

## ***Suggestions for Additional Reading***

### **1 *Rerum Novarum (Author's guide)***

#### *S36-41 Self-help groups*

S36-37 RN strongly endorses the establishment of workplace institutions which offer help to those in need, such as relief to those who cannot work through illness or injury, or those left widowed. It reminds us of the medieval guilds which offered such support, and also help to train young people in skills.

S38. Also states that the right to join such a society is a human right, and must not be prohibited by the State, unless such associations are designed for bad or dangerous purposes....For laws only bind when they are in accordance with right reason (natural law) and therefore with the eternal law of God. (It quotes Thomas Aquinas: "Human law is law only in virtue of its accordance with right reason: and thus it is manifest that it flows from the eternal law. And in so far as it deviates from right reason it is called an unjust law; in such a case it is not law at all, but rather a species of violence". ST ia IIae Q13 art 3.)

S39 - RN notes how the Church has created charities and alms-giving throughout its history, but warned how 'in our own times, the State has laid violent hands upon them, taken away their rights as corporate bodies, and robbed them of their property.'

S40 - RN observe that associations of working men are far more common than formerly. It warns that many of these 'are managed on principles far from compatible with Christianity and public well-being.' Christian workmen must take care not to join such associations, and if necessary form Christian ones.

s. 41 RN strongly encourages Catholics to set up mutual self-help groups, like medieval guilds, that pay for medical and other help. However, it warns that such groups can be killed by the "deadhand" of the State. It commends:

'Catholics possessed of affluence who have, as it were, cast their lot with the wage-earners, and who have spent large sums in founding and widely spreading Benefit and Insurance Societies, by means of which the working man may without difficulty acquire by his labour not only many present advantages, but also the certainty of honourable support in time to come....Let the State watch over these societies of citizens united together in the exercise of their right; but let it not thrust itself into their peculiar concerns and their organization, for things move and live by the soul within them, and they may be killed by the grasp of a hand from without '

S 42 such associations must be based upon Christian morality.

#### *S.45 Conclusion*

'(Having shown how) this most difficult question must be solved. every one must put his hand to the work which falls to his share, and that at once and immediately.... Every minister of holy religion must throw into the conflict all the energy of his mind, and all the strength of his endurance'.

### **2 *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (2004)***

- Human Rights section 152-159

- Healthcare, section182

[https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/pontifical\\_councils/justpeace/documents/rc\\_pc\\_justpeace\\_doc\\_20060526\\_compendio-dott-soc\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html)

**3. Fr Robert Sirico - Rethinking Welfare, reviving charity: A Catholic perspective**

in Booth Ed, *Catholic Social Teaching and the Market Economy* 2007.

This is Chapter 3 in the link, starts on page 95 in the attached:

[https://iea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Catholic%20Social%20Teaching\\_Text%2005-03-14.pdf](https://iea.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Catholic%20Social%20Teaching_Text%2005-03-14.pdf)