to all, according to the principles of justice and charity.

Every person, as a living being gifted with wisdom, has in fact from nature the fundamental right to make use of the material goods of the earth, while it is left to the will of humankind and to the juridical statutes of nations to regulate in greater detail the actuation of this right. This individual right cannot in any way be suppressed, even by other clear and undisputed rights over material goods. Since all property is acquired originally by labor, and the only purpose of property or capital is the service of labor, by

furnishing the means with which actually human beings labor and produce useful goods or services, it makes no sense to set labor and capital in opposition to each other.

However, it does make sense, in regard to this conflict, to ask questions about the arrangements of property ownership in order that property may in fact serve human labor (Donders 40). His Holiness reiterates in *On Human Labor* that everyone cannot exclude the socialization, in suitable conditions, of certain means of production. It is interesting, however, to see what he means by his viewpoint.

Naturally, in the first place he is referring to state ownership, which in some cases is legitimate, as other Pontiffs have previously taught, such as Pope Pius XI. He is not, of course, referring to socialism, the socio-economic system condemned by Pope Pius XI as incompatible with Roman Catholicism. Nevertheless, he is also bringing to light a more fundamental truth, often lost sight of in the bitter political debates that characterize this subject; namely, that merely taking these means of production such as capital out of the hands of their private owners is not enough to ensure their satisfactory socialization. No one can speak of socializing only when the subject character of society is insured; that is to say, when on the basis of his or her labor each person is fully entitled to consider his or herself a part-owner of the great labor bench at which he or she is laboring with everyone else. Here His Holiness places both capitalists and socialists on their heads. For although the problem of disregard of the subject of human labor is real, it cannot be solved merely by subjecting the laborer for state ownership and a bureaucratic boss instead of private ownership and a corporate boss. In both cases the laborer can be equally exploited. If state ownership is not the automatic solution of the problem, nothing else can be done (Donders 41). His Holiness suggests in *On Human Labor* many

of the same proposals which were made by Pope Leo XII, Pope Pius XI, and Pope Pius XI, such as associating labor with the ownership of capital and even makes a clear reference to the occupational groups highlighted by Pope Pius XI. As intermediate bodies with economic, social and cultural purposes, they would be bodies enjoying real autonomy with regard to the public powers, pursuing their specific aims in honest collaboration with each other and in subordination to the demands of the common good.

15. The Personalist Argument

According to Pope John Paul II:

Thus, the principle of the priority of labor over capital is a postulate of the order of social morality. It has key importance in the system built on the principle of private ownership of the means of production and also in the system in which private ownership of these means has been limited even in a radical way. Labor is in a sense inseparable from capital; in no way does it accept the antinomy, that is to say, the separation and the opposition with regard to the means of production that has weighed upon human life in recent centuries as a result of merely economic premises. When human beings labor, using all the means of production, they also wish the fruit of this labor to be used by themselves and others, and they wish to be able to take part in the very work process as a sharer in responsibility and creativity at the labor bench to which they apply themselves. (Wojtyla OHL17)

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that as industry and technology developed, conflict arose between “capital” and “labor.” Classical liberal capitalists, communists, and socialists, interpreted this conflict as a socioeconomic class conflict. However, the question of ownership is linked with labor as shown in the first chapter of the Holy Bible, for Almighty God only means that humanity has for the resources hidden in nature to serve itself and others in its labor. And to be able through its labor to make these resources bear fruit, human beings take over ownership of small parts of the various parts of the various riches of nature. Capital cannot be separated from or opposed to

labor as it is itself the result of human labor. Neither can labor be opposed to capital, and still less can the actual people behind these concepts be opposed to each other. In laboring, human beings also enter into the labor of others. The error of materialism or economism is to value human labor solely according to its economic purpose. This error places the spiritual and the personal in a position of subordination to material reality.

Materialism, being what it is, cannot do otherwise, and hence cannot provide a sufficient basis for thinking about human labor. The Roman Catholic Church affirms the right to private property, even when it is a question of the means of production (Donders 42). His Holiness emphasized in *On Human Labor* that the right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone. Therefore, one cannot exclude the socialization, in suitable conditions, of certain means of production, and rigid capitalism is unacceptable as an untouchable dogma of economic life. Hence organs of the Roman Catholic Church have made proposals for joint ownership of the means of labor, laborers sharing of management, and the like.

However, mere conversion of the means of production into state property in the collectivist systems of today is not the answer. Finally, the fact that a person labors not only for pay but also for him or herself, even within an enterprise owned in common with others, was in the mind of Saint Thomas Aquinas. This was the principle reason in favor of the means of production. This personalist argument must never be lost sight of despite conflicts. The personalist argument of Saint Thomas Aquinas that human beings labor for themselves, though not really a basis for asserting private property rights, is yet Biblically true in that it is faithful to humankind's created identity in Almighty God's own image and likeness all things were created for Holy God's glory and pleasure

(Revelation 4: 11 NAB). This Scripture simply reiterates Merciful God's approval of that labor in the Biblical week of creation (Genesis 1: 4, 10, 12, 18, 21, 25, 31 NAB). World-wide planning and control to protect the rights of all laborers at least in part subverts this design.

If carried to its limit, it would make all human beings not themselves controllers but the controllers' slaves (Donders 43). Pope John Paul II mentioned in *On Human Labor* that global planning is the counterfeit of Almighty God's creation order of humanity's individual stewardship under Holy God, and as such most fully incarnates the materialism and economism highly rejected in His Holiness' third papal encyclical. It would abolish the human dignity, brotherhood and freedom so eloquently championed by His Holiness. This is the lesson taught to all people centrally planned and controlled, socialist-type societies of history, such as ancient China and Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Incas, and others.

On Human Labor's statements about subjects, and in particular about women and motherhood, disabled persons and emigrant laborers, should by all means be held fast as good (1 Thessalonians 5: 21 NAB). The beautiful final section on Roman Catholic spirituality of labor is a great blessing and joy to read, especially in its reference to the first chapter of Genesis where Almighty God records a personal account of labor and rest in the Biblical week of creation. Those who maintain that simply by one or other type of legal arrangement of property ownership, public or private, all difficulties will be solved, are wrong for neither the ideologies of socialism nor of capitalism grasp that specific steps must be taken that laborers not feel that they are just cogs in a huge machine moved from above. The Roman Catholic Church's teaching has always expressed the strong and

deep conviction that humankind's labor concerns not only the economy but also, and especially personal values (Donders 44). Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that labor is not just an economic action; it is primarily something about the human person. It has economic consequences to be sure, but it arises from and affects humanity and society at many and deeper levels than the economic.

IV. Rights of Laborers

16. Within the Broad Context of Human Rights

Pope John Paul II wrote:

While labor, in all its many senses, is an obligation, that is to say a duty, it is also a source of rights on the part of the laborer. These rights must be examined in the broad context of human rights as a whole, which are connatural with man, and many of which are proclaimed by various international organizations and increasingly guaranteed by the individual States for their citizens. Respect for this broad range of human rights constitutes the fundamental condition for peace in the modern world: peace both within individual countries and societies and in international relations, as the Church's Magisterium has several times noted, especially since Pope John XXIII's Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth). The human rights that flow from labor are part of the broader context of those fundamental rights of the person. (Wojtyla OHL18)

Pope John Paul II discussed in *On Human Labor* the solution to this unhappy strife between the supposed rights of various people, or over the priority of different rights such as property rights versus human rights as given in the Biblical record. It is that there are natural rights of humanity. The word right does occur in the creation record of Genesis 1 and 2. Humankind's implied rights such as eating from every tree in the Garden of Eden except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil (Genesis 2: 16-17 NAB) are wholly due to Almighty God's gift and bestowed together with a mandate for

obedient exercise of responsible dominion, that is, not ownership but stewardship, under Merciful God.

The fact that humankind brought nothing into this world, and it is certain that people can carry nothing out (1 Timothy 6: 7 NAB) confirms this true condition of humanity (Donders 45). His Holiness made it clear in *On Human Labor* that they have not rights but rather duties. This is why the best code of law, such as the Ten Commandments, does not delineate human rights but obligations.

17. Direct and Indirect Employer

According to Pope John Paul II:

The concept of indirect employer includes both persons and institutions of various kinds, and also collective labor contracts and the principles of conduct which are laid down by these persons and institutions and which determine the whole socioeconomic system or are its result. The concept of “indirect employer” thus refers to many different elements. The responsibility of the indirect employer from that of the direct employer-the term itself indicates that the responsibility is less direct-but it remains a true responsibility: the indirect employer substantially determines one or other of the labor relationship, thus conditioning the conduct of the direct employer when the latter determines in concrete terms the actual labor contract and labor relations. This is not to absolve the direct employer from his own responsibility, but only to draw attention to the whole network of influences that condition his conduct. When it is a question of establishing an ethically correct labor policy, all these influences must be kept in mind. A policy is correct when the objective rights of all laborers are fully respected. (Wojtyla OHL18)

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that human beings as laborers have a direct relationship to a direct and an indirect employer. The former is the person or institution with whom the laborer enters directly into a labor contract. The concept of indirect employer embraces all the factors that exercise a determining influence on just or unjust relationships in the field of human labor.

It includes society, the state, or many or all states in a worldwide system of mutual dependence. A gap exists between rich and poor countries today which is increasing more and more to the detriment of the poor countries. International organizations, such as the United Nations and its affiliates, have fresh contributions to offer on this point. World-wide planning and control to protect the rights of all laborers is needed for the proper organization of human labor in keeping with individual societies and states, and should address especially the problems of employment and of the use of natural resources to help the masses of the unemployed and the hungry. An employer or firm does not operate in a vacuum (Donders 46).

His Holiness emphasized in *On Human Labor* that the ability to pay just wages, in fact the entire labor policy, depends on many things over which an individual owner or corporation has little or no control. These include government policies, the policies of other industries, unions, foreign governments and corporations, international institutions such as the World Bank or the International Monetary Fund and, increasingly so, international agreements concerning trade, the environment or other matters. All these are part of what His Holiness calls the indirect employer (Donders 47). Furthermore, because of their importance and their influence on wages and laboring conditions, these indirect employers have, to one degree or another, a true responsibility for the resulting situation and welfare of the laborers. Moreover, this includes the influence which the policies, both public and private, of rich countries can have on the economies of their poorer trading partners and of debtor countries. The Pope introduced the concept of the direct and indirect employer.

A direct employer is an employer according to the usual meaning of the word. An indirect employer, on the other hand, includes both persons and institutions of various kinds, and also collective labor contracts which determine the whole socioeconomic system.

18. The Employment Issue

Pope John Paul II wrote:

When we consider the rights of laborers in relation to the “indirect employer”, that is to say, all the agents at the national and international level that are responsible for the whole orientation of labor policy, we must first direct our attention to a fundamental issue: the question of finding labor, or in other words, the issue of suitable employment for all who are capable of it. The opposite of just and right situation in this field is unemployment, that is to say the lack of labor for those who are capable of it. It can be a question of general unemployment or of unemployment in certain sectors of labor. The role of the agents included under the title of indirect employer is to act against unemployment, which in all cases is an evil, and which, when it reaches a certain level, can become a real social disaster. It is particularly painful when it especially affects young people, who after appropriate cultural, technical, and professional preparation fail to find labor, and see their sincere wish to labor and their readiness to take on their own responsibility for the economic and social development of the community sadly frustrated. The obligation to provide unemployment benefits, that is to say, the duty to make suitable grants indispensable for the subsistence of unemployed laborers and their families, is a duty springing from the fundamental principle of the moral order in this sphere, namely the principle of the common use of goods or, to put it in another and still simpler way, the right to life and subsistence. (Wojtyla OHL 18).

Pope John Paul II’s concept of an indirect employer points to a world government, United Nations style in *On Human Labor*. It is based in part on His Holiness’ personalist argument, the principle of the priority of labor and a basic principle of the order of social morality. He preached that the economic gap between developed and underdeveloped countries is widening, and that this shows the poorer countries’ increasing misery. His Holiness proposed to alleviate this misery by planned if not

forced redistribution of wealth on an international scale. However, the facts are that this gap is a very misleading measure of the real economic improvement taking place in Third World countries today. Malnutrition has diminished everywhere except in drought-plagued Africa.

Per capita food production world-wide has gone up, and life expectancy, the best indicator of physical well-being, has significantly increased. Further, increased wealth in already wealthy countries does not necessarily mean exploitation of less wealthy countries but may even be helpful to the latter well-documented studies. After making this distinction between the direct and indirect employer, His Holiness begins a discussion of employment and unemployment (Donders 48). His Holiness pointed out in *On Human Labor* the duty of the indirect employers to meet the danger of unemployment and to ensure employment for all by making provision for overall planning. In the final analysis this overall concern weighs on the shoulders of each individual government. He immediately includes, however, that it cannot mean one-sided centralization by the public authorities. Instead what is in question is a just and rational coordination. This puts one in mind of the summary of governments' duties in the economic realm made by the Pope, directing, supervising, encouraging, and restraining. It can hardly be stressed too much that the Roman Catholic Church sees a role for the state in the economy different from that proposed by both American conservatives and American liberals.

Governments are not to step back and merely maintain law and order, nor is it to become directly involved in solving every problem. Instead as the guardian of the common good of the nation, it must be concerned with the entire life of the citizens, but it by no means follows that the state should directly involve itself in every aspect of life.

Rather the public authorities are to direct, supervise, encourage, and restrain, and as the Pope puts it, to coordinate, the efforts of other groups, not only businesses, but cooperatives, voluntary associations and occupational groups, who will themselves directly address the various problems that arise in the social order.

19. Wages and Other Social Benefits

According to Pope John Paul II:

After outlining the important role that concern for providing employment for all laborers plays in safeguarding respect for the inalienable rights of man in view of his labor, it is worthwhile taking a closer look at these rights, which in the final analysis are formed within the relationship laborer and direct employer. All that has been said above on the subject of the indirect employer is aimed at defining these relationships more exactly, by showing the many forms of conditioning within which these relationships are indirectly formed. This consideration does not have a purely descriptive purpose; it is not a brief treatise on economics or politics. It is a matter of highlighting the deontological and moral aspect. The key problem of social ethics in this case is that of just remuneration for labor done. In the context of the present there is no more important way for securing a just relationship between the laborer and the employer than that constituted by remuneration for labor. Whether the ownership has undergone a certain “socialization”, the relationship between the employer (first and foremost the direct employer) and the laborer is resolved on the basis of the wage, that is through just remuneration for labor done. (Wojtyla OHL 20)

Pope John Paul II emphasized in *On Human Labor* that the principle of the common use of goods should govern the proper remuneration of labor through a just wage.

A just wage means remuneration which will suffice for establishing and properly maintaining and for providing security for its future. It may be awarded by a single wage to the head of the family for his or her labor, family allowances or grants to mothers devoting themselves to their families. For women, having to abandon a mother’s tasks in order to take up paid labor outside the home is wrong from the point of view of the good

of society and of the family when it contradicts or hinders these primary goals of the mission of a mother; labor should be structured in such a way that women do not have to pay for their advancement by abandoning what is specific to them and at the expense of the family, in which women as mothers have an irreplaceable role. His Holiness' discussion of employment naturally leads to a discussion of wages. The key problem of social ethics in this case is that of just remuneration of labor done. This has been a major theme of Roman Catholic papal social teaching since Pope Leo XII's *Rerum Novarum* (Of Revolution) seventy three years before the publication of *On Human Labor* (Donders 49). The Pope reminded his readers in *On Human Labor* of the connection of just wages with the family. Just remuneration for the labor of an adult who is responsible for a family means remuneration will be suffice for establishing and properly maintaining a family and for providing security for its future. This can be done either by means of what is known as a family wage; that is, a single salary given to the head of the family for his or her labor, sufficient for the needs of the family without the other spouse having to take up gainful employment outside the home or by family allowances or grants, which are common in many European countries.

Such arrangements are a way in which society can ensure that mothers are not forced to leave the home to take up paid labor, something which is unfair from the point of view of the good of society. This is detrimental to the family when it contradicts or hinders the primary goals of the mission of a mother.

20. Importance of Unions

Pope John Paul II wrote:

All these rights, together with the needs for the laborers themselves to secure them, give rise to yet another right: the right of association, that is to form associations for the purpose of defending the vital interests of those employed in the various professions. These associations are called labor or trade unions. The vital interests of the laborers are to a certain extent common for all of them, at the same time however, each type of labor, each profession, has its own specific character which should find a particular reflection in these organizations. In a sense, unions go back to the mediaeval guilds of artisans, insofar as those organizations brought together people belonging to the same craft and thus on the basis of their labor. However, unions differ from the guilds on the essential point: the modern unions grew up from the struggle of the laborers-laborers in general but especially the industrial laborers-to be protect their just rights vis-à-vis the entrepreneurs and the owners of the means of production. Their task is to defend the existential interests of laborers in all sectors in which their rights are concerned. The experience of history teaches that organizations of this type are an indispensable element of social life, especially in modern industrialized societies. Obviously, this does not mean that only industrial laborers can set up associations of this type. Representatives of every profession can use them to ensure their own rights. Thus there are unions of agricultural laborers and of white collar laborers; there are also employers' associations. All, as has been said above, are further divided into groups or subgroups according to particular professional specializations. (Wojtyla OHL 21)

Pope John Paul II turns his attention in *On Human Labor* to one important and practical way of securing some of the rights of laborers: unions. Many previous popes had, of course, discussed and defended labor unions (Donders 50).

Pope Pius XI, for example, had complained about Roman Catholic industrialists who were hostile to a labor movement that they themselves recommended (Duffy 258). His Holiness pointed out in *On Human Labor* that it is false to say that unions are no more a reflection of the class struggle. Rather, they are a necessary type of organization, especially in modern industrialized societies. Unions are an example of the way in which labor, first and foremost, unites people, and of its power to build a community. However, he then immediately made a statement, which to one with any familiarity with the tradition of Roman Catholic social thought, the Christian virtue of Solidarity, is a clear

call for the establishment of the occupational groups so strongly called by Pope Pius XI and Pope Pius XII (Duffy 259). In the final analysis, both those who labor and those who manage the means of production of who own them must in some way be united in this community.

21. Dignity of Agricultural Labor

According to Pope John Paul II:

All that has been said thus far on the dignity of labor, on the objective and subjective dimension of human labor, can be directly applied to the question of agricultural labor and to the situation of the person who cultivates the earth by toiling in the fields. This is a vast sector of labor on our planet, a sector not restricted to one or other continent, nor limited to the societies which have already attained a certain level of development and progress. The world of agriculture, which provides society with the goods it needs for its daily sustenance, is of fundamental importance. The conditions of the rural population and of agricultural labor vary from place to place, and the social position of agricultural labors differs from country to country. This depends not only on the level of development of agricultural technology but also, and perhaps more, on the recognition of the just rights of agricultural laborers and, finally, on the level of awareness regarding the social ethics of labor. (Wojtyla OHL 22)

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that agricultural laborers are exploited by big landowners in certain developing countries where the dignity especially of agricultural labor needs to be restored. Agricultural laborers everywhere must be seen and treated as fully human subjects with corresponding innate, sacred and inviolable rights (Donders 51). His Holiness mentioned in *On Human Labor* that both direct and indirect employers should provide adequately for their training, productive activity, just remuneration and proper laboring conditions. Emigrant laborers must not be exploited, and with regard to them especially capital should be at the service of labor and not labor

at the service of capital.

22. The Disabled Person and Labor

Pope John Paul II wrote:

Recently, national communities and international organizations have turned their attention to another question connected with labor, one full of implications: the question of disabled people. They too are fully human subjects with corresponding innate, sacred and inviolable rights, and, in spite of the limitations and sufferings affecting their bodies and faculties, they point up more clearly the dignity and greatness of man. Since disabled people are subjects with all their rights, they should be helped to participate in the life of society in all its aspects and at all the levels accessible to their capacities. The disabled person is one of us and participates fully in the same humanity that we possess. It would be radically unworthy of man, and a denial of common humanity, to admit to the life of a community, and thus admit to labor, only those who are fully functional. To do so would be to practice a serious form of discrimination, that of the strong and healthy against the weak and sick. Labor in the objective sense should be subordinated, in this circumstance too, to the dignity of man, to the subject of labor and not to the economic advantage. (Wojtyla OHL 23)

Pope John Paul II has defended the disabled laborer in *On Human Labor* by stressing that medical assistance should easily be available for disabled laborers as well as non-disabled laborers, inexpensive or even free of charge. Laborers have a right to rest on Sundays and during annual vacations, a right to accident and old age insurance, and a right to a healthful laboring environment (Donders 52). His Holiness reiterated in *On Human Labor* that unions should even be indispensable but not an aspect or part of the class struggle, and they must not play politics in the modern sense. Strikes are legitimate in the proper conditions and with just limits but must not endanger essential community services, which would be contrary to the requirements of the common good of society and the properly understood of labor itself.

23. Labor and the Emigration Question

According to Pope John Paul II:

Finally, we must say at least a few words on the subject of emigration in search of labor. This is an age-old phenomenon which nevertheless continues to be repeated and is still today very widespread as a result of the complexities of modern life. Man has the right to leave his native land for various motives-and also the right to return-in order to seek better conditions of life in another country. This fact is certainly not without difficulties of various kinds. Above all it generally constitutes a loss for the country which is left behind. It is the departure of a person who is also a member of a great community united by history, tradition and culture; and that person must begin life in the midst of another society united by a different culture and very often by a different language. In this case, it is the loss of a subject of labor, whose efforts of mind and body could contribute to the common good of his own country, but these efforts, this contribution, are instead offered to another society which in a sense has less right to them than the person's country of origin. (Wojtyla OHL 24)

Pope John Paul II expressed concerns about the phenomenon of people who emigrate, either permanently or seasonally, in search of labor. He reiterated the Roman Catholic Church's traditional position of the defense of immigrants in *On Human Labor*. Emigration means a loss to the person's country of origin which decreases the labor population. Cultural adjustment is often difficult especially when a foreign language and unfamiliar laws are concerned. People laboring away from their country of origin may be vulnerable to exploitation by corrupt employers who take advantage of their employee's illegal status. Each country should have laws to protect the rights of immigrant laborers, so that they may receive equal treatment (Donders 53). In *On Human Labor* His Holiness condemned the hypocrisy concerning the illegal immigrant laborer issue by outlining a few of the seven deadly sins that play a major role in the exploitation of these disadvantaged laborers. The demand for too much materialism (avarice and greed), through the means of the cheapest foreign labor possible (arrogance and laziness), contribute towards the abuse and practice of illegally hiring foreign laborers on a daily

basis with little if any concerns about the long and negative future consequences including the rise in national unemployment and over population.

V. Elements For A Spirituality Of Labor

24. A Particular Task for the Church

Pope John Paul II wrote:

It is right to devote the last part of these reflections about human labor, on the occasion of the ninetieth anniversary of the Papal Encyclical *Rerum Novarum* (*Of Revolution*) to the spirituality of labor, in the Christian sense, since labor in its subjective aspect is always a personal action, an acting person, it follows that the whole person, body and spirit, participates in it, whether it is manual or intellectual labor.

It is also to the whole person that the word of the living God is directed, the evangelical message of salvation, in which we find many points which concern human labor and throw particular light on it. These points need to be properly assimilated; an inner effort on the part of the human spirit, guided by faith, hope and charity, is needed in order that through these points the labor of the individual human being may be given the meaning which it has in the eyes of God and by means of which labor enters into the salvation process on a par with the other ordinary yet particularly important components of its texture. (Wojtyla OHL 25)

A special section in *On Human Labor* deals with the Roman Catholic Church's tasks in proclaiming and promoting the spirituality of labor in the Christian sense. If humankind properly fulfills its creation mandate, then by the subjection of all things to humanity, the name of Almighty God would be a blessing throughout the whole world. Human beings, created in the image of Merciful God, shares by their labor in the activity of the Creator (Genesis 1: 28 NAB). In the Book of Genesis the creation activity itself is present in the form of labor done by Almighty God during six days, resting on the seventh day. This description of creation is thus also in a sense the first concept of labor. Humankind ought to imitate Almighty God both in laboring and also in resting, since

Merciful God wished to present a unique creative activity under the form of labor and rest (Donders 54). Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* how Holy God's activity in the world is still going on, for the Lord Jesus Christ always mentioned that his father is constantly working. Almighty God labors with creative power by sustaining in existence the world that has been called into being from nothing, and Holy God labors with salvific power in the hearts of those whom from the beginning has destined for rest in union with Merciful God in a heavenly kingdom.

Hence humanity's labor not only requires physical rest every seventh day, but must also leave room to prepare itself, by becoming more and more what in the will of Almighty God human beings ought to be, for the rest that Merciful God reserves for chosen servants and friends. Christian spirituality of labor should be shared with all people, and should point to Almighty God's power, greatness, creative purpose and praise. The Lord Jesus Christ did so as a person of labor. The fruit of human labor may already be a small part of that new earth where justice dwells (2 Peter 3: 13 NAB). Labor must help to promote human dignity, brotherhood and freedom on this present earth. His Holiness' encyclical statements are accompanied by ninety ones notes. Of these, twenty refer to earlier Roman Catholic documents, eighteen to the Book of Genesis, and the remainder to other Biblical passages.

25. Labor as a Sharing in the Activity of the Creator

According to Pope John Paul II:

As the Second Vatican Council says, throughout the course of the centuries, men have labored to better the circumstances of their lives through a monumental amount of individual and collective effort. To believers, this point is settled: considered in itself such human activity accords with God's will. For man,

created to God's image, received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all that it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness; a mandate to relate himself and the totality of things to him who was to be acknowledged as the Lord and Creator of all. Thus, by the subjection of all things to man, the name of God would be wonderful in all the earth. (Wojtyla OHL 26)

Pope John Paul II illustrated in *On Human Labor* some reflections on the spirituality of labor. He insisted especially in his third papal encyclical as sharing in the activity of God the Creator, and quoted the words of Saint Paul the Apostle, "Whatever your task, labor heartily, as serving the Lord and not men, knowing that from the Lord you will receive the inheritance as your reward" (Colossians 3: 23-24 NAB). Human beings can then realize that it is the subject of labor, the human person, who will live forever, either with Almighty God or without him, and that the eternal aspects of their labor will, in the end, be more important than the economic products that they create (Donders 55). His Holiness mentioned in *On Human Labor* that by a kind of paradox, it is in doing their labor on earth well that in part they can attain that eternal life which, as human persons, Merciful God invites everyone to share.

26. Christ, the Man of Labor

Pope John Paul II wrote:

The truth that by means of labor man participates in the activity of God himself, his Creator, was given particular prominence by Jesus Christ-the Jesus whom many of his first listeners in Nazareth were astonished, saying, "Where did this man get all this? What is the wisdom given to him? Is not this the carpenter?" For Jesus not only proclaimed but first and foremost fulfilled by his deeds the Gospel, the word of eternal Wisdom, that had been entrusted to him. Therefore this was also the Gospel of Labor, because he who proclaimed it was himself a man of labor, a craftsman like Joseph of Nazareth. And if we do not find in his words a special command to labor-but rather on one occasion a prohibition against too much anxiety about labor and life at the same time eloquence of the life of Christ is unequivocal: he belongs to the laboring world, he has appreciation and respect for human labor. It can indeed be said that he looks with love upon human labor

and the different forms that it takes, seeing in each one of these forms a particular facet of man's likeness with God, the Creator and Father. Is it not he who says: "My Father is the vinedresser" and in various ways puts into his teaching the fundamental truth about labor which is already expressed in the whole tradition of the Old Testament, beginning with the Book of Genesis? (Wojtyla OHL 28)

On Human Labor includes a section regarding the importance of labor to Christian spirituality. Pope John Paul II encouraged the Roman Catholic Church to develop and teach a spirituality of labor. He explained that Human labor and rest are a sharing in the activity of Almighty God, the Creator, a privilege which separates human beings from animals and the rest of Merciful God's creations (Donders 56). In *On Human Labor* His Holiness defined labor as following in the footsteps of the Lord Jesus Christ, a carpenter, and the Apostle Saint Paul, a tentmaker. Many other examples of various occupations are given in the Old and New Testaments which are honorable and pleasing to the Creator. By enduring the toil of labor in union with the Savior Jesus Christ who was crucified for humanity in a way collaborates with the Son of Almighty God for the redemption of humanity by securing as a role model for other human beings to follow in the right direction.

27. Human Labor in the Light of the Cross and the Resurrection of Christ

According to Pope John Paul II:

There is yet another aspect of human labor, an essential dimension of it, that is profoundly imbued with the spirituality based on the Gospel. All labor, whether manual or intellectual, is inevitably linked with toil. The Book of Genesis expresses it in a truly penetrating manner: the original blessing of labor contained in the very mystery of creation and connected with man's elevation as the image of God is contrasted with the curse that sin brought with it: "Cursed is the ground because of you; in toil you shall eat of it all the days of your life". This toil connected with labor marks the way of human life on earth and constitutes an announcement of death. "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread till you return to the ground, for out of it you were taken". Almost as an echo of these

words, the author of one of the Wisdom books says: “Then I considered all that my hands had done and the toil I had spent in doing it”. There is no one on earth who could not apply these words to himself. (Wojtyla OHL 29)

On Human Labor's teaching about labor as humanity's way of carrying out its creation mandate to subdue the earth is evidently correct because it follows the Biblical description of the purpose of human labor in the Book of Genesis. The very word subdue implies sustained effort or labor. The notion that human beings originally created did no labor, or by extension, that redeemed humankind will not labor in the new heaven and earth of eternity, is unscriptural (Donders 57). Pope John Paul II reiterated in *On Human Labor* that Almighty God put Adam into the Garden of Eden to dress and keep it (Genesis 2: 15 NAB), that is, to labor. In the age to come, Merciful God's servants will have authority over much more than in this life (Luke 19: 17-19 NAB), judge the world and angels (1Corinthians 6: 2 NAB), and serve Almighty God and the Lamb (Revelation 22: 3 NAB). Therefore His Holiness' third papal encyclical is also correct in teaching that not labor itself but only its present punitive aspect, its sweat and toil came into being after the fall (Genesis 3: 17-19 NAB).

Conclusion

The reliance of Pope John Paul II upon the Biblical book of Genesis' record of humanity's creation in Almighty God's own image and likeness is accurate and praiseworthy (Wuerl 197). Acknowledging and building upon the foundation of biblical creation, he confidently offers advice on labor and social relations not only to Christians but also to contemporary government and social leaders at large.

Whatever reservations they may have about this or that specific inference derived by him in *On Human Labor* from the biblical creation record, they should unconditionally applaud his explicit faith in that record as the infallible, true, incontrovertible, forever valid, absolute revelation by Almighty God of the creation and purpose for humankind. Pope John Paul II's third papal encyclical is greatly to be praised by Christians and non-Christians, political and religious scholars, and skilled and unskilled laborers for its forthright and uncompromising stand on the biblical creation record. It gives scripturally substantiated guidance on human labor relations in such areas as humanity's labor as the way in which it implements its creation mandate to subdue the earth; sweat and toil as added to labor only after the fall; Christianity's bestowal of dignity upon humankind's labor, and elimination of class differentiations; the error of materialism and economism which subordinates the spiritual and personal to the material making human beings the object rather than the subject of labor; labor solidarity which should be open to all people; the labor of women including motherhood; agricultural, disabled, and emigrant laborers; and Christian spirituality of labor. Problems currently exist with regard to certain issues in the area of laborers rights, the ownership of resources, and especially the proposed role of world-wide economic planning based partly upon misinformation about the economic circumstances of underdeveloped countries.

Questions also arise about the physical extent of humankind's creation dominion, society's concept of self-realization, and His Holiness' papal encyclicals' emphasis concerning the distribution of goods and services and the over emphasis on the importance of production.

The biblical creation concept of humanity's creation mandate as stewardship and not ownership under Almighty God should replace natural rights concepts. If this were faithfully accepted worldwide, strife over various rights or their respective priorities would cease (Wuerl 199). *On Human Labor* deserves the prayerful and diligent considerations of all Christians and thoughtful students of social relations. Most importantly, it points to the right way to answers of genuine lasting authority and benefit by its fundamental and extensive reference to the biblical record of creation which is the accurate and reliable source of spiritual inspiration which became the blueprint that led to the creation of an anti-communist and pro-Roman Catholic labor union that rightfully borrowed its name from a Christian virtue described in *On Human Labor* called Solidarity.

Chapter Three:

The Analysis of Pope John Paul II's *On Human Labor*

"Blessed is the one who reads aloud and blessed are those who listen to the prophetic message and heed what is written in it, for the appointed time is near" (Revelations 1: 3 NAB).

Pope John Paul II wrote three major pro-solidarity, papal, social encyclicals: *Laborens Exercens* (*On Human Labor*, 1981), *Sollicitudo Rei Solialis* (*On Social Concerns*, 1987), and *Centesimus Annus* (*The Hundreth Year*, 1991). All three papal encyclicals discuss the topic of labor. However, *On Human Labor* is the most comprehensive and systematic. Its objective is the defense of the rights of laborers which is based on the Christian virtue Solidarity. In this papal encyclical, His Holiness' treatment on the topic of labor is based on the first chapter of the biblical book of Genesis. His papal encyclical is the first truly systematic theology of study in Roman Catholic social teaching. He has also included a phenomenological component to this understanding of labor by emphasizing the acting person. Like its predecessors, his papal encyclical also addressed specific contemporary social concerns: automation, capitalism, communism, depletion of natural resources, economy, industrialization, materialism, moral values, politics, socialism, technology, and unemployment (Noughton 67). Nonetheless, the main objective in *On Human Labor* is to provide a systematic reflection on the nature of labor. For him, this reflection on labor must begin with a proper comprehension of the human person which is extracted from the elements of revelation.

Although *On Human Labor* borrows ideas from other Roman Catholic social writings from various sources, including the Holy Bible, other papal encyclicals, and

traditional Roman Catholic social teaching, it devotes more attention to solidarity than any other church piece of literature has done.

Pope John Paul II not only understood the key to the social question as usage, he perceived the key to the social question as the manner in which labor is understood. Comprehending labor does not merely constitute understanding its economic or social impact upon society. For His Holiness, comprehending labor implies comprehending the human explanation of labor. It must be seen in the light of its original purpose, that is, in terms of the value bestowed upon it by Almighty God, from the beginning of all creation (Noughton 68). According to him: “At the beginning of man’s labor is the mystery of creation” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 124). The social question then, for him, is definitely a spiritual question. The value of labor is both conviction of the intellect and a doctrine of Christian faith. The Roman Catholic Church views the person not only in light of historical experience and scientific data, but more fundamentally in light of Almighty God’s revelation. As he explained in a 1979 sermon during Mass in Warsaw, Poland: “The problems of human labor cannot be fully solved without the Gospel” (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 50). The Holy Bible for him was the only reliable source of reference for resolving human problems that he used in his third papal encyclical.

On Human Labor attempts to connect in a more organized manner natural law and scripture or what Pope John Paul II labeled the ethical order. It is an attempt to fill out a comprehension for labor first proclaiming in His Holiness’ book *The Acting Person* which was published in 1969. *The Acting Person* states that if labor is personally connected to the person, then labor can never be fully comprehended without the insights

of the Gospel. This new approach does not eliminate or isolate reason or natural law, instead it places them in an explicit spiritual framework (Noughton 69). For him, natural law is a spiritual concept that rests on the frame work of revelation. The natural law is not an entity unto its own. In *On Human Labor*, the Pope continued to rely on natural law arguments of common good, human dignity, human rights, justice, participation, and virtue. He believed that these principles are accessible to reason for all humanity. However, His Holiness explicitly and specifically placed natural law in the category of the doctrine of creation in the Biblical book of Genesis. In doing so, he moved away from a predominant reliance on a natural law methodology to ground his teaching in sacred scripture. According to Dr. Rocco Buttiglione: “The doctrine of creation, in on which *On Human Labor* is largely grounded, can incorporate the basic insights of the natural law tradition while acknowledging that the tradition finally rests on claims about the source of all being” (Buttiglione 200). Pope John Paul II accepted the Biblical interpretation of creation in the book of Genesis without having to depend upon other sources of information.

Pope John Paul II argued: “Labor, as a basic component of the person, is discoverable through natural science such as anthropology, history, psychology, and sociology” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 125).

The source of the Roman Catholic Church’s conviction is above all the revealed word of Almighty God, and therefore what is a conviction of the intellect is also a conviction of Christian faith (Noughton 70). For Pope John Paul II, the profound spiritual significance of labor can only be revealed to the masses which he described in *On Human Labor*.

Four scriptural themes inspired His Holiness' vision of labor:

1. Genesis reveals that people are created in the image of Merciful God, which makes them distinct from the rest of creation (Genesis 1: 26 NAB).
2. Because they are made in Almighty God's image, people have been given the divine commission to conquer and exercise control over the earth (Genesis 1: 27 NAB).
3. Through their dominion, they participate in Merciful God's creative activity through labor. People continue the process of creation as co-creators to complete creation by advancing the discovery of resources of contained in the depths of the mystery of creation. In their labor, people can fulfill Almighty God's will (Genesis 1: 28 NAB).
4. People have been given the responsibility to till the earth and care for the gift of creation. Humanity has an obligation of stewardship (Genesis 1: 29).

Pope John Paul II claimed: "This spiritual vision of labor has significant implications on how a person understands the four dimensions of labor" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 126). Deep inside this spiritual framework, laborers obtain dignity strictly from the reality that they are created in Merciful God's image (Noughton 71). It constitutes a compensation policy based upon common use and justice, a production method that involves everyone, and products that contribute to the common good as explained in *On Human Labor*.

The goal of Pope John Paul II's *On Human Labor* is to provide its readers, including both Christians and non-Christians, with an explanation of His Holiness' comprehension of the four dimensions of labor together with how he combines natural law and revelation in his knowledge of the four dimensions of labor (Noughton 72). He

emphasized that the Roman Catholic Church has the moral obligation to voice its opinion on labor from the viewpoint of its human value and of the ethical order as well as to create a spirituality of labor which will help all human beings to unite themselves, through labor to Almighty God. Each of the four dimensions contained in his papal encyclical investigates this two-fold task of comprehending labor as a sacred part of Merciful God's revelation along with comprehending labor as a part of the ethical order.

Establishment and *On Human Labor*

Pope John Paul II believed that one of the basic faults of contemporary society was contained in its incorrect perception of a human being. At the beginning of his pontificate during a papal trip to Puebla, Mexico on January 25, 1979, he argued: 'Without doubt, our age is the one in which man has been most written and spoken of the age of the forms of humanism and anthropocentrism' (qtd. in Noughton 73).

Nevertheless, His Holiness explained that it is paradoxically also the age of man's humiliation to previously unsuspected levels, the age of human values tramped on as never before. The basic reason for this incorrect anthropology is the mistake of failing to recognize the spiritual nature of a human being. Pope John Paul II taught that a spiritual comprehension of a human being creates the right order of priorities in the economic and political order (Noughton 74). The failure to comprehend the spiritual order of the economic atmosphere, especially concerning labor, is a strong motivation behind His Holiness' motives to create a spiritual blueprint of comprehending labor in *On Human Labor*. A reliable source for comprehending this spiritual order is the Biblical Book of Genesis.

The Role of Genesis in the Image of Humankind

Pope John Paul II preached that labor is a Christian virtue. From the beginning of time human beings are commanded to labor. Almighty God's first commandment to men and women is to exercise control over Merciful God's creation through labor. The first chapter of the Book of Genesis states: "God created man in his own image, in the image of God He created him; male and female He created them and blessed them. And God said to them: "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth" (Genesis 3: 19 NAB). His concept is one of the more important themes that stand out in *On Human Labor*. This Biblical verse gives credibility to Pope John Paul II's concept of labor.

He explained that the sacred order to exercise control over Almighty God's created upon the planet is an order of labor. It is not an outcome of the fall of humankind, but a realization of the original creation. Labor is a reality before the fall of humankind. However the fall itself has made labor burdensome, as it has all other things including child birth. Nevertheless, a human being still remains a reflection of the all mighty God (Noughton 76). His holiness explained that Almighty God's image was not withdrawn or cancelled out even when man, having broken the original conversant with Merciful God, heard the words: "In the sweat of your face you shall eat bread." In other words, this implies that human nature has not been completely stained by sin. It is exactly because a human being is made in the reflection of Almighty God that labor is still so important.

The labor “image of Almighty God” continued in the first chapter of the Biblical book of Genesis possesses the key to Pope John Paul II’s spiritual interpretation of a human being. Even though Merciful God created everything out of emptiness with the order “Let them be,” there exists a notion that Almighty God created from God’s own being when humankind was made. Of everything Merciful God made, only humankind is recognized as formed in God’s own likeness (Noughton 77). His Holiness illustrates in *On Human Labor*, the human being that is made in the reflection of Almighty God must mirror and in a similar manner almost reproduce the substance of its prototype. It is definitely from this valuable quality in creation that human beings are different and in many ways far more superior to the rest of creation. The Pope wrote: “Man resembles Almighty God more than nature” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 127).

Because humankind is made in the images of Merciful God, human beings cannot be demoted or simply comprehended on the level of the world. In other words, a human being is well as those activities that are definitely human, such as labor, cannot be comprehended as only material or intellectual categories, such as science or technology. His Holiness claimed: “The original blessing of labor is affiliated with the comprehension of a human being’s reflection of God’s image” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 128). Humanity mirrors Almighty God’s image as the only member of creation who is called to labor, that is, called to have control. However, a human being as a reflection of Merciful God is not totally identified with Almighty God. Instead, a human being is only a similarity that is hidden and tarnished by original sin, which has in turn spoiled labor.

Pope John Paul II emphasized that because humankind was created in the likeness of Almighty God, human beings possess control over the planet as dominant beings that are in search of self-realization. This process is realized when it mirrors Merciful God's similarity. Only human beings can mirror Almighty God's image, that is, his actions, because only to them have been granted the order to act, that is, and govern over Almighty God's creation (Noughton 78). His Holiness' creation comprehension of labor was granted in the nature of human being, the acting person. Human beings, like Merciful God, are creators. Their ability for creativity, invention, and reasoning is a reflection of Almighty God. However, unlike Merciful God, who is perfect and pure Act, human beings are acting persons. *On Human Labor* explains how they put into action their potential by becoming what they ought to become, namely, Almighty God's reflection. For the Pope, labor extracts its value from the manner by which it creates a person's human potential, which is to become more like Merciful God.

Essentially, for Pope John Paul II, the importance of labor comes from the reality that one who is performing the job is the human being. People are created in the image of Almighty God. Therefore, their labor provides a way to better mirror Merciful God's reflection (Noughton 79). Thus, His Holiness emphasized in *On Human Labor* that the foundation for judging labor is neither the kind of labor created nor the product produced, nor the compensation awarded, but how the laborer is affected, that is, how it furthers the laborer's reflection of Almighty God's image. For the Pope, the Biblical story of creation serves as an evaluation of any place of labor that fails to treat the laborer as "maker and subject," and shrinks the human being to the same level as the whole complex of the material means of production, as a tool.

The Ethical Order: The Priority of the Subject in Human Activity

While the bigger blueprint of *On Human Labor* is based on the Biblical book of Genesis and the Christian doctrine of creation, Pope John Paul II also emphasized the ethical framework contained in human nature, which can be seen through experience and reason.

From his commenting on Genesis 1: 27-28 in *On Human Labor*, His Holiness attempted to differentiate between the objective and the subjective natures of labor (Noughton 80). He explained that the experience of dominating the planet is universal.

The Pope argued: “Each and every individual, to the proper extent and in an incalculable number of ways, takes part on the giant process whereby man sustains the earth through his work” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 129). For the Pope, to control the planet is not only an exposed order from the Almighty God as found in the Biblical book of Genesis, it is also a normal experience of humanity. He explained in his third papal encyclical that the universal experience of ruling the planet manifests itself in a positive manner, that is, something is conquered or ruled by which all human beings become participants. Accurately through the experience of the subject controlling the objective, human beings expect and comprehend that they are the beings who rule. They understand that labor is a purposely human activity that possesses an exclusive effect on human beings. According to the Pope: “The fact that the one who carries it out is a person, a conscious and free subject, that is to say, a subject that decides about himself, constitutes a specific moral nature of labor” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 130). For His Holiness the most outstanding preference of the subject is to take control over the object.

Pope John Paul II emphasized that labor is a particularly human activity. Just like love, prayer, and reason, labor is unique to humans. Even though this human trait is not limited to people, in a sense, human beings lead, while animals follow. Human beings labor for a purpose; to achieve personal satisfaction, to fulfill a religious vocation, to make a living, and to provide a product or service for a community. Animals labor for one reason to survive according to their instincts which includes hunting for their food, fighting to protect their species and procreating their own species (Noughton 81).

His Holiness claimed: “Labor is one of the characteristics that distinguish man from the rest of creatures, whose activity for sustaining their lives cannot be called labor, only man is capable of labor, and only man labors” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 131). Thus labor bears a particular mark of man and of humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. And this mark decides its interior characteristics. In a sense it constitutes its very nature.

Pope John Paul II emphasized in *On Human Labor* because human beings labor that their humankind is revealed and society itself is transformed and visualized. The activity of animals in hunting for food is based upon instinct. Therefore it is unable to express freedom or reason or creating social relationships. However, human beings rationally participate in labor. They are motivated not only by instinct, but also by their use of liberty and reasoning in the process of achieving and maintaining their survival, personal development, social direction, and spiritual growth (Noughton 82).

Commenting about *On Human Labor*, Dr. Rocco Buttiglione argued: “Human acts, such as labor, are human precisely because they bear the characteristics of rationality and freedom, not simply because they are performed by human beings” (Buttiglione 201).

His Holiness preached that human brings labor every day to provide for their survival, construct their society, and establish their history. As a human activity, labor reveals the traits of human nature, personal and social.

Pope John Paul II wrote: “Labor possesses specific traits because it follows that the whole person, body and spirit, participates in it, whether it is manual or intellectual labor” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 132). Labor has a transformational impact on the subject who labors. As a self-determining being, a human being, through the activity of labor, strives towards the satisfaction of their human hood, labor not only constitutes meaning to its object, but it is something worth to do since it adds value to a human being (Noughton 83). His Holiness mentioned in *On Human Labor* that labor corresponds to the human being’s dignity and self-esteem, and if people participate in good labor, their dignity is established and even multiplied. The activity of labor should not ruin a human being’s dignity. This does not overlook the reality that much labor includes both physical and mental activities. However, it is exactly through the activities that labor can be transformative, so long as the human being’s dignity is esteemed. In other words, human acts have limitations, they possess a determining trait that exists in a human being. They can either add or subtract from human growth. This occurs in labor, which is partly why it is so vital to human nature.

As human beings perform certain acts, they fulfill themselves in that they perform unchangeable labor which causes their minds to shut down (Noughton 84). Pope John Paul II claimed: “Without labor all life goes rotten; but when labor becomes soulless, life stifles and dies” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 133). For His Holiness, the self-determining nature of labor should lead to self-satisfaction which permits a person to

become “more human.” He explained in *On Human Labor*, labor is an instrumental method of becoming more human and must reflect a human characteristic.

This is not to say that every act of labor must somehow be meaningful and rewarding. But labor is not just activity; instead it is human activity which needs to mirror human subjects and not just the economic part of labor. Labor creates not only the economic and psychological nature human being but their moral and spiritual nature as well. It is for this reason that the Pope emphasized the priority of labor over capital.

For Pope John Paul II, labor also brings with it a social trait. Most of the vital acts in the life of a human being are done in fellowship with others and towards a social objective. There are two senses in which labors have the social characteristics, the impact it has upon on society and the connection it has with social aspect of a human being (Noughton 85). In the very first sentence of *On Human Labor*, His Holiness stressed the commercial and social aspect of labor and the impact it has on society. He stated:

Though labor man must contribute to the continual advance of science and technology and to elevating unceasingly the cultural and moral level of the society within which he lives in community with those who belong to the same family, labor means a particular mark of man and humanity, the mark of a person operating within a community of persons. (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 134)

Labor is by its very nature a commercial activity, since a human being is by nature a social creature (Noughton 86). Commenting in *On Human Labor*, Pope John Paul II claimed: “All human beings are called to ‘communion’ which implies that “actualization of a community in the person not only preserves his own nature but acknowledges his or herself absolutely” (Wojtyl, *The Acting Person*, 135).

For His Holiness, the interdependency between personal growth and the improvement of society cannot be divided. Through labor, a human being cannot reach personal growth without at the same time improving society by laboring towards the common good. Labor is the financial or personal benefits that it can achieve. It is a social activity that connects the social past of human nature with the common good of society. Labor must donate to society, that is, to the common good. However, to create the communal ability of labor property, the priority of the labor must be recognized.

Pope John Paul II understood together with the rest of the Roman Catholic social tradition that labor possesses an extremely vital formative impact on the growth of the human personality. Labor not only changes creation but it also leads to personalization (Noughton 87). Thus, His Holiness emphasized in *On Human Labor* the basic priority of the subject, who produces over the object, produced the dignity of labor and must be primarily sought in the subject, not the object. He argued: “This priority of the subject eliminates the differentiation of human beings into categories depending upon the type of labor done” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 136). This procedure has the advantage of equalizing as it were, all men and women before Almighty God in what they do, whether king or pauper. This does not signify that the object that is created has no ethical meaning. However, the Pope believed that in modern society’s technologically advanced case of scientific gadgets, the priority of the creator of the products has been distorted.

Pope John Paul II preached in *On Human Labor* that the subject does not reject a productive workplace. He believed that the customs and values needed for a productive workplace dedication, discipline, honesty, industriousness, patience, and satisfaction, just to name a few are the same values needed for a good person. He argued: “The economic

system itself and the production process benefit precisely when these personal values are fully respected” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 137). The priority of the subject never detracts from the material success of the work place. Rather, it is a foundational principle in its success because the work place is a human institution that must be designed in accord with human nature: otherwise, the success of the particular organizations is at best in doubt.

Compensation, Domination and Ordinary Utilization

On Human Labor’s major argument is the divine command to conquer and exercise control over creation, comprehended both as a revealed order in Genesis as well as a natural human experience recognized through reason. However, as with all of Almighty God’s orders, humankind had failed to fulfill Merciful God’s will in regards to labor (Noughton 88). According to Pope John Paul II: “It is a disturbing reality that while obvious natural resources remain unused, millions of human beings are unemployed or underemployed who are afflicted with the pains of poverty and the feeling of uselessness” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 138). This suffering is a failure to overpower creation properly. His Holiness taught in *On Human Labor* that this failure is the primary reason for misunderstanding labor, especially, the fair distribution of resources which labor should provide. Throughout his papal encyclical, the Pope mentioned the different ways of controlling the planet.

The first section of *On Human Labor* investigates the arranged nature of this command. The second section of his *On Human Labor* focuses on his interpretation of the traditional natural law value of common use in its relevance to compensation.

Dominion and Distribution

According to Pope John Paul II: “People have been provided with an authoritative position in the hierarchy of Almighty God’s creation” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 139). Because they have been made in Almighty God’s likeness, all human beings have been given the order, which is both an obligation and a privilege, to control the planet (Noughton 89). As explained in *On Human Labor*, His Holiness argued: “For man, created in God’s image, received a mandate to subject to himself the earth and all that it contains” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 140). It is this fact which will enable people to participate in the kindness of Almighty God’s creation.

Pope John Paul II defined the phrase “subdue the earth” as a human activity that reveals all the resources the planet provides so as to use them for humankind’s own means. The only use for human beings to accomplish this task is through labor (Noughton 90). His Holiness confessed that in the biblical book of Genesis 1: 28 NAB, “subdue the earth” does not directly imply to labor. However, he argued that labor is a necessary way for human beings to dominate Almighty God’s creation. It is only through labor that human beings can extract the wealth Merciful God’s creation has to offer humankind. Humanity’s extraordinary acceleration of scientific advancement through the labor of numerous professions provided for the Pope a historical confirmation of man’s dominion over nature.

Therefore, he perceived the obligation to labor ultimately originating from Almighty God’s order to dominate his creation.

Pope John Paul II claimed: “Control of God’s creation is an order given within the blueprint of the Creator’s original divine plan” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 141). He confirmed that the right order of labor derives from the right order of the Creator together with the Creators’ orders. Merciful God’s commanding is permanently connected with the fact that human beings who rule the planet are created in the likeness of Almighty God. The order of Merciful God’s creation is interrupted whenever the methods of control such as capital, raw materials, and technology are unjustly divided, that is, they fail to serve the growth of human beings (Noughton 91). For His Holiness labor must always respect the dignity of the subject. It is exactly through the subject that labor receives its specific ethical value. His Holiness wrote: “In doing this, focusing on the subject, we must always keep in mind the biblical calling to subdue the earth: in which is expressed the will of the Creator that labor should enable man to achieve that dominion in the visible world that is proper to him” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 142).

For Pope John Paul II what is correct for humankind is that all the resources of Almighty God’s creation which a human being dominates are destined to serve humanity. Creation through the method of labor is positioned at a person’s disposal. Creation is a blessing from the Creator which humankind discovers “and does not create” (Noughton 92). His Holiness in *On Human Labor* explained that when humanity rules the planet it is confronted by the blessing of Merciful God’s creation and thus the mystery of creation.

Pope John Paul II therefore emphasized in *On Human Labor* that human beings receive two benefits when they labor; one is what is given by the creator in regards to natural resources and two is what is given by other people regarding what has been already created on the basis of those natural resources. Humankind owes to both the

Creator and other people who provide the tools and opportunities to participate in the benefits of Almighty God's creation. All capital and property, then, including the methods of production, are definitely for the benefit of all humankind, since Merciful God's creation is a blessing for the growth of a human being (Noughton 93).

Furthermore, any thoughts of a just right to capital and property is denied, since property is not exactly dependent on the primary owner nor is it definitely destined for the specific individual person laboring upon this matter. His Holiness argued: "No one can say that the gifts of creation have been made simply to him unconditionally, without regard to any of the other human persons, who like him have been created to have dominion over the earth" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 143). This social inheritance of capital and property positions are a commitment on cooperation of this inheritance to permit other human beings, including new generations, to cooperate and take part in this inheritance.

Pope John Paul II claimed: "The methods of production are not only the outcome of the efforts of the creator and of generations" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 144).

In light of this matter and the theory that all capital together with resources are inherited, His Holiness explained that the suggestion of dual ownership by the "highest magisterium of the church" and authorities in Roman Catholic social teaching takes on significant value (Noughton 94). He stressed that while dual ownership may not be relevant to all circumstances, it is obvious that the correct place of all laborers requires ownership of the means of production in some way.

The Moral Order: Common Use

Stressed in the obligation to rule the planet is also the value of common use. The obligation to dominate the globe cannot become a fact unless availability to common use exists, Almighty God's creation is meant for the benefit of all people. To deny availability to the benefits of the planet is to disobey Merciful God's order of dominion. Almighty God's divine order has a peaceful relationship with the ethical blueprint of creation; that is, Merciful God's divine order creates the ethical blueprint of human relationship (Noughton 95). Pope John Paul II emphasized in *On Human Labor* that part of God Almighty's commanding is a fair distribution guided by the value of common use.

Following the tradition of Roman Catholic social teaching, Pope John Paul II explained that the first value of the social-economic order is the universal distribution of products and the right of common use of them. People are destined to participate in the benefits of Almighty God's creation (Noughton 96).

According to His Holiness: "Everyone has a right to have his basic life-sustaining needs fulfilled" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 145). He explained in *On Human Labor* that the earth and its fruits were destined for the uses of everyone. No one is to be excluded from them or denied access to them. Consequently, that form of ownership is to be preferred which most successfully accomplishes the universal distribution of material goods.

For Pope John Paul II, two basic ways to reach common use are through ownership of the means of production, and usage (Noughton 97). *On Human Labor* explains the difference regarding His Holiness' use of this virtue as personal experience and positive attitude. Previously, the old Roman Catholic tradition demanded common

use of Almighty God's creation, especially in the manner of usages. It did not unite the virtue specifically with ownership of the ways of production.

One of the most dangerous problems preventing a right to common use, according to Pope John Paul II, is the division and hostility between the members of capital and labor (Noughton 98). A basic reason for this hostility is the division of the labor place which is unnatural for His Holiness as described in *On Human Labor*. By separating the ways of production as a divided property in order to establish it in the form of capital in opposition to work violates the purpose of possession and use for which these methods of production were originally destined. Furthermore, failing to pay a family wage obligates both husband and wife to labor which ruins family stability.

Necessary to the relationship between the members of capital and labor is the virtue of common use, which Pope John Paul II explained is the foundation of the Roman Catholic Church's social teaching on compensation which includes the methods of earnings and production (Noughton 99). His Holiness elaborated upon two types of compensation in *On Human Labor*.

Even though *On Human Work* devoted less attention to wages, only two paragraphs to be exact, than any of the other papal letters that was written by Pope John Paul II, he was still very much interested in the family's earnings. He explained that a family's earnings are an absolutely vital criterion for "verifying the justice of the whole socio-economic system." It is an indispensable trial and error test of the integrity of society's economic system (Noughton 100). The bulk of earning part in his third papal encyclical concentrated on the family, more especially on the mother, so as to focus upon what His holiness understood as one of the most negative outcome of the failure to pay a

family's earnings, mothers leaving their homes to be able to supplement their husband's inadequate pay.

In *On Human Labor* Pope John Paul II specifically bases the family earnings on the virtue of the common use of goods (Noughton 101). He argued: "In every system regardless of the fundamental relationships within it between capital and labor, earnings are still a practical means whereby the vast majority of people can have access to those goods" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 146). This means that they are intended for common good: both the goods of nature and manufactured goods which both kinds of goods become accessible to the laborer through the wages which he receives as remuneration for his work.

More so than laborers ownership, earnings are the most practical ways by which human beings can receive the benefits of Almighty God's creation (Noughton 102). Pope John Paul II mentioned in *On Human Labor* that family earnings are a major indication to the fulfillment of the virtue of the common use of benefits. In other words, family earnings provide availability to the benefits of Merciful God's creation such as education, food, health care, and housing.

Similar to his predecessors, Pope John Paul II justly condemned the determination of earnings mainly through the market. He explained that proponents of free market economics maintain that compensation should be treated by the market and not by its necessary trait, as discussed in tradition Roman Catholic social teaching, here by a virtue such as common use. Such a market earning is determined by the demand and surplus of capital and work which is based in the mechanics of the market and not rooted on ethical values which arise from human necessity. Implicit in this market is the conception that

earnings can fall below the level needed to maintain a family, thus denying the virtue of common use (Noughton 103). In *On Human Labor* His Holiness fully rejected this type of strict capitalism because it excludes the influence of ethical standards and spiritual virtues upon economic life. He does accept that earning in Western societies is less determined mainly by the force market than they were in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. However, he was concerned that the full human dimension christened by the virtue of common use is not adequately taken into consideration in determining family earnings.

Pope John Paul II noticed, however, that the family earnings cannot be determined outside the distribution and production market system in which it finds itself. The market set guidelines for earnings (Noughton 104). His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* that paying family earnings in a specific corporation or industry may be impossible due to either economic inability, or because of the numerous necessities of different family sizes, health care, and special education.

Furthermore, he advocated allowances by the government to “mothers that devoted themselves solely to their families.” He mentioned that family earnings are fundamental human rights which are the responsibility of both the employer which he refers to as the direct employer, and also the government which he too refers to as the indirect employer. The distinction between the direct and the indirect employer is explained in *On Human Labor* in section five. The failure to incorporate the government as partially responsible for the family earning places unnecessary hardship both upon the family and the organization, especially upon large families. As numerous authorities throughout the Roman Catholic social tradition have noted, to delegate to one

organization alone the obligation to pay family earnings would provide financial incentives to organizations to discriminate toward large families. The failure of the government to provide supplemental family earning also excludes the complexity of the economy and the social responsibility of society as a whole entity to guarantee family wages.

For Pope John Paul II, property is not correct in and of itself. It is a way to expand the virtue of common use. His Holiness explained that justice is obtained when capital serves labor, if must be at labor's availability, especially through ownership. Possession of capital, especially the methods of production, is obtained first of all through labor in order that it may serve labor. The only criterion for legitimate right to ownership of the methods of production is capital's service to work (Noughton 105). The Pope stressed in *On Human Labor* that the methods of production should serve labor and therefore by serving labor that they should make possible the attainment of the first virtue of the order, namely the universal destination of products and the right to common use of them. By joining the virtue of common use to some type of laborer or dual ownership, His Holiness re-envisions ownership. He envisions ownership not as a type of laborer's self-interest as opposed to managerial self-interest, but as a search to fulfill the virtue of common use. The Pope never consolidates laborer ownership, since it is only one type of property among many. It is a way to the bigger objective of common use. Nevertheless, laborer ownership is viewed by His Holiness as one of the better ways to acquire one of the definite ends of common use, namely, a fair distribution of products.

Laborer ownership provides other benefits as well. It also has the ability to satisfy the personal area of the virtue of common use. Pope John Paul II described this

personal area as the “personalist argument.” He pointed out that the Roman Church’s social teaching has always taught the personal and powerful conviction that humankind’s labor affects not only the economy, but also, and specifically, “personal values.” The rule of ownership has to be at the service of “personalist values.”

Laborers are not only involved in what they receive from their labor (extrinsic benefits), they also need to know that they are laboring for themselves (intrinsic benefits) (Noughton 106). For His Holiness, it is hard for laborers to maintain an intimate connection to what is not their own. He emphasized in *On Human Labor* that laborer’s ownership adds to the personal growth of the individual laborer, that is, to the developmental section of labor. Another area of this personal area of laborer ownership is that it builds better social relationships between employees and employers. Laborer ownership was advocated by the Pope not only because it distributes the wealth, but because it serves well as a way to personalization by positively affecting the developmental areas of a human being and building stronger social relationships between laborers and employers.

The Process: Co- Creators and the Participants

Pope John Paul II possessed two fundamental concerns in the area of the production process: the spiritual nature of the process of labor and what effect the process of labor has upon the laborer. His Holiness saw a possible connection between the labor of the creator and the labor of humankind, labor has an objective in the masterpiece creation of Almighty God’s creative order. To attain this end, human being’s labor has to become a participation in Almighty God’s continuing labor of

creation (Noughton 107). The Pope also perceived the organization as an organic blueprint, where every laborer has a specific duty and role in cooperation with other laborers to provide to the common good of the organization in unity with society.

Nevertheless, he was not against a robotic organization while combines the subjectivity of the laborer within the objectives of the organization and the laws of market. An organization becomes organic exactly when, in the manner that it is formed and structure, it acknowledges the priority of the subject. An organic work place, for the Pope, is a cooperative labor place that positions the good of all human beings at the core of its organization. The struggle between the wellbeing of all human beings and the wellbeing of the organization is discussed in detail in *On Human Labor*. The true wellbeing of the organization explores the Popes comprehension of laborer as co-creator in establishing Merciful God's kingdom and the laborer's role as an active participant in the production process.

Co-creation

Pope John Paul II insisted that labor is an intimate activity which participates on Almighty God's continuous creation. Furthermore, through labor, human beings are co-creators with Merciful God. This specific idea is greatly inspired by the Holy Bible. His Holiness discussed the explanation of human activities in light of Almighty God's revelation. He discussed human activity in light of Genesis 1: 27-28 NAB, concentrating on how work unfolds "the creation's labor" (Noughton 108). The Pope developed this "co-creation" theme more directly in his section on the spirituality of labor in *On Human Labor*. Although the theme of co-creation can be found in the Holy Bible, no other

Christian writer including Roman Catholic Pontiffs, has expanded upon the theme of co-creator as thoroughly as Pope John Paul II.

Even though Pope John Paul II never used the term, the concept that people are “co-creators” is consistently present in *On Human Labor*. The foundation for comprehending what he meant by co-creation and co-creator is to understand that Almighty God’s creation is not a onetime event. It is an ongoing process, maintained through Merciful God’s power and love in cooperation with people (Noughton 109). He explained in *On Human Labor* that human beings continue to create and improve creation in cooperation with Almighty God by cooperating in Merciful God’s continuous creative activity. Pope John Paul II stressed that human beings participate in Almighty God’s creative activity by fulfilling Merciful God’s order to dominate and be in control. In this manner they mirror “the very action of the creation.” He affirms that Almighty God has given human beings the order to dominate the planet, and Merciful God has provided labor as the ways to acquire this privilege. This order to dominate the planet is a call to take part in Almighty God’s creative activity. Commenting on this theme of co-creation in *On Human Labor*, Roman Catholic Liberal academic scholar Tadeuz Mazowiecki argued: “The person is called to participate in the remaking of a more perfect creation while by transforming and dominating the world he, in a sense, becomes partner with Merciful God” (Masowiecki 56). Through his work he regains his true greatness as Almighty God’s collaborator and ensures the continuation of the divine creative action. Thus, the worker becomes the means in order that the whole of creation will be subjected to the dignity of the human being and son of Merciful God.

For Pope John Paul II, a natural and personal connection, then, exists between Almighty God as creator and person as laborer (Noughton 110).

Tadeuz Mazowiecki wrote: “The relationship is not related as the sacred to the profane; rather, a human being’s labor is related as cooperation with God’s continuous creation” (Masowiecki 57). As explained in *On Human Labor*, the work of Almighty God’s revelation is profoundly marked by the fundamental truth that man created in the image of God, shares by his labor in the activity of the Creator and that, within the limits of its own human capabilities, humankind in a sense continues to develop that activity and perfects it. This occurs as it advances further and further in the discovery of resources and values contained in the whole creation.

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* how the reality that God’s creative activity is illustrated as labor and places Genesis as the first “gospel of work” establishing respectable labor (Noughton 111). As Almighty God’s image, human beings should copy Merciful God’s labor, since Almighty God present’s Merciful God’s own creative labor as labor.

Pope John Paul II understood the relationship of the labor’s activity with Almighty God’s creative activity as profoundly intimate. In *On Human Labor* he explained that calling and invitation to become involved and perform Merciful God’s labor every day in the labor place. Referring to the Holy Bible, His Holiness wrote: “By their labor the laborers are achieving the Creator’s labor, consulting the advantages of their brothers and sisters, and making a contribution through their personal industry to the achievement in history of the divine plan” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 147). The

Pope's spirituality of labor is not an escape from reality; instead, it is an entrance into society, so as to fulfill the planet within Almighty God's command.

Again referring to the Holy Bible, he pointed out that humankind's advancement and skills which evolved from their labor is not in competition or in opposition with Merciful God's creations; instead, the triumphs of the human race are a sign of Almighty God's glory and the growth of his personal mysterious design (Noughton 112). For the Pope, Christians are invited to construct the kingdom of Merciful God, that is, to perfect creation, through their labor as co-creators within the creation's command and framework. Labor as co-creation involves an intimate calling to establish the globe not only in a scientific and technological manner, but in an ethical style as partners in building Almighty God's kingdom of love, justice and peace. As co-creator, the laborer has been given a spiritual reason to join in the building of Merciful God's creation. This upgrade accomplished through the Lord Jesus Christ's grace makes labor not only good but also sacred.

Pope John Paul II's perception of laborers as co-creators raise the importance of the labor process to a spiritual level, emphasizing the spiritual structure of the laborer's position in the production process (Noughton 113). His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* that the ability for creative innovation, inventions, and self-reflection in human beings constitute in part their similarity and reflection of Almighty God's likeness and of Merciful God's first act in creating the traits of creativity on the part of laborers has an important role to play in their labor. Their creativity is a reflection of divinity that has to be expressed in the labor place.

The entire human being must be included, that is, the emotional, the intellectual and the physical part of a human being. Labor has to be designed to use the whole human being and not just one part, as for example, in specific types of assembly line and bureaucratic foundations. He did not provide obligatory or specific examples for the labor, place, but he perceived an ethical obligation on the part of authorities and employers in the areas of organizational behavior and human resources to discover methods to incorporate the complete human being in the maintenance and production process. He recognized and supported the reality that this manner of labor was being done.

The Ethical Order: Priority of Labor and Participation.

For Pope John Paul II, three issues in the production process endanger the dignity of work by violating the virtue of the priority of labor over capital; the priority of the machine over the laborer; the continuous hostile relationship between management and labor; the depersonalization of centralized bureaucracy (Noughton 114). For His Holiness, these problems can be resolved by the active cooperation of the laborer in the decision process of the organization. *On Human Labor* examines more meticulously how the priority of work and involvement influenced the Pope's comprehension of the phase of the production process.

The fact that capital derives from creation and human labor is, for Pope John II, the reason why work has priority over capital. The production process must not be converted into simply a process driven by capital, even though capital programs assist human labor, a specific type of merchandise needed for production.

His Holiness called this merchandise perception of production “materialistic economism” (Noughton 115). He explained in *On Human Labor* that this philosophy of labor is provided by the rapid process of the growth of a one-sided materialistic society, which provides major importance to the objective dimension of labor, while the subjective dimension stays on a secondary level. In other words, labor is more valuable for what it produces than the human being who actually produces it, that is, the production process remains a priority of capital over labor.

Pope John Paul II understood that this concept of labor has faded since its height in the nineteenth century. However, for His Holiness, the materialistic values still visible and expanding today can produce an environment conducive to a materialistic perception of labor. This materialism can easily lead back to the wild depersonalization that existed in the late nineteenth century (Noughton 116). He believed that modern consumerism, for example, has increased the desire to maximize a personal consumption experience to such an extent that the desire to possess products has taken priority over the need to become more human as a person. It is the fear of consumerism and materialism that shaped the Pope’s preoccupation that labor will be viewed as a type of merchandise not only by the employer but also by labor itself. Seeing a human being as a plain instrument of the production process reverses the ordered priority of labor over capital founded by nature. His Holiness argued: “A human being has to be treated as the effective subject of labor and their true creator” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 148). Reducing a human being down to one of the many material elements of production violates the original goal of the production process to establish the dignity of the human person.

Pope John Paul II preached that the priority of labor over capital is maintained in the labor place if laborers have a participatory part in the direction of their labor (Noughton 117). He explained in *On Human Labor* that the laborers must be able to participate in the very labor process as a participant in creativity and responsibility at the labor bench to which the laborers apply themselves. For the Pope, only through the practice of personal responsibility will the laborer really be capable to cooperate in self-determination and defeat the typical friction between laborers and employers. For the laborer to actually become the subject of the production process, as the priority of labor demands an organization must be structured to maximize humankind and optimize profits. His Holiness explained that the methods of production are only tools for the growth and satisfaction of the human personality. Any organization established only on increasing profits efficiency, and productivity reverses the priority of labor over capital, even though they may claim this priority provides the best interest of labor. The labor place must be designed primarily to accelerate the growth of the laborer. Labor is a human activity not simply a financial activity. The Pope rejected the traditional capitalistic concept, that the key to successful organization is the control of production decision by owners of capital and by the managers who represent them.

Participation in the labor place was extremely important to Pope John Paul II. His writing, especially his third papal encyclical *On Human Labor*, demonstrates that he more than any pontiff that reigned before him, possessed a systematic comprehension of the definition of participation (Noughton 118). As a philosopher, His Holiness' fundamental beliefs regarding the satisfaction of human activities, which included the act of labor, is whether they are contributing to the participatory design of the human person.

He wrote: “Do they make it easier for a human being to experience a human being and other human beings as the other I, and through that, allow also a fuller experience of one’s own humanity, or do they, on the contrary, impede it, destroying that basic fabric of human existence and activity?” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 149).

This criterion of participation was important for Pope John Paul II’s Catholic social teaching on labor. Since human activities are self-determining, and since labor is a human activity, the labor place must be designed in light of the personal formation of the laborer (Noughton 119). This is the argument on which the priority of labor rests. Those who design the production process possess a duty of justice to respect the participatory design of the human person. Just as traditional Roman Catholic social teaching instructs that the usage design must confirm to the necessities of a human being that is earnings must be living wages, so His Holiness stressed in *On Human Labor* that production must conform to the formative dimension of a human being. Only through participation can the intimate aspect of a human being be satisfied. The labor process not only permits the laborer to acquire more but also to become more.

More precisely, Pope John Paul II compared laborer involvement to the virtue of industriousness, inspired by Saint Thomas Aquinas. His Holiness taught that virtue is something whereby a person becomes good as a human being (Noughton 120).

Therefore, it is the practice of virtue that makes human beings more human, then labor exercised as industriously makes laborers more human. He elaborated upon the idea of principle in relation to the process of labor in *On Human Labor* more than any other of his papal encyclicals. The Pope included industriousness but also expanded that list to include diligence, prudence in comprehending reasonable disks, reliability and

loyalty in interpersonal relationships as well as courage in carrying out decisions which are challenging and painful yet necessary, both for the overall laboring of a business and in facing possible set-backs.

Pope John Paul II pointed out that the principle resource throughout the production process is the human person (Noughton 121). The creativity, intelligence, and wisdom of laborers in collaboration with other employees create laboring communities which they can depend upon to transform human beings and natural environments.

Pope John Paul II also perceived laborer involvement as growing community and solidarity in the labor place (Noughton 122). He explained in *On Human Labor* that in order for labor to have a positive impact upon the lives of individual laborers, it must first and foremost unite human beings. Labor possesses a social power, by the aspect of its activity, to establish a community. A social duty exists for all laborers and most specifically those laborers who manage and own the way of production to become an integral section of the community. His Holiness described the social economic life of labor as a system of connected vessels where labor's basic design of interdependence leads to a real community of human beings.

Roman Catholic conservative academic scholar Czeslaw Mikosz claimed: "This involvement creates a closer union among individuals, and tends to cement more strongly the bonds between members of the human family" (Mikosz 44). This occurs because labor is a social fact which requires various forms and modalities of cooperation and establishes a relation of solidarity among those who labor together."

Pope John Paul II taught in *On Human Labor* that for labor to realize this unifying characteristic it demands a real participatory labor place (Noughton 123). For example, if

solidarity between labor and management is to exist, it must be realized in a labor place that allows the involvement to create that solidarity.

The Product: Common, Good and Stewardship.

As with the Christian values taught in traditional Roman Catholic social teachings, the product is the least developed dimension of Pope John Paul II's theology of labor in *On Human Labor*. However he did develop it in his other papal encyclicals both earlier and later. The major focus of *On Human Labor* is the formative dimension of labor (Noughton 124). Here, the value of the product originates in whether it seems a human being or not his concentration on the laborer is meant to de-emphasize the classism that arises when human beings are placed into categories depending upon the kind of labor they perform. He is concerned that the products and services produced from labor, such as technology, have determined the definition and value of a human being. His Holiness argued that the source of human dignity originates from the subjectivity of the laborer and not the product produced.

In his emphasis on the subject, however, he never omitted the focus of the common good. According to Pope John Paul II: "It is precisely by examining the subject that man combines his deepest human dignity with membership of a nation, and intends his labor also to increase the common good developed together with his compatriots" (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 150). This helps humanity realize that in this way work serves to add to the heritage of the whole human family, of all people in the world.

Even though the concentration of Pope John Paul II's papal encyclicals on the subject, the product and services produced by the process of labor cannot be separated for

the common good of society, which for His Holiness is rooted in the personality virtue of the laborer (Noughton 125). He explained in *On Human Labor* that laborers cannot be excluded from the product one produces. If discrepancy between the ethical norms of the subject and the moral content of the product is maintained, it can only produce alienation. For the Pope, the laborer must acquire full responsibility of not only the process of labor but also of what is produced. What is produced must add for the benefit of other laborers in society. He also explained in *On Human Labor* that society is the social incarnation of the labor of all generations.

As with his dealing of compensation and the production process, for Pope John Paul II the product is perceived from the original goal of creation, namely, that Almighty God has bestowed upon humankind his creation to conquer and exercise control so as to act as stewards for the purpose of contributing positively to human beings own development and the common good (Noughton 126). He explained that Merciful God has provided humankind with the responsibility of stewardship in *On Human Labor* over God's creation; that is, the products produced have a specific objective to serve Almighty God's created order. This special goal is found in pursuit of the common good discoverable through reason. *On Human Labor* examined the Pope's comprehension of the product dimension in light of the virtues of stewardship and the common good.

Dominion as a Form of Stewardship

Several different aspects exist in comprehending the divine order to conquer and exercise control. In the second section of *On Human Labor*, conquer and control are

discussed in its distribution aspects. In the second section of Pope John Paul II's papal encyclical, conquer and control are examined in light of the overwhelming obligation of stewardship that responsibility carries with it (Noughton 127). His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* that the correct comprehension of Almighty God's order to conquer, control and possess responsibility over the planet must be comprehended within Merciful God's creation command. In *On Human Labor*, he also explained that a human being is made in Almighty God's likeness and that is as Merciful God's likeness a human being has been given an order to rule the planet with holiness and justice. In *On Human Labor*, he also explained that a human being must remain subject to the will of Almighty God and imposes limitations upon his use and control over things. In *On Human Labor*, the essential definition of control for the Pope is perceived as consisting of a control or priority of labor over capital, morals over technology, human beings over products, a spirit over matter. Control is an ethical control which makes it an act of stewardship. As such it is not only a control over things but also a control that every individual person exercises individually. Products are a means to the psychological, social and spiritual growth of a human being, which is the glory of Merciful God's creation and Almighty God. Products have no more basic goals than that.

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that Almighty God had provided humankind with the needed tools for establishing human society. He believed that human beings are obligated to use what is provided for the goal of constructing. Merciful God's creation has a goal that is still to be unfolded (Noughton 128). His Holiness explained that as participants in Almighty God's creative command human beings unfold Almighty God's labor consulting the benefits of their brothers and sisters

and donating by their personal industry to the reality in history of the holy goal. This divine objective involves in part the structure of society, for the well-being of human kind through produced goods and services in accordance with the designs of Almighty God's holy creation. The Pope explained this vocational aspect to the products produced most profoundly in a sermon presented to farmers in Des Moines, Iowa on May 11, 1979. He argued: "The land is Merciful God's gift entrusted to people from the very beginning" (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 53). It is God's, given by a loving Creator as a means of sustaining the life which God has created. But the land is not only Almighty God's gift. It is also humankind's responsibility. Humankind himself created from the dust up the earth. (Genesis 3: 7 NAB), was made its master (Genesis 1: 26 NAB).

In order to bring forth fruit, the land would depend upon the genius and skillfulness, the sweat and the toil of the people to whom Almighty God would entrust it. The farmers are stewards of some of the most important resources Merciful God has given to the world. Therefore they must conserve the land well, so that their children and generations after them will inherit an even richer land than was entrusted to them. They also must remember the heart of their vocation. It is true that farming today provides an economic livelihood for the farmer; still it will always be more than an enterprise of profit making. In farming, farmers cooperate with the Creator in the very sustenance of the earth.

Whether an artisan, business person, entertainer, forum, intelligent, or laborer, the materials that these laborers produce and services that they render serves a purpose in the scheme of Almighty God's created command. As a picture of Almighty God, co-creator,

and steward, human beings, obligation and right to rule the planet is never a permit for abuse (Noughton 129). While the order to conquer and control has been used to justify environmental irresponsibility, Pope John Paul II taught that the divine commission of control must be comprehended as an invitation to perfect and preserve now and for future generations, and not as a permit to abuse and ruin at will. Commenting upon *On Human Labor*, Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar Dr. Rocco Buttiglione pointed out the divine commission to rule the planet was given to agricultural people. He wrote: “It was a call to become cultivators of the earth and stewards of the rules stored up in nature” (Buttiglione 202). Agricultural people know that nature must not be violated, for if they subjugate nature, they make it barren and destroy it.

To possess control, then, is to have expertise as artisans have expertise over their art. Expertise is not the abuse of something. It is comprehending the aspect of every individual person’s art, in the same manner as craftsmen know how to properly use their skills, and material. In the same sense control is meant to reveal the mystery of Merciful God’s creation through the stewardship of created products.

Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that the rapid wasting of the earth’s natural resources, the unbalanced quantity of monetary funds and skills applied towards military technology, and the abuse and destruction of Almighty God’s creation itself has not assisted human kind’s rule over creation. It has actually reversed it (Noughton 130). The environmental problems facing the globe service as testimony to the future of humankind to be Merciful God’s stewardships. Laborers live in fear that what they produce will be used against them. According to His Holiness: “Why is it that the power given to man from the beginning by which he was to subdue the earth turns

against himself?” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 151). A certain number of people are exploiting the earth for industrial and military purpose through an uncontrolled development of technology outside the moral order of creation. His answer is that human beings have become separated from the products of their labor, and from correct relations to their communities. People in general have failed to become stewards in their control of their world.

For Pope John Paul II, the reality that the environment is abused comes not from the biblical order to govern the planet, but rather from a political misconception that the goal of labor is economic to maximize profits. This is exactly where the biblical order of governing is reversed.

Maximizing profits divides stewardship from ruling by producing products only for economic reasons. When products and services are separated from physical and spiritual goals, that is, stewardship, the products themselves can lead to the decline of the social and spiritual component of a human being (Noughton 131). His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* that human beings cannot surrender their physical and spiritual position in the order of creations; otherwise, they become slaves of their own products and production process. When human beings abuse the planet, that is, when they fail to understand the ethical dimension of governing, they will eventually become enslaved by Almighty God’s creation.

The Ethical Order: the Common Good and Solidarity

The biblical book of Genesis’ order to subdue the earth relates to what Pope John Paul II labeled the “goal component” of labor (Noughton 132). As acting individual

person, such a human being is meant to become involved upon the planet in order to transform the planet. The world exists for all human beings to fulfill their necessities through the means of their labor.

Unlike no other living creature, human beings have extended themselves beyond their own personal surroundings as well as having allowed the physical appearances of the planet. The enduring and growing complexity of modern technology has provided humankind with the ability to govern the planet like it never had done before in history. However, that power must be subjected to stewardship.

In the opening sentence of *On Human Labor*, Pope John Paul II explained that as a command and social activity, labor must provide for both the scientific and technological growth of society, and most importantly to the cultural and ethical wellbeing of society. For labor to achieve such dignified goal the objective content of labor, namely, the product, must be directed towards the common good. There is no other possible means of the advancement of technology and the ethical level of society to achieve progress unless the products are usable and worth to the spiritual growth of a human being (Noughton 133). For His Holiness, it is exactly through labor that matter gains in nobility. However, he explained in *On Human Labor* that before the context of the product even be mentioned, laborers must be inspired with a sense of purpose, believing that the organization for which they work is using what they produce for the common good of society. He labeled this sense of purpose the virtue of solidarity. In *On Human Labor*, Pope John Paul II taught that all financial activities including labor possess an interdependent component. He emphasized that independence should be created by the principle of solidarity which is an enduring and strong determination to

unite human beings, especially laborers, to the common good; that is to say, to the wellbeing of all and each individual person, because they are all actually responsible for everyone. For His Holiness, the reality that human beings are interdependent in their labor necessitates the principle of solidarity. For example, in *On Human Labor*, he explained that solidarity does not reflect a struggle as contained in the anger and separations between management and labor which until recently described the management labor resolutions in North America, especially the USA.

Rather, solidarity is a reflection of the unification in the struggle for justice, not against a particular group. Created by the principle of solidarity, labor has to become a cooperative activity that leads its productive ability towards the necessities of society.

Solidarity prevents the temptation to shrink labor to a simple financial calculating or mental exercise. This temptation is exposed in an organization that lowers itself comprehension to becoming a group of self-interested individual persons attempting to maximize their own interests whether financially or psychologically comprehended. Consequently, the existence of the organization can be taken apart at the size of any financial or personal disadvantage. This comprehension of an organization can produce not only weak laborer morale, but eventually a long term poor productivity, unstable communities, and ultimately greedy human beings (Noughton 134). Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that individual personal that are governed by a self-interest attitude miss the focus or what has to become the common goal or end of the organization. Their motivation is limited to whether it is an advantage to themselves and not necessarily the organization on the community. For him, solidarity must persuade the attitudes of all the laborers so as to guide the products of the labor place to the common

good. His comprehension of solidarity was based upon his belief that laborers as well as all human beings are truly connected to one another.

For John Paul II, then, the good of solidarity is to lead human beings to the common good. In labor, the common good leads the steps concerning the products to be used by all people. He explained in *On Human Labor* that something is wrong with the organization of labor, especially with what has been produced.

This is shown by the reality that big proportions of resources are unused. However, millions of human beings are either unemployed or underemployed and suffering from the need of basic human necessities (Noughton 135).

His Holiness argued in *On Human Labor* that the decisions about product and services cannot be imposed primarily by the forces of demand and supply. Products and services have to be primarily determined on whether they contribute to the common good and well-being of humankind, and secondarily on whether the market will handle their existence. He explained in *On Human Labor* that though labor, a human being humanizes the planet by providing products and services which serve humankind. What human beings produce must possess a complete human definition as well as not only a market or psychological function. He stressed that the product together with every phase of labor must be aimed primarily at being more and secondarily at having more. For the Pope, products and services must blend with the authentic wellbeing of the human race. They must be subordinated, primal to the ethical law and secondarily to market on personal values.

The products produced by industry as well as service must possess as its end the common good. Laborers, both labor and management, must question whether the

product they are making or the service they are providing adds to the common good, namely whether it is making human beings as well as themselves more human.

Becoming more human possesses a normative component that has an essentially social aspect which must contribute to the well-being of society. An essential aspect to this social component of labor rests in its ability to add value and utility to an object, which includes an ethical value that adds to the common good, and not just a functional utility (Noughton 136). His Holiness emphasized, for example, in *On Human Labor* that the ultimate goal of technology, which is itself a product, is to add to the dignity and growth of all humankind. In the labor place, technology can accelerate the quantity, quality, efficiency, and profitability of a company, allowing them to appreciate a long term perspective and focus upon matter other than the survivability of its day to day existence. Technology can alleviate the physical work and monotonous activity of labor's process. Proper technology can make human beings careers as well as other areas of their lives easier, safer, more of expansive, and probably more purposeful. The Pope pointed out in *On Human Labor* that the invention of technological gadgets such as aeronautics communication devices, computers, and vehicles have changed the labor place and the planets. Technology has made the earth more accessible to human beings, has increased cultural and educational opportunities, and has overall advanced the discovery of creation's mysteries. However, it is sad that this material transformation has not always benefited human growth. Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that it has sometimes ruined and separated human beings from one another, as well as from the benefits of Almighty God's creation due to either human ignorance or human sin. He emphasized that humankind is afraid of self-destruction by what has been manufactured.

Example of this issue include the extravagant budgets in the defense industry on nuclear weapons, the side-effects of manufacturing such as the deterioration of natural resources and pollution, chemical food additives that contribute to cancer, heart disease and other contemporary illnesses, the media corporations, especially advertising and entertainment, manipulating sexual desires, aggression, material wants, and power.

These products are sometimes manufactured in the labor environment where laborers are able to acquire autonomy, creativity, and supposedly self-actualization. However, the products they produce, add to the eventually ethical physical and spiritual downfall of society. The Pope gave a sermon to the Federation of Knights of labor in Frankfurt, Germany on May 11, 1979. He stated: “Never has man been as rich in goods, means, and techniques as he is now, but never has he been as poor in indications about their utilization” (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 54). If people truly want to attain personal fulfillment in their work, the products and services they produce must conform to the dignity and development of the person.

Pope John Paul II defined labor in *On Human Labor* as a human activity for three main reasons: 1) Labor is a spiritual activity in that it fulfills Almighty God’s order to conquer and establish control over His creation. 2) Labor is a personal activity in that it establishes in part a person’s humanity through the self-determination aspect of its activity. 3) Labor is a social activity both in the sense that it is interpersonal, and in the sense that it is guided towards a social goal (Noughton 137).

His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* that labor derives its ethical and spiritual definition for these three main reasons. Therefore, the experience of labor has an impact upon a person’s dignity. Labor provides the possibility for a human being to

become more of a human being and society to become humanized. This important aspect of labor illustrates the priority of the subject over the object because it is through the subjective nature of labor that the laborer possess the possibility to comprehend, master, and develop the self as well as society. The Pope claimed: “Just as labor derives from a person, it is also ordered towards the person” (Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*, 151). For when people labor they not only alter things and society, they develop themselves as well. They learn much, they cultivate their resources, they as well go far beyond themselves. Rightly understood, this kind of growth is of greater value than any external riches which they can garner. People are more precious for what they are than for what they have.

Labor is beneficial not only because of the usefulness of the object manufactured or of the enormous change it has created in nature, but because labor provides the expectation for human satisfaction (Noughton 138). Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that labor is a vital part of what it means to be human since it has such a great influence on the growth of the individual person. In *On Human Labor's* section on compensation, Pope John Paul II perceived it in light of the divine order to conquer and exercise control over Almighty God's creation. Human beings have been collectively been given a privilege to use the resources of Merciful God's creation.

The demand and inheritance of control are provided for a very special objective to be used by humankind to better mirror Almighty God's image (Noughton 139).

For His Holiness, this goal reflects an intense and deterministic definition. Human beings must not be perceived as created completely by their environment, rather; they must be perceived as molding it and possessing control over it. So as not to be

determined by the environment, people must have the opportunities and resources to determine the environment. Human beings' employment, fair earnings and social benefits, professional and vocational education, and the proprietorship of the methods of the manufacturing have become the rulers of their environment. For the Pope, a failure to equally divide the resources of Merciful God's creation increases the possibility of determinism both by preventing those individuals who have obtained minimal to conquer the planet, and by increasing the dependency of material benefits for those individuals who abuse the order of control by hoarding them.

Within the aspect of the manufacturing method, Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that a labor place with employee involvement must provide laborers the opportunity to participate in Almighty God's continuous activity, and achieve self-realization and self-improvement by committing themselves to the well-being of the organization as well as to the whole community. Without some type of employee involvement, labor tends to become estranged and materialistic, where virtue is equal to the size of a human being's paycheck (Noughton 140). In the area of the product manufactured, His Holiness explained that even though the subject has preference over the object, it is not an exact priority in the sense that one controls the other one. The product is not meant to serve the individual person in just an individual or private sense, but in a way that serves the entire person which includes the spiritual as well as social aspect of the individual person.

Roman Catholic Conservative academic scholar Czeslaw Mikosz agreed with Pope John Paul II's argument that any correct comprehension of labor must be based upon an anthropology informed by Holy Scripture. Humankind must possess a consistent

image of itself that is both humanistic and religious. The material and social objectives of the labor place must be included (Noughton 141). His Holiness explained in *On Human Labor* that there it has to be connected to the spiritual objectives of human kind. Previously, Holy Scripture had not been fully integrated into the Roman Catholic social tradition as it could have been done, such as with the social documents of the Roman Catholic Church which were posted primarily in natural law. In them, Holy Scripture is used loosely in virtues, and is never the basis for discussion. The Pope's three other papal encyclicals: *The Redeemer of Man* (Redemptor Hominis), *On Social Concerns* (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis), and *The Hundredth Year* (Centesimus Annus) illustrate that natural law reasoning is sufficient to examine all social problems. Even though all of these documents specify that without a spiritual conversion, together with love, the social problems of society will remain unresolved, their dependency on natural law and under emphasis will lead to a practical conclusion.

Roman Catholic conservative academic scholar Jozef Tischner praised Pope John Paul II's effort to use Holy Scripture as a source of comprehending labor, even though he perceived it as a grave mistake that bordered on intellectual emasculations. For Tischner, His Holiness' sole use of the biblical book of Genesis in *On Human Labor* displays an intention to arrive at conclusions derived from a natural law method. This limited use, for Tischner, reflects an absolute but continuing dependence upon the natural law presumption that Almighty God's creation itself provides sufficient reasons for universally ethical assessment (Noughton 142). The Pope presupposed unity between the source of revelation, namely Holy Scripture and natural law. It was the Pope's intention to unite the two concepts more closely. It was not an error. For the Pope, natural law is

in harmony with Holy Scripture not opposed to it. He was never arguing as a Biblical Scholar, but wrote magisterially explaining religious doctrines, The Pope used natural law together with specific concepts of phenomenology to explain these doctrines. He explicitly used Holy Scripture as the foundational source of the Roman Catholic Church's authority. Natural law is used as a tool to fully explain in reasonable terms what has been provided in faith.

Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar Tadeuz Mazowiecki agreed that the terms natural law and ethical order differ only in name and not in content (Noughton 143). He explained in *On Human Labor* that the term natural has been interpreted to mean that there exist a direct parallel between humankind and its morality and biological laws and behavior. This concept of nature appears too essentialist to the people of our time, who challenge, as being a souvenir of Greek philosophy, the term natural law which defines as conservative, defensive, and outdated.

They further object that the expression was defined arbitrarily and once and for all in to a subjective and Western philosophical manner, and is therefore one-sided as well as lacking in any ethical authority for the universal conscience.

Tadeuz Mazowiecki explained that even though the term natural does in fact lend itself to serious misconceptions, the reality intended has lost nothing of its impact when it is replaced by contemporary synonyms such as human beings, human dignity, humankind, the rights of humankind or the rights of people, conscience, humanness in conduct, the struggles for justice and, more recently, the obligation of being, and the quality of life (Noughton 144). Pope John Paul II emphasized in *On Human Labor* putting aside what words are used. The important point is this: in this nature, individual

person and people all possess a common denominator, a common good of man, which is neither a simple term for a simple compromise but a fundamental and existential reality. It is a combination of assumptions and experience, ancient and modern, which people do not question, even; if they belong to opposed systems, for human discussion as an inseparable aspect of themselves which connect all of them.

Tadeuz Mazowiecki explained that Pope John Paul II's reference to the official order comes from the warning of the existing misunderstanding of nature and natural law (Noughton 145). Pope John Paul II explained in *On Human Labor* that the term ethical order reflects an ethical personal definition more than the possible physical definition that some people may impose upon the natural law.

Roman Catholic Liberal academic scholar Dr. Rocco Buttiglione emphasized that Pope John Paul II was criticized by both Roman Catholics and Protestants for deriving a co-creation theme from the Biblical book of Genesis. Buttiglione maintained that the text in Genesis means the exact opposite. He claimed: "The good news of the creation account is that Almighty God completed his creation and that mankind needs to do nothing more to see its perfection" (Buttiglione 203). That is exactly why Almighty God could call it good and rest and more importantly invite humanity to rest within his completed good creation. For Buttiglione, the person is a representative and not a co-creator of Almighty God's creation. The idea of co-creator, for Buttiglione, comes close to the reason for the fall, human beings placing themselves on the same level as Merciful God, that is, idolatry.

Labor, for Buttiglione, is a means to survival, a service to other human beings and most of all a way to keep busy. To credit labor to the purpose of co-creation is to make

labor demonic, in other words, an idolatrous activity through which human beings try to guarantee and service their significance, to make their mark on history. Buttiglione's critique exposed the roots of certain basic differences between Roman Catholic and Protestant theology in particular, whether creation is final with Almighty God's act, or a continuing process. For Buttiglione, labor, in general, is not a satisfying activity, It is simply a need for survival; that is, it does not possess the personal aspect ascribed to it in the Roman Catholic social tradition. Sin for Buttiglione is the corruption of labor resulting from humankind's idolatrous desire to see its labor as more than what it actually is in real life. Pope John Paul II, according to Buttiglione does not perceive sin seriously enough. Buttiglione stressed that Pope John Paul II fought to prove wrong any change of idolatry in his theme of co-creation. His Holiness was cautious in qualifying the theme of co-creation (Noughton 146).

He explained in *On Human Labor* that while human beings share in the activity of Merciful God, each person's activity is within the limits of individual capacities. Therefore, it is only in a sense that it contributes to develop Almighty God's creation. Actually, the language of co-creation is analogical and not literal. Merciful God is the one and only Creator. However, as a reflection of God, the human person has been provided a unique position in creation to fulfill Almighty God's divine will in a way that no other type of God's creation has been called to perform such a privileged act. Furthermore, in order for the person's labor to be co-creative it must conform to Almighty God's creative command. Not all human labor is co-creative. The Pope would agree with Buttiglione that labor can be destructive as well as idolatrous. However, there also exists the problem of departing labor and failure to comprehend its dignity and nobility.

Technology can cease to be humankind's friend and become almost his adversary, as when the mechanization of labor restricts it, taking away all personal satisfaction together with the incentive to creativity and responsibility, or when, through exalting the machine, it shrinks a human being to the status of a slave. His Holiness does not deny the effects of sin on labor. He understood the toil of labor first hand as a laborer in a Polish quarry. However, labor, as a human act, can become an ethical and spiritual reality that transforms labor as toil. For the Pope, labor is a human activity whereby people can build communities, acquire self-satisfaction, and get closer to Almighty God, if they labor within Merciful God's creative command.

Roman Catholic conservative academic scholar Tadeuz Mazowiecki noted that Pope John Paul II was criticized from a variety of different perspectives regarding his emphasis on the subject over the object. For example Mazowiecki noticed that his Holiness' over emphasis on the subjective reality can eventually espouse the view that human beings should be capable of finding labor satisfying regardless of its objective nature. Mazowiecki wrote: "*On Human Labor* in emphasizing the sanctity of labor as a process, the encyclical understates the sanctity of its purpose which is to provide consumers with material goods to help them achieve self-determination" (Mazowiecki 58). He criticized the Pope for not comprehending the capital aspect of capitalism and emphasized that His Holiness possessed a limited definition of capital such as the object. It excluded human beings whose investments are in the discovery and transformation of natural resources (Noughton 147). The Pope gave the impression that the object and the subject are separate, verging on a type of dualism in *On Human Labor*. While the difference between the object and the subject must be maintained, unless a person falls

into monism or pantheism to separate them too far, a person can underestimate the importance of the object. Even though the Pope underestimated the value of the product, he did not ignore it, especially in his other papal encyclicals especially in *On Social Concerns* (Sollicitudo Rei Socialis).

Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar Dr. Rocco Buttiglione claimed: “Pope John Paul II’s ethical and spiritual position opposed those individual person who prefer to take a more liberal laid back position that so long as the product or service is legal” (Buttiglione 204). This means that an individual person should not be concerned about its ethical aspect, as when the American Medical Association stated that physicians should concern themselves with whether abortion is legal and if the procedures are safe, rather than with the ethics of abortion (Noughton 148). His Holiness’ views in *On Human Labor* reflect the Roman Catholic Church’s conservative position on a human being’s right to free will while at the same time being conscious of the benefits of obedience and the punishment for disobedience to Almighty God’s commandments.

Buttiglione noted that this is exactly why Pope John Paul II argued in defense of the dominion language of the Biblical book of Genesis. While the Pope understood that extreme abuse exists in what is called “dominion theory” not to acknowledge the primacy of the individual person in the order of Almighty God’s creation can possibly fall into pantheism as some extreme types of the environmental movement has done such as Earth First (Noughton 149). In *On Human Labor*, the divine order to conquer the earth gives human beings priority over all of Almighty God’s creation, which is fundamentally an ethical priority. For His Holiness to deny the order of domination positions at risk this basic ordering.

Solidarity co-founder and Polish ex-electrician Lech Walesa wrote: “Pope John Paul II’s theology was always about the exuberant overflowing of divine love being what ought to unite all humankind in peace and solidarity” (Walesa, *The Road to Hope*, 101). This was a hallmark of his preaching in his native Poland (Noughton 150). It was no accident that Solidarity, a worker’s union, after all became the inspired name of the movement theme to challenge communism.

On Human Labor, which the majority of Solidarity members believe is Pope John Paul II’s most important papal encyclical, is a glorious exposition of His Holiness’ teachings regarding the holiness of labor together with the special integrity for the rights of laborers (Noughton 151). Those teachings, quite evident in the Pope’s writings, preach the ethical values of the Roman Catholic Church’s social commitment and love for those in need, and emphasize social responsibility for the poor in light of the common good.

Pope John Paul II’s papal encyclicals launched Roman Catholic social teachings into the twenty first century while reinvigorating them in his own spiritual reflections (Noughton 152). *On Human Labor* stood out as his most brilliant and successfully implemental Roman Catholic Church’s letter which converted the Church’s social teachings into an anticommunist social movement.

Traditional Roman Catholic teachings about the common good instead of selfishness about solidarity rather than private interest, about preferential attention to the poor, and about comprehending the benefits of this earth as divine blessings for human beings care and stewardship were preached by Pope John Paul II (Noughton 153). It was established upon the superabundance of divine charity overflowing into the appointed

labor of humankind on the earth. Furthermore, he lived his faith that was reflected all of his papal encyclicals especially in *On Human Labor*. It was a comprehension of divine charity that transformed his extraordinary meekness, his unique gentleness, his gifted sense of humor, his contagious optimism, his youthful spirit, and his sincere deeply rooted faith in Almighty God. He was a real person who practiced the genuine love that he preached during his papacy. Nothing else can explain a man with good will and friendship and whose humble words and prayers definitely played perhaps the most important role accelerating the peaceful collapse of the Iron Curtain in Poland and the rest of the Soviet Controlled Satellite Nations of Eastern Europe.

Pope John Paul II's reinvigoration of the Roman Catholic Church's social teachings is still growing in momentum and appears to possess far reaching positive effects (Noughton 154). The reinvigoration of those teachings is especially evident among today's Roman Catholic youth who admire him. He is the Pope who visited his assassin to forgive and bless him, and who sought to breach the divisions among the earth's religions upon which he placed so much hope. It is evident in the many new movements within the Church that he encouraged all around the world. Obviously, it is his reinvigoration for the Church's social teachings that inspired him to write *On Human Labor* which led to the creation of Solidarity that will become his most famous legacy. Maybe it is no coincidence that his beatification coincides with the feast of Saint Joseph the Worker and his very own Divine Mercy Sunday (April 2). For years the Roman Catholic Polish community worldwide already considered him a saint. Pope John Paul II was officially canonized by Pope Francis on April 27, 2014 in Vatican City.

Chapter Four: Pope John Paul II and Lech Walesa's Solidarity

"There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free person, there is not male and female; for you are all in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3: 28 NAB).

Pope John Paul II's first papal encyclical *The Redeemer of Man* (Redemptor Hominis), which was published on March 4, 1979, begins with the explanation of a Christian virtue known as Solidarity. It surpassed itself in appreciation, pardon, and unity of humankind while reflecting Almighty God's Holy Trinity. This is the beginning of solidarity in theory. Polish electrician Lech Walesa wrote the blueprint for the first Polish non-governmental independent trade labor union in a Soviet-bloc country. Inspired by the Pope's first Roman Catholic Church document, Walesa borrowed many of its themes. However, His Holiness rewrote it and the name of a Christian value became the name of the organization that gave rise to a broad, non-violent, anti-communist, social movement that, at its height, claimed some 9.4 million members. Walesa and his fellow Polish workers organized a strike at the Lenin Shipyards (now Gdansk Shipyards) in northern central Poland on a hot, late summer day on August 31, 1980 which marked the actual beginning of Solidarity in practice. (Ost 14). Lech Walesa and Pope John Paul II's groundbreaking creation is considered by Roman Catholic conservative and liberal scholars, such as Dr. Rocco Buttiglione, Tadeuz Masowiecki, Czealaw Mikosz, and Jozef Tischner, to have contributed greatly to the fall of communism in Poland, the Eastern European Soviet Satellite countries, and the former Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

Solidarity was a huge anti-bureaucratic social movement during the 1980s. It applied civil resistance to advance the causes of laborers rights and social changes.

The Polish Communist Government tried to eliminate the independent self-governing labor union during the period of martial law in the early 1980s and several years of political repression (Ost 15). However, in the end it was obligated to negotiate with the union due to overwhelming political pressure from the Vatican, the United States, and the international community.

The historical Round Table Talks between the Polish Communist Government and the Solidarity-led opposition led to the creation of semi-free elections in 1989. By the end of August of that same year, a Solidarity led coalition government was established. Lech Walesa was elected President of Poland on December 1, 1990. Since then Solidarity has become a more traditional, liberal trade union. Its membership has dropped from 10 million members to 680,000 members 30 years after its beginning in Poland (Ost 16). However, Solidarity has grown and is still growing as an international movement in many parts of the world today representing various noble causes where needed, such as the Dream Act Movement for immigrant students in the USA supported by the Roman Catholic Church.

The Polish Communist Government drastically raised food prices in the 1970s without raising laborers' salaries. This unjust incident together with other acts of social injustice led to the June 1976 laborers' protests along with abusive government enforcement of protesters.

Anti-communist government opposition groups like the KOR (Defense of the Laborers), the KPN (Confederation of Independent Poland), the ROPCIO (Movement for

Defense of Human and Civil Rights), and the WZW (Free Unions of the Coast) began to form secret organizations to monitor and oppose the Polish Communist Government's cruel attitude towards Polish laborers (Lepak 100). Labor unions formed an independent and important part of this network especially since the creation of Solidarity, the first anti-communist/pro-Roman Catholic labor union of its kind.

In 1979, the Polish economy decreased for the first time since World War II by 2 percent. Poland's foreign debt reached \$18 billion by 1980 (Lepak 101). Polish citizens held the Polish Communist Government responsible for the economic failure and were convinced more than ever of Solidarity's right to exist and the need to support it.

Solidarity emerged on August 31, 1980 in Gdansk at the Lenin Shipyards when the Polish Communist Government signed the agreement to allow for its existence. Twenty Inter-factory Founding Committees of free trade unions merged at the congress into one national organization: NSZZ Solidarnosc (Independent Self-governing Laborer Union Solidarity). It was officially registered on November 10, 1980 (Lepak 102). The Polish Communist Government tried desperately in vain to convince Polish citizens that their interpretation of communism was wrong by changing some of its policies even though at this point it was too late.

Devout Roman Catholic and Polish electrician Lech Walesa together with other laborers created a wide anti-Soviet movement ranging from Christians of the Roman Catholic Church to members of the anti-Soviet left. Solidarity advocated non-violence in all of its members activities. Lech Walesa was unanimously voted as President of Solidarity on September 1, 1981 by its first national congress. He adopted a republican political program known as the "Self-governing Republic." The Polish Communist

Government tried in vain to annihilate Solidarity with the martial law of 1981 along with several years of repression (Lepak 103). However, in the end it had to start negotiating with the union. Polish citizens were tired of a bad political system that was not only forced upon them, but it also failed to guarantee and protect their rights.

The historical Round Table Talks led between the Polish Communist Government and Solidarity-led opposition led to semi-free elections on April 1, 1989. Towards the end of August of that same year a Solidarity-led coalition government was established. Furthermore, Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar Tadeusz Mazowiecki was elected Prime Minister of Poland also that same year. Since 1989 Solidarity has evolved into a more traditional trade union. It had actually had little impact upon Poland's political scene during the early 1990s. However, a political branch was created on May 1, 1996 known as the AWS (Solidarity Electoral Action) which won the parliamentary election on April 1, 1997, yet lost the following 2002 election (Lepak 104). Today, Solidarity as a political party has very little influence on contemporary Polish politics.

However, even though Solidarity is no longer needed in Poland, since it accomplished what it set out to do successfully, there is still a need for it in today's world where it is still growing after having been modeled after the original Polish movement.

Pope John Paul II's first papal encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* (The Redeemer of Man), a major document of Roman Catholic Social Teaching, identifies the concept of solidarity with the poor (O'Keefe 68). It is also marginalized as a constitutive component of the Holy Bible and human participation of the common good. The Roman Catholic Church, under the leadership of Pope John Paul II, was an important and powerful supporter of Solidarity and was tremendously responsible for its success. Lech Walesa,

who himself openly displayed genuine Roman Catholic piety, confirmed His Holiness' enormous influence. According to Walesa: "The Holy Father through his meetings, demonstrated how numerous we were, especially when he told us not to be afraid" (Walesa, *The Road to Hope* 102). The Pope simply pointed out to his fellow Poles that they outnumbered the few members of the Polish Communist Party physically and spiritually.

In addition, Polish Roman Catholic priest Jerzy Popieluszko, who regularly gave sermons to the striking laborers, was eventually murdered by the Polish Communist Regime for his association with Solidarity on October 19, 1984 in Wloclawek, Poland. Polish laborers themselves were closely associated with the Roman Catholic Church, which can be seen in the photographs that were taken during the laborers' strikes of the 1980s. The portrait of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the Lord Jesus Christ, and Pope John Paul II were visible on the walls of every Polish factory (O'Keefe 69).

Unlike other trade unions, Solidarity was directly affiliated with the Roman Catholic Church supported by Roman Catholics around the world.

Solidarity's survival was an unprecedented event not only in Poland, a satellite state of the USSR ruled in practice by a one-party Polish Communist Regime, but the whole of the Eastern Communist Bloc. It meant a separation in the hardline stance of the Polish Communist United Laborers Party, which had ended bloodily a 1970 laborers' protest with machine gun fire killing dozens and injuring over 1,000, and the broader Soviet Communist Regime in the Eastern Communist Bloc, which had crushed both the 1956 Hungarian Uprising and the 1968 Prague Spring with Soviet-led invasions

(O’Keefe 70). The Polish Communist Party lost the respect and trust of the Polish People by creating a government that stood for evil on a massive scale.

Solidarity has strongly influenced as well as inspired the protests of the Arab Spring. Lech Walesa has voluntarily visited Tunisian protestors in Tunisia in 2011 (O’Keefe 72). Even though the majority of Arabs in those countries are Muslim, Shiites and Sunnis, as well as their governments, they rebelled against a system of political repression similar to the original Solidarity movement.

Several democratic opposition groups in the Russian Federation have established a Solidarity movement of their own (O’Keefe 73). The original Solidarity challenged communism while other Solidarity-inspired organizations challenged political and social injustice.

Even though Pope John Paul II’s literal works, especially his 1979 papal encyclical *The Redeemer of Man* (*Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*), was officially banned in Poland by the Polish Communist Government, underground copies of them influenced the opinions of the Polish intellectual opposition. His Holiness’ 1981 papal encyclical *On Human Labor* (*Laborem Exercens*), which recommended that self-organized social groups could gradually expand the domains of civil society in a totalitarian state, helped inspire the dissident movements of the 1970s that eventually led to the creation of Solidarity and provided a philosophical underpinning for the historical movement (Kubik 27). *On Human Labor* created an anti-abusive political system domino effect that led to the creation of Solidarity creating more Solidarity-inspired movements that achieved similar success.

Established on August 31, 1980, Solidarity's supreme powers were vested in a legislative body, the Convention of Delegates. The executive branch was the National Coordinating Commission, later renamed the National Commission. Solidarity had a regional structure, made up of thirty-eight regions and two districts (Kubik 28). Solidarity won the support of all Polish citizens that cooperated in supporting the movement any way that they could including housewives and students.

Solidarity had at its peak over ten million members, which became the biggest union membership on earth. During the communist era Solidarity's thirty-eight delegates were arrested and jailed when martial law came into effect on December 13, 1981 under Poland's communist leader General Wojciech Jaruzelski.

After a one year jail term the high ranking members of Solidarity were offered one way trips to any nations in the world that would willingly accept them including Canada, the United States, and countries in the Middle East (Kubik 29). The few members of the Polish Communist Party were outnumbered and afraid of the millions of Polish citizens that stood behind Solidarity. Therefore, they tried in vain to get rid of its leaders peacefully so as not to provoke further action from the movement.

Solidarity was organized as an industrial union and based upon a model, more specifically according to the One Big Union principle, along the lines of the Industrial Laborers of the World and the Spanish National Confederation of Laborers (CEON). Laborers in every trade were organized by region, rather than by craft (Kubik 30). These not too well known local unions were actually supported by the Roman Catholic Church even though unlike Solidarity they were not inspired by a papal encyclical.

Solidarity had more than 4000,000 members in 2010. The National Commission of Independent Self-Governing Trade Union is located in Gdansk, Poland. It is composed of Delegates from Regional General Congress (Kubik 31). Solidarity has not died out completely in Poland even though today its role is less political and more educational in consulting other non-violent organizations that represent humane causes.

Divided into thirty-seven regions, Solidarity's territorial structure to a large extent reflects the shape of Polish provinces, established in 1975 and annulled in 1998 by the Administration division of the Peoples Republic of Poland (Kubik 32). Its members and even ex-members such as Lech Walesa still advise and lecture on Solidarity's goals that reflect Christian virtues.

The network of Solidarity branches of the key factories of Poland was established on April 14, 1981 in Gdansk, Poland. It was made of representatives of seventeen factories. Each one stood for the most important factories from every province of the pre-1975 Poland. However, there were two important exceptions. There were no representatives from the Koszalin Province, and the Katowice Province was represented by only two factories (Kubik 33). Solidarity was supported by secret members that were not Polish laborers but included Polish housewives and students.

Solidarity's legacy continues to flourish today in numerous social movements around the world which still refer to Pope John Paul II's *On Human Labor* as its blueprint together with Lech Walesa's Roman Catholic Christian faith as a role model for bringing about necessary social changes. Other similar movements have borrowed virtues from their own faith (Christian, Jewish, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu, etc.) as a blueprint for establishing social justice through the use of non-violent civil disobedience as

successfully conducted by Pope John Paul II, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Mahatma Gandhi, and the 14th Dalai Lama.

Conclusion

“None of you will ever believe unless you see miracles and wonders” (John 4: 48 NAB).

The fall of the Communist Empire in Eastern Europe can teach citizens of the world a valuable lesson on how history in general tends to repeat itself for the sole purpose of instructing those individuals who seem to either misunderstand it or forget to remember it. This appears to be a Biblical prophetic message that has stood the test of time. Nevertheless, this warning seems to be true because human beings have instinctively made repetitive mistakes since the beginning of humankind. Human nature is constantly laboring with decisions which must be made between good and evil. These elements are consistently present in every person's life. Human beings have experienced success and failure both as individuals and as members of society. People's free will permits them to make choices that will lead them in the right or wrong direction. Humanistic reasoning allows people to think critically, to be able to solve problems before drawing any conclusions.

The impact of the fall of communism in Eastern Europe has had an extraordinary effect on the lives of ordinary people. History served as a sort of documentary film, a particular type of modern reality show where the cast was made up of real life performers who either selected their roles or were assigned specific parts to be played to the very best of their abilities. History acted as a script that has been written, and will be rewritten in order to create the necessary scenario where benevolence and malice are part of the main plot. Different as well as similar versions help to form sequels that enhance the

players' performances. The director is chosen by the actors either conscientiously or unconscientiously.

The producer is divine in nature and in control at all times. The production is the sole and unique creation of one superior being, Almighty God.

One of the most frequent themes in the continuing story of humankind is the conflict of church verses which played a major role in the fall of communist governments in Eastern and Europe. Some of the best performances have evolved out of this topic. The best actors have demonstrated exceptional talent. They have given the best performance that they have to offer. The well-deserved awards will be bestowed upon the few but memorable best performers. The sweet taste of victory and the bitter agony of defeat are recurrent in the rise and fall of empires. This popular story is a historical phenomenon. It is a remake, an endless sequel of sequels. Only the cast and sometimes the location change but the picture is pretty much the same. It is one of the longest running presentations in the archives of reality. Even though such a spectacle is all too familiar, there is one feature that has stood out a little more than the other ones.

The Communist Empire in Eastern Europe was unique. The script was nothing close to the book. The original authors had one goal in mind. The script writers rewrite their own objective to suit their own purpose. The utopian story which was meant to have a happy ending was distorted to become a classic tragedy, a contemporary nightmare. Fortunately, a tale such as this one requires heroes and villains in order to promote a successful production. It is a standard aspect of life. The Communist Parties of Eastern Europe were the villains while the leaders of the free world were the heroes.

The historical events that took place after the end of World War II on August 9, 1945 up to the collapse of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republic on December 21, 1991 produced some of the best and worst historical figures of all times.

Karol Jozef Wojtyla was perhaps without a doubt the most charismatic hero of the Solidarity movement. Communism was obviously by all comparisons the most evil villain that challenged Solidarity.

Karol Jozef Wojtyla, who eventually came to be known all around the world as Pope John Paul II, stood out among both the heroes and villains of his time. When compared to other noble humanitarian icons such as American Civil Rights Leader Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Indian Independence Leader Mahatma Gandhi, His Holiness belongs in the same category reserved only for exceptional heroes such as these noble individuals that have changed not only the course of history, but have also contributed enormously towards the well-being of all humanity.

Pope John Paul II stood out as the leader of the Roman Catholic Church unlike no other pontiff has ever done in history. His life was a living testimony of what one human being can make in this world especially when guided by the right principles. He was an excellent role model for all faithful practitioners of all different faiths.

Pope John Paul II was a man of many talents. He was a gifted writer who wrote essays, papal encyclicals, plays, poetry, sermons, and short stories on Christian topics. His Holiness also spoke several languages. He was an active athlete that canoed, hiked, swam, and played soccer. The Pope's several educational degrees included a doctoral degree in theology.

He even served in the Polish Army during World War II. His Holiness was an ordained Roman Catholic priest, bishop, cardinal, and finally the first Polish Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church. His resume was quite impressive to say the least perhaps more than sufficient for even one remarkable human being.

Pope John Paul II survived both the Nazi as well as the Soviet occupation of his native Poland while still living there. Miraculously, he escaped death on several occasions especially during an assassination attempt on his life during his reign as pontiff. He suffered the loss of his mother, brother, and father early in his life. Before becoming a Roman Catholic priest, he labored at several unskilled jobs performing manual labor under dangerous and strenuous conditions during World War II.

Pope John Paul II lived during a time when the existence of intellects from politics to religion flourished especially in Europe. Different ideologies inspired the masses to adapt causes that led to good or evil. There was competition for the complete control of humankind. Communists and fascists were enemies even though they were on the same side of malevolence. There was also competition for the liberation of human life. Political as well as religious leaders were also rivals especially regarding the separation of church and state. However, they were both on the same side of benevolence. Ironically, they became the exception to the rule when they cooperated with each other for the same humane cause.

Pope John Paul II's intellectual contemporaries ranged from those individuals who possessed exceptional intelligence to a higher degree with just a touch of wisdom to a lesser degree, to those individuals who demonstrated average intelligence to a lesser degree with the right amount of wisdom to a higher degree. Some of those intellects

lacked wisdom and one particular trait even more necessary which is faith in Almighty God. However, there was only one individual who actually manifested these three exceptional qualities to a higher degree than average expectation of human potential. He was His Holiness Pope John Paul II.

Pope John Paul II was a truly unique human being. He was extremely intelligent, exceptionally wise, and sincerely faithful in spiritual matters. Despite his impressive resume full of more than sufficient qualifications necessary to become the leader of the largest Christian religion in the world, His Holiness was by traditional Roman Catholic Church standards an extraordinary humble individual. His personal lifestyle was vigorous yet simple. He exercised common sense and discipline quite naturally as part of his daily routine. However, the people in his life that were close to him and knew him very well have observed repeatedly that his life was pretty much like any other ordinary devoted Christian except for one interesting personality trait, which was his praying habits. He prayed consistently and devotedly on a daily basis. Despite his busy work schedule, he always set aside a time to pray on his list of priorities. He prayed constantly both privately as well as publically. The Pope zealously believed in the power of prayer to Almighty God.

Pope John Paul II was highly respected as well as well as deeply admired by both the leaders of the free world and the leaders of the Communist Empire in Eastern Europe for his knowledge of world affairs pertaining to politics and religion and modest yet outspoken personality.

However, his most single important contribution to the well-being of humanity has to be without any doubt his inspirational and important third papal encyclical *On*

Human Labor, which became the blueprint for the historical Solidarity movement helping to defeat the evil and powerful Polish Communist Government followed by the “domino effect” collapse of the Soviet Union and the Eastern European Communist Satellite countries by way of successful civil disobedience.

On Human Labor specifically defines through Biblical interpretation, especially the Book of Genesis, Almighty God’s purpose of labor along with men and women’s roles as laborers. Pope John Paul II wrote: “Since God labors and rested on the Sabbath, man must therefore be God-like, imitating Him and enjoying the special benefits provided for him by his Creator” (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 53). His Holiness understood that everything that Merciful God does for humankind is done as an act of God’s perfect love for God’s creation. Almighty God’s creation especially human beings are an act of love. Merciful God’s Ten Commandments were created to protect God’s laborers. This provides further proof of the Creators perfect plan for humankind to enjoy the fruits of happiness God’s way.

Communism forces human beings to labor without any concern for their personal well-being. It is an evil system of government, an atheistic belief system, which enslaves humanity by military force. Communism is destined to fail. It is Almighty God’s enemy. Christianity is stronger than communism. Christians in solidarity as a world-wide community are more powerful than communist as a political organization.

Pope John Paul II was often asked to give his personal opinion on why he believed Solidarity was historically so successful. He responded by giving credit to Almighty God’s words in the New Testament: “I say to you if two of you agree on earth about anything for which they are to pray, it shall be granted to them by my Heavenly

Father. For where two or more are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them” (Matthew 18: 19-20 NAB).

According to Pope John Paul II: “First, I prayed, then Lech Walesa prayed, and finally ten million Polish laborers prayed to God for Solidarity’s triumph over communism in Poland. God, who is the greatest, compassionate, generous, and loving father of all times, would never refuse his beloved children’s desperate needs. God always keeps his word” (Wojtyla, *Sign of Contradiction*, 54). His Holiness understood the power of prayer especially in overcoming adversity such as communism in Poland which he explained in *On Human Labor*.

Polish Roman Catholic, electrician, President of Poland, Solidarity co-founder and leader, author, human rights activist, and winner of the 1983 Nobel Peace Prize Lech Walesa has admitted that Pope John Paul II is his favorite author and that *On Human Labor* is the most inspirational piece of literature he has ever read in his life. His Holiness’ third papal encyclical inspired Poland’s second most popular native son, and the Pope is still Poland’s most popular native son, in several important ways.

Like the Pope, Walesa learned from harsh experiences the bitter yet valuable lessons that were taught by the occupation of the Nazi Regime and more so under the rule of the Soviet-backed Polish Communist Government while living in his native land. Both devoted Roman Catholics possessed a deeply rooted, sincere faith in Almighty God and believed in practicing a non-violent Christian philosophy as the most effective way in achieving freedom from their oppressors. Unlike the Pope, Walesa lacked the intellectual resources that His Holiness possessed to write Solidarity’s blueprint which was *On Human Labor*. Walesa admitted that without the Pope’s written contribution Solidarity

would never have been able to win Poland's must needed and well-deserved freedom from the Polish Communist Government.

Roman Catholic academic scholars Dr. Rocco Buttiglione, Tadeuz Masowiecki, Czeslaw Mikosz, and Jozef Tischner have agreed that Lech Walesa was the "brawns" behind Solidarity while Pope John Paul II was its "brains." *On Human Labor* convinced Walesa that his true calling in life from Almighty God was to lead Solidarity's march towards freedom. It also allowed him to focus all of his mental and physical energy on the manual aspects of the Polish freedom movement after allowing the Pope to take control of Solidarity's written component. *On Human Labor's* powerful and vital message was similar to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous 1963 *I Have a Dream* speech which echoed "Let freedom ring."

Buttiglione, Masowiecki, Mikosz, and Tischner have compared Pope John Paul II to both Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Mahatma Gandhi who are recognized as two of the world's greatest civil rights leaders of all times. *On Human Labor* parallels *I Have a Dream* with achieving freedom Merciful God's way through the power of prayer and peaceful demonstrations. Scholars have also compared Lech Walesa to African American civil rights leader Bayard Rustin who was Dr. King's personal assistant and organized the peaceful demonstrators together with the peaceful demonstrations during the 1960s American Civil Rights Movement.

Lech Walesa wrote about Pope John Paul II: "Without Pope John Paul II there would have been no end of communism in Poland, Eastern Europe, and the Soviet Union or at least it would have happened much later, and the end would have been bloody" (Walesa, *The Road to Hope*, 120). Both leaders knew that the communist possessed

military superiority, but they also believed that Almighty God is always in control and that communism was no match for the created who fights on his terms in mysterious ways especially through the power of Solidarity.

Lech Walesa wrote about Solidarity:

The sole basic source of our strength is the solidarity of Polish laborers, peasants, and the intelligentsia, the solidarity of the nation, the solidarity of people who seek to live in dignity, truth, and in harmony with their conscience that gave rise and still do so, to the feelings of understanding and solidarity all over the world.

(Walesa, *The Road to Freedom*, 150)

Both leaders firmly believed that Solidarity is a Christian virtue to be practiced by all human beings to love and serve Almighty God as explained meticulously in *On Human Labor*.

Lech Walesa wrote about *On Human Labor*: “*On Human Labor* was Solidarity’s blueprint which became the Polish People’s struggle and the Polish Communist Government’s defeat was the triumph” (Walesa, *The Struggle and the Triumph*, 175). Solidarity was a sort of laborer’s declaration of independence and bill of rights that all Polish citizens needed to see in writing to convince them to struggle for freedom and written by a Polish spiritual and political leader, Pope John Paul II.

Lech Walesa wrote about his leadership role in Solidarity: “God was our commanding officer, the general, in our battles for freedom while Pope John Paul II was my senior officer in rank and I was just an obedient lieutenant, a good soldier fighting a tough war alongside my fellow Polish soldiers” (Walesa, *All that I Do, I Do for Poland*,

200). Solidarity was a sort of army, Almighty God's army fighting evil on Holy God's terms and winning the battle the Lord's way with God's perfect timing.

Italian Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar Dr. Rocco Buttiglione is convinced that Pope John Paul II was at the right place at the right time in world history and he was not the only important historical figure that has been granted this honorable and unique rare privilege. It is a historical fact that Jozef Karol Wojtyla was born, raised, and educated as a Roman Catholic in Poland, was intellectually gifted as a writer, and rose through the ranks of the Roman Catholic Church from priest to become the Pope during the period in history when the Soviet-backed Polish Communist Government unjustly ruled the Polish nation. History has always been notorious for repeating its similar lessons to humanity.

In America Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., an African American Baptist minister and civil right leader, was highly instrumental in helping to liberate his fellow African Americans from their enemy, the American Government during the American Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s. In India Mahatma Gandhi, a devoted Hindu, lawyer, and civil rights leader was also highly instrumental in helping to liberate his fellow Indians from their enemy, the British Government during the 1940s. In Poland Pope John Paul II was just as highly instrumental in helping to liberate his fellow Poles from their enemy, the Polish Communist Government during the 1980s. Christians can credit this historical phenomenon to Almighty God's Divine Intervention while non-Christians can credit these events that took place in history to fate. Some academic scholars may label such amazing occurrences as pure coincidence. Buttiglione does not believe in fate or coincidence. He believes that history is similar to nature in that they follow some sort of

scientific laws which were written by Almighty God. Buttiglione credits His Holiness' role in writing *On Human Labor* as the driving force which led to the creation of Solidarity that led to the collapse of the Communist Empire in Eastern Europe. This was a domino effect where one event led to another. The Pope started the push with his introduction of his papal encyclical. Lech Walesa and his fellow Poles continued pushing until communism tumbled down to the ground. Certain academic scholars have wondered if for example another Pope especially a non-Polish Pontiff would have done what Pope John Paul II did to help eliminate communism from Europe's geopolitical map.

Dr. Rocco Buttiglione wrote about Pope John Paul II: "There was only one Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. with his *I Have a Dream* speech and then there was only one Pope John Paul II with his *On Human Labor* papal encyclical that led to the historical liberation of oppressed Eastern Europeans" (Buttiglione, *The Thoughts of the Man who became Pope John Paul II*, 194). Perhaps history would have been written by other civil right leaders who could have failed where these two noble humanitarians have succeeded graciously exceeding all expectations without any doubt whatsoever for the benefit of all humankind.

Polish Roman Catholic liberal academic scholar Tadeuz Masowiecki is also convinced that Pope John Paul II was both an exceptionally versatile man of the cloth as well as a political leader. The role of the Bishop of Rome, the Supreme Pontiff of the Roman Catholic Church is a controversial one especially when the separation of Church and State is the norm in most democratic nations. Roman Catholicism does not endorse any political agenda of any kind. Vatican City, a nation with its own government, is also

the headquarters of the largest Christian religion in the world, the Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, the Pope is both the religious leader as well as the political leader of both a religion and a country. The Church has produced Pontiffs who have been some of the best and worst religious leaders. It has also produced Pontiffs who have been some of the best and worst political leaders. However, the Church has rarely produced Pontiffs who have been both the best and worst religious and political leaders. Religion and politics share very little, if anything, in common with their dogma.

Ministers and politicians seldom, if ever, agree upon anything. Masowiecki believed that Pope John Paul II was the exception. He was equally faithful in religious affairs as well as wise in political matters. His Holiness knew how to balance both vocations with equal finesse. The Pope was a charismatic preacher and diplomat who knew how to convince the faithful masses of the Church's traditional social teachings and negotiate peaceful solutions to solve political crisis through his writings as evident in *On Human Labor* that dealt with communism from a religious and political perspective. Unlike some politicians, he told people what they needed to know and not necessarily what they just wanted to hear. His Holiness' strong anti-communist agenda was second only to his first priority which was the reiteration of the Church's traditional social teachings on the defense of the rights of laborers based upon the tenets of the Holy Bible. No other Pontiff in the Church's history has committed himself to such a noble cause with such personal interest and professional expertise. The Pope did something that was totally radical when compared to other Pontiffs regarding their encyclicals. Traditionally, when a Pope wrote a papal encyclical it was read to the Cardinals who instructed the Bishops on how to pass the message to the Priests who finally preached it to the their

church parishioners. His Holiness drastically changed Church tradition by after reading all of his papal encyclicals to the Cardinals instructing them to make the printed copies available to every Polish Roman Catholic in Poland, especially *On Human Labor*, with the emphasis that every Bishop instruct the Priests on how to explain getting the message across after distributing the papal encyclicals on pamphlets to the church parishioner.

On Human Labor was made available and read by not only every Polish citizen, including Roman Catholics and Jews, but also by every member of the Polish Communist Party, the Soviet Communist Party, and even the members of every European Communist Party inside the Soviet Satellite Countries of the Eastern Bloc. *On Human Labor* became His Holiness' and the Roman Catholic Church's most widely read papal encyclical of all times. Even international and powerful world leaders such as US President Ronald Reagan and Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev read it and were inspired to take action in support of the defense of the rights of laborers. Reagan responded to *On Human Labor's* message by creating sanctions against the USSR, Poland, and all of the other communist countries of Eastern Europe as well as convincing the USA's allies to do the same in support of Solidarity. Every one of those nations responded by to the President's request by doing the same. He even went as far as to order the CIA to help Solidarity with money, electronic equipment for spying and communicating, anti-communist printed literature, and overseas manpower which was provided by America's allies that were located in Europe, including CIA agents stationed over there together with espionage agents from countries that were on friendly terms with the US (Bernstein and Politi 87).

Ronald Reagan wrote about *On Human Labor*: “Pope John Paul II’s *On Human Labor* is the most important laborers manifesto that has been written for laborers by one of God’s most wisest and modest laborers who reiterated the Creator’s Divine Plan for the benefit of all humanity” (Reagan, *An American Life*, 204).

One of President Ronald Reagan’s political goals was to abolish communism in Eastern Europe. He needed a good reason to justify his intentions. *On Human Labor* and *Solidarity* were all that he needed to accomplish his political dream.

Ronald Reagan wrote about *Solidarity*: “Pope John Paul II’s *On Human Labor* was the seed that produced *Solidarity*, a tree firmly planted, where the laborers, its branches, gave the fruits of dignity, freedom, and justice to humanity” (Reagan, *Where’s the Rest of Me?*, 215). President Ronald Reagan decided to go along with the Pope’s plan for eliminating communism in Eastern Europe by providing American support (manpower, money, technology, etc.,).

Gorbachev reacted to *On Human Labor*’s message by writing *Perestroika* (Restructuring) in 1986 which contained his own personal ideas on radical reforms including demokratizatsiya (democratization), glasnost (openness), perestroika (restructuring), and uskoreniya (acceleration of economic development). His ideas were accepted unanimously by the members of his own communist party in the Kremlin. Tadeuz Masowiecki believed that Pope John Paul II’s own experience with communism made him more qualified than any other Pontiff to deal with it with prudence and maturity.

Mikhail Gorbachev wrote about *On Human Labor*:

Pope John Paul II's *On Human Labor* is the most influential piece that I have read. The *Communist Manifesto* is standard reading for all communists, but *On Human Labor* should be mandatory reading for all laborers both professionals and peasants from all cultures and every political belief around the globe.

(Gorbachev, *Perestroika*, 235)

Mikhail Gorbachev realized that communism in Eastern Europe was failing so he tried to incorporate certain values contained in *On Human Labor* which dissolved communism purity by watering it down through the strength of Solidarity.

Mikhail Gorbachev wrote about Solidarity: "Pope John Paul II's *On Human Laborer* became Solidarity's soldier's manual on how to fight a non-violent war with weapons of faith, hope, and wisdom in order to win a peaceful solution towards obtaining freedom and securing the rights of all laborers" (Gorbachev, *Memoirs*, 236). Mikhail Gorbachev admired and respected the Pope's strong stance against communism and the manner by which he fought to eliminate it peacefully.

Czeslaw Masowiecki wrote about Pope John Paul II:

Father Jozef Karol Wojtyla was promoted to Bishop, Cardinal, and finally Pope for similar reasons that a lieutenant is promoted to captain, major, colonel, and finally general in the military after having proving himself to be a heroic veteran of war who possesses the makings of a brave and brilliant military strategist.

(Masowiecki, *Letters from Prison and other Letters*, 217)

Czeslaw Masowiecki believed that Pope John Paul II deserves credit for who he was in history and what he accomplished because it was Almighty God's Divine Will.

Polish Roman Catholic conservative academic scholar and winner of the 1980 Nobel Prize for Literature Czeslaw Mikosz admired Pope John Paul II for his unique writing style which was a well-balanced combination of genius and simplicity, Roman Catholic traditional social teaching and contemporary social concerns, and Biblical interpretation of labor and examination of the politics of communism.

Like Saint Paul the Apostle who reiterated the teachings of the Old Testament in the Holy Bible through Christian interpretation in the New Testament of the Holy Bible, His Holiness reiterated the Roman Catholic Church's defense of the rights of laborers. Like Saint John the Evangelist who provided a written description of the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ in the New Testament of the Holy Bible through a practical interpretation in several languages, His Holiness provided in *On Human Labor* the Roman Catholic Church's dogma on the Christian virtue of Solidarity through a practical explanation in several languages.

Czeslaw Mikosz wrote about Pope John Paul I: "Pope John Paul II was an exceptional preacher who preached the true meaning of labor from a Biblical perspective in *On Human Labor* by being able to relate to his fellow laborers and connecting with them in Christian Solidarity" (Mikosz, *To Begin Where I Am: Selected Essays*, 211). Czeslaw Mikosz admired the Pope for what he endured as a Christian and native of Poland under a communist regime and doing something positive to help his fellow Poles.

Polish Roman Catholic conservative academic scholar and philosopher Jozef Tischner admired Pope John Paul II's application of "Christian Common Sense" (Christian faith and common sense combined). This was the driving force that led to the success of *On Human Labor*, Solidarity, and termination of

communism in Eastern Europe. His Holiness owed his triumph to his steadfast faith in Almighty God, the power of prayer, and voluntary obedience to the Lord's Commandments.

He meditated daily upon two of his favorite verses in the Holy Bible and applied them to everything that he did in his life: "Whatever you ask for in prayer with faith, you will receive" (Matthew 21: 22 NAB); "I set before you here, this day, a blessing and a curse: a blessing for obeying the commandments of the Lord, your God, which I enjoin on you today; a curse if you do not obey the commandments of the Lord" (Deuteronomy 11: 26-28 NAB).

Jozef Tischner wrote about Solidarity: "Pope John Paul II was asked on numerous occasions to explain how his papal encyclical *On Human Labor* led to the creation of Solidarity and how it helped defeat communism in Eastern Europe to which he replied, 'I asked God what can I do to help and he showed me exactly what to do and it worked'" (Tischner, *The Spirit of Solidarity*, 214).

Pope John Paul II was truly a great spiritual and political leader as well as a great writer. His greatness manifested itself when he reintroduced the Roman Catholic Church's Christian virtue Solidarity through his third Papal Encyclical *On Human Labor* which has become a modern, standard tool of effective, peaceful means of defending the rights of human beings and animals as well as the support for numerous humane causes worldwide.

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His Holiness Saint Pope John Paul II

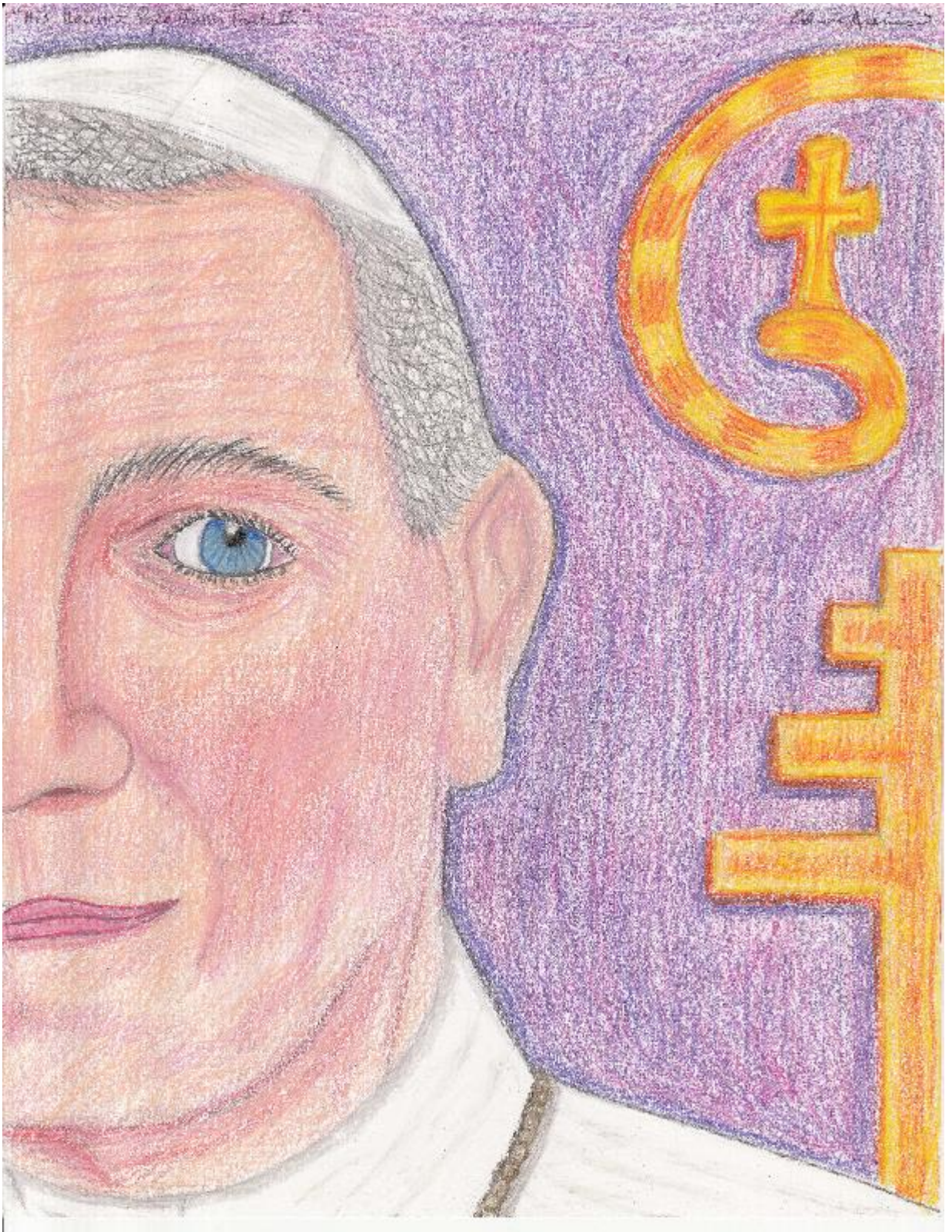
Karol Jozef Wojtyla born on 05/18/20
in Wadowice, Poland, raised on Christianity
by a devoted Roman Catholic family
former priest, bishop, cardinal with Ph.d,
spoke and wrote several languages fluently,
became first Polish Pope in history.

Pope John Paul II traveled extensively
with faith, wisdom, and charismatic personality,
winning the respect of people universally,
preaching, “Don’t be afraid” with sincerity,
challenging communism through universal non-violent philosophy
like Dr. King and Mahatma Gandhi.

He wrote 14 papal encyclicals brilliantly.
On Human Labor was number three
which contained the Christian virtue Solidarity
that became an anti-communist movement instantly
benevolently changing the course of history.
Co-founder Lech Walesa helped out tremendously.

Scholars Buttiglione, Masowiecki, Mikosz, Tischner agree
The Pope’s Solidarity set Poland free
together with every Soviet Satellite country,
even the evil USSR collapsed quickly
thanks to love from God Almighty,
terminating the Soviet Communist Empire’s tyranny.

Edwin Arenas, D.Litt.



His Holiness Saint Pope John Paul II by Edwin Arenas, D.Litt.

VITA

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Collegiate:			
Jersey City State College	Jersey City, NJ	B.A.	1984
Graduate:			
Jersey City State College	Jersey City, NJ	M.A.	1988
Drew University	Madison, NJ	M.Litt.	2010
Drew University	Madison, NJ	D.Litt.	2014

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