



Digna Portilla Amador (5) Honduras

# An Introduction to Trócaire and to Catholic Social Teaching

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Who is Trócaire?  
Where do we work?  
What do we do?  
Why?

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# Who is Trócaire?

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- Trócaire is the official overseas development agency of the Catholic Church in Ireland. It was set up by the Irish Catholic Bishops in 1973 to express the concern of the Irish Church for the suffering of the world's poorest and most oppressed people
- Trócaire's partnership approach makes us different. We work through global Catholic networks and with local partners on the ground. When we help people, we work with them, so that they drive the entire process themselves.

Domitille Nyirabavakure (6) Rwanda.



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# Founding Document

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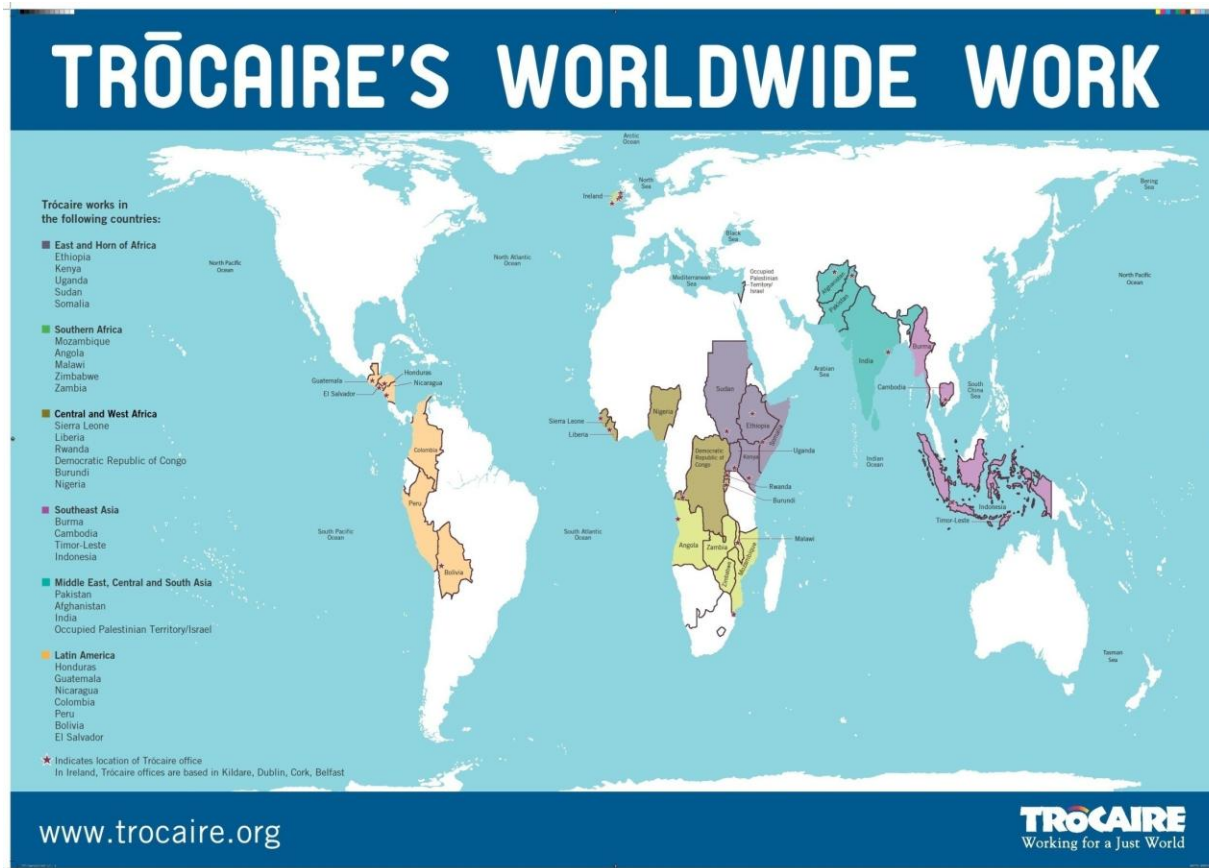
Bishop's Pastoral Letter on Development that established Trócaire (1973) that the aim of Trócaire will be two fold:

Abroad it will give whatever help lies within its resources to the areas of greatest need among the developing countries.

At home it will try to make us all more aware of the needs of these countries and of our duties towards them. These duties are no longer a matter of charity but of simple justice.

# Where

Trócaire is funding 115 programmes in 23 countries around the world in Africa, Asia, Middle East and Latin America



# Our Main Areas of Work

1. Emergencies and Disasters
2. Livelihoods
3. HIV/AIDS
4. Gender Equality
5. Climate Change
6. Human rights and governance



Images L to R: Drought in Somalia; Gizelda Perez Portales, 8; Honduras, HIV conference, India.

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# Why?

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Am I my brother's/sister's  
keeper?

What are your views on this?

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The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* explains, "To receive in truth the Body and Blood of Christ given up for us, we must recognize Christ in the poorest, his brethren" (no. 1397).



**How might this influence our understanding of celebrating Mass together as a community of believing Christians?**

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## Catholic Social Teaching

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*The immediate purpose of the Church's social doctrine is to propose the principles and values that can sustain a society worthy of the human person (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church 580)*

### CORE PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

**Human Dignity – Solidarity – The Common Good**  
**– Universal Destination of Goods – Participation**  
**- Subsidiarity**

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## Human Dignity:

We are made in the image of God. This is the simple starting point of all Catholic Social Teaching. Each member of the human family is equal in dignity and has equal rights because we are all the children of the one God.

## Solidarity:

We **are** our 'brother's/sister's keeper'. We are responsible for one another in real ways.

## The Common Good:

The conditions that make it possible for each social group and each individual member to achieve their full potential. The rights and responsibilities of individuals and groups must always therefore be kept in balance.

(Adpted from Sandie Gornish for the Loyola Institute, [www.loyola.org.au](http://www.loyola.org.au))

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## **Universal Destination of Goods:**

God intended the goods of creation for the use of all, not just some. Everyone has the right to access the goods of creation to meet their needs.

## **Participation:**

People have both a right and a duty to participate in those decisions that most directly affect them. We are all called to shape our own destinies and have the right and duty to do so.

## **Subsidiarity:**

The principle of subsidiarity places responsibility as close as possible to the grassroots. The people or groups most directly affected by a decision or policy should have a key decision-making role.

(Adpted from Sandie Gornish for the Loyola Institute, [www.loyola.org.au](http://www.loyola.org.au))

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# Some Key Documents of Catholic Social Teaching

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- ❑ Rerum Novarum 1891, Leo XIII
- ❑ Mater et Magistra, 1961, John XXIII
- ❑ Pacem in Terris, 1963, John XXIII
- ❑ Gaudium et Spes, 1965, Paul VI
- ❑ Popularum Progressio, 1967, Paul VI
- ❑ Octogesima Adveniens (80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Rerum Novarum), 1971, Paul VI
- ❑ Laborem Exercens, 1981, John Paul II
- ❑ Sollicitudo rei socialis 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Popularum Progressio, 1987, John Paul II
- ❑ *Benedict XVI: Caritas in Veritate, 2009*



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On capitalism, in 1967, Paul VI wrote,

"It is unfortunate that a system has been constructed which considers profit as the key motive for economic progress, competition as the supreme law of economics, and private ownership of the means of production as an absolute right that has no limits and carries no corresponding social obligation."

**WHAT IS YOUR PERSONAL REACTION TO PAUL VI's COMMENT?**

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# Biblical roots of Catholic Social Teaching



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## Justice and Scripture:

Jim Wallis (*Sojourners Community*) and a friend took a scissors and an old King James Bible, and cut out every verse that had anything to do with peace or justice issues. When they got through, they had very little left of the Bible. They would pull the Bible out at workshops, wave it aloft, and make the point vividly that without the strands of justice one could virtually not even read the Bible.



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# Old Testament

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## Covenant Relationship/Right Relationships

- With Adam and Eve
- With Noah
- With Abraham
- With Moses

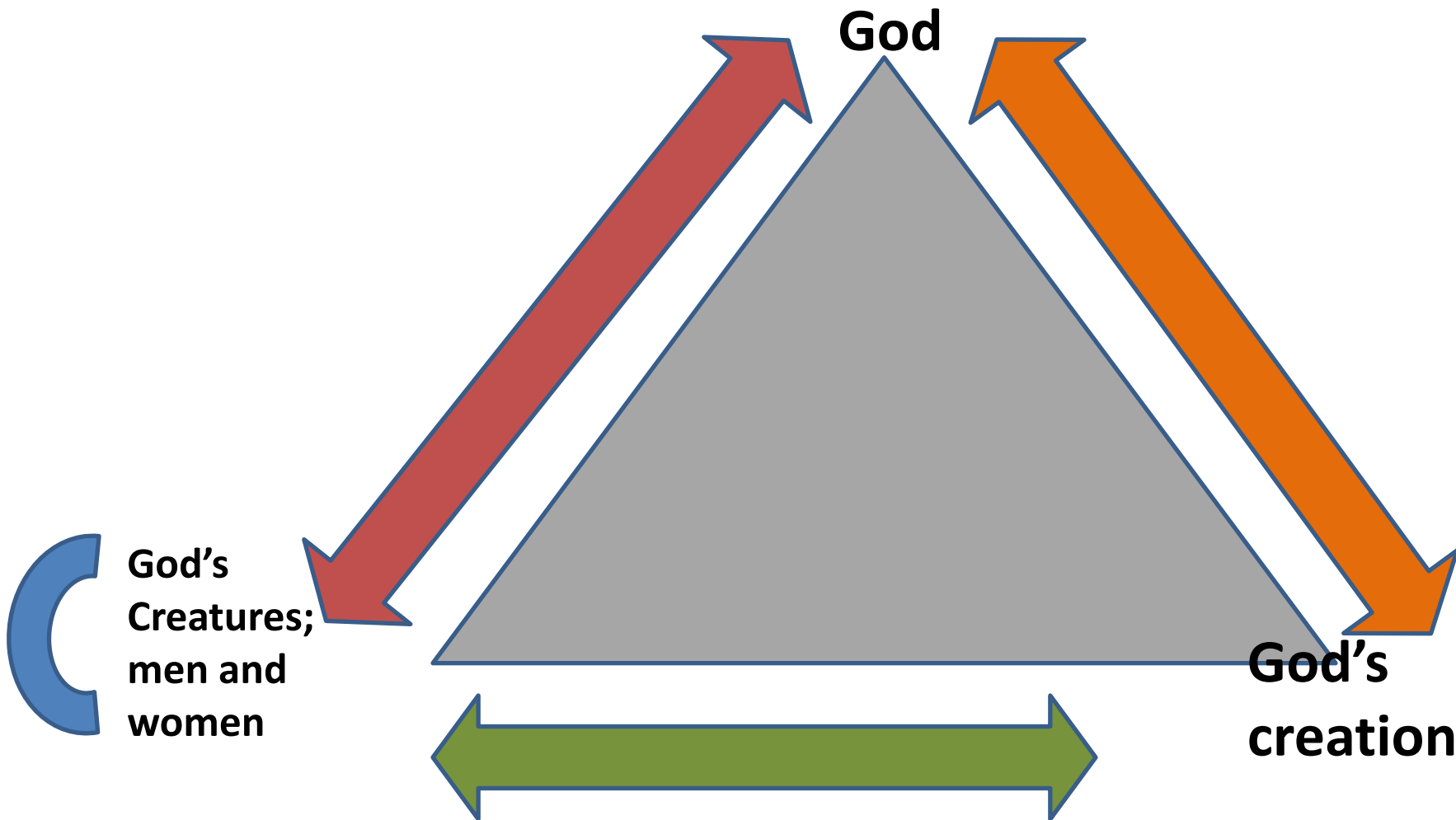
“What does God require of you but to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with your God.”  
(Micah 6:8)

*Is not this the fast that I choose:  
to loose the bonds of injustice,  
to undo the thongs of the yoke,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
and to break every yoke?  
If you offer your food to the hungry  
and satisfy the needs of the afflicted,  
then your light shall rise in the darkness  
and your gloom be like the noonday.*

—Isaiah 58:6 & 10



Speak out for those who cannot speak,  
(Proverbs 31: 8 – 9)



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**I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.**

**Ezekiel 36:26**



**What does this ‘new heart’ and ‘new spirit’ mean for your parish? In particular what does it mean in terms of justice and peace work you do?**

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# New Testament

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The Spirit of the Lord is upon me,  
because he has anointed me to bring good news to  
the poor.

He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives  
and recovery of sight to the blind,  
to let the oppressed go free,  
to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour. (Lk 4:18-  
19)



- A Triune God
- A Creator God
- An Incarnate God

Leads us to an understanding of the human person:

- Innate dignity
- Relational and Social; Kingdom Values

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# Who is my neighbour? The Parable of The Good Samaritan

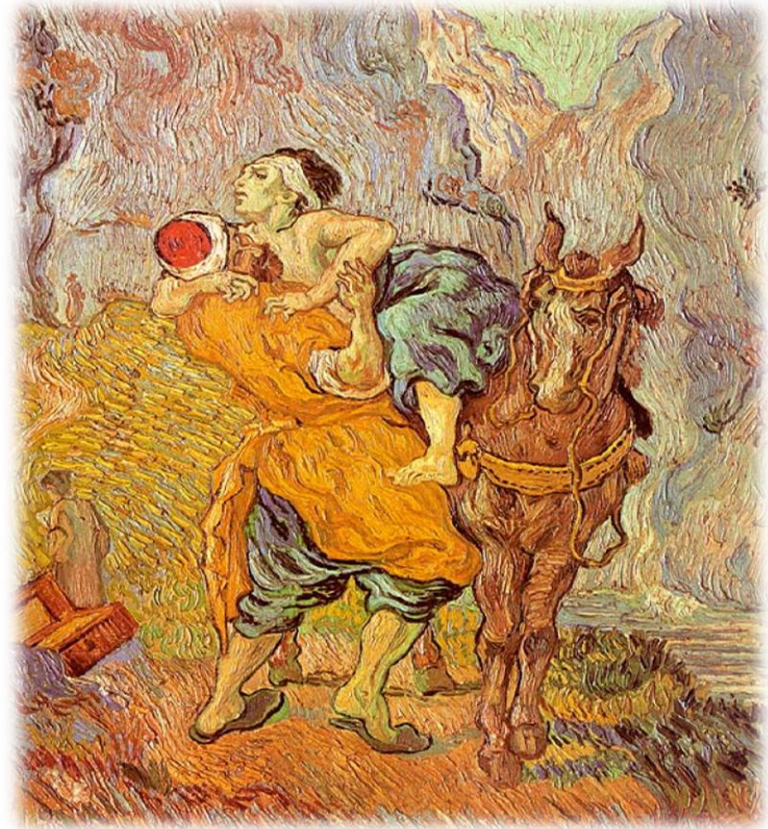
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<sup>36</sup>"Which of these three do you think was a neighbour to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?"

<sup>37</sup>The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him."

Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

**Luke 10: 25–37: Read this parable in its entirety and discuss it together.**



*The Good Samaritan (version of Delacroix)  
Vincent Van Gogh, 1890*

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**Key questions for you to consider together:**

- 1. Role of prayer/worship versus primacy of action**
- 2. Between horizontal and vertical, between overspiritualizing and underspiritualising  
Between being in the world and being 'apart' from the world**
- 3. Between being overtly political and being socially aware**
- 4. Conservatism and change within the Church and within the world**

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# Additional Point for Reflection

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In your own situation, what step or steps could you see yourself taking to help your parish/community to engage better in working for our brothers and sisters in the developing world?



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# Concluding Prayer

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(adapted from the Mass “For the Progress of Peoples”. See [www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/JusticeandPeaceCommission](http://www.adelaide.catholic.org.au/sites/JusticeandPeaceCommission))

**God of All Peoples,**

**You have given us one common origin,  
and your will is to gather all humanity as one family in yourself.**

**Fill our hearts with the fire of your love  
and the desire to ensure justice for all our brothers and sisters.**

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

**We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son,  
who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God for ever and ever,**

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**Amen.**