

Distinctive Imperatives for Teaching Marketing in a Catholic Business School

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Exhibit Two

KEY PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING [as described in Klein T. A. and G. R. Laczniak, “Applying Catholic Social Teachings to Ethical Issues in Marketing” *Journal of Macromarketing* (September 2009)]

The Principle of Human Dignity

The most basic and fundamental instruction of CST flows from the idea that *all* persons (“created in the image of God”) have inherent worth regardless of race, color, or creed. Dignity is not “earned” but rather it is always a given right to be accorded to all persons in all circumstances. This principle is used to argue that “*The economy exists for the person, not the person for the economy*” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1997 [1]) and that an excessive focus on profit maximization can be harmful to authentic personal development because rewards and burdens may not be justly distributed (*Compendium* 2005).

The Principle of the Common Good

This principle flows partly from the above noted theme #2 and its “call to family, community and participation” of everyone in the benefits of the commonwealth. From it unfolds the CST doctrine of the “universal destination of goods” (*Compendium* 2005). This implies that the goods of the earth should be used for the benefit of all, not exclusively from an economic perspective, but from a balanced social, cultural, and community standpoint. While CST clearly affirms the right of private property, this teaching provides a foundation for the notion that “all persons have the right to secure the basic necessities of life.” Included here would not only be the right of all persons to food, shelter, and available work, but also access to education and affordable healthcare (Pope John XXIII 1963 [11]).

The Principle of Subsidiarity

This is one of the most basic articulations of rights and responsibilities inherent in CST. It states, “It is an injustice...to assign to a greater or higher association what lesser and subordinate organizations can do”

(Pope Pius XI 1931 [79]). It grants that everyone, as they are able, needs to contribute as well as receive from the community: “If able, all people have ... a ... duty to work and provide for their families” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1997 [6]). Commentators on this principle also imply that the concept warns about the dangers of over-regulating business activities and, indeed, such an argument can be sustained. However, the same principle is also used in CST to insure that sufficiently powerful parties weigh in to offset persistently unfair practices in society: “Society has a moral obligation, including governmental action where necessary, to assure opportunity, meet basic human needs, and pursue justice in economic life” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1997 [8]).

The Principle of Preference for the Poor and Vulnerable

This teaching recalls the Gospel admonitions of Jesus to “Love thy neighbor” and “What you do for the least of my brethren, you do for me.” Here CST argues that “the proper end of economic activity is the progress of the entire community, especially the poor” (Massaro, 2005). This centrality of the obligation to help the poor is manifest not only in CST, but also in *every* other major religious doctrine - Jewish, Protestant, Islamic, Hindu, and Buddhist.

The Principle of Worker Rights

This theme advances the idea that work is central to human growth and that workers help to continue the wonder of God’s creation. This is the oldest teaching of modern CST dicta, embodied in the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, published in 1891, and elaborated in Pope John Paul II’s *Laborem Exercens* (1981). These documents proclaim: “All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions as well as to organize and join unions or other associations” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1997 [5]). They grant workers the right to organize in unions and suggest that duties of past loyalties by workers always need to be recognized.

The Principle of Solidarity

This concept recognizes that all people and social groups are united in a brotherhood that seeks common growth and fulfillment, in the debt of one another for the support that we require in community. It provides a framework for the idea that “... economic life should be shaped by moral principles” (National Conference of Catholic Bishops 1997 [2]) because all persons both seek and want a fair opportunity to attain betterment in their lives. This foundational theme of CST is the basis for advocating ethical responsibilities of rich nations to poor as well as the special ethical obligations of multinational businesses operating in developing countries (Tavis 1999).

The Principle of Stewardship

This precept captures the responsibility of every party - including corporations - to contribute to the care of the earth. It is among the newest in the evolution of CST. It calls for economic actions always to “respect the integrity and cycles of nature” and to fastidiously avoid environmental exploitation (*Compendium* 2005). It views the physical environment as a common pool of abundant resources not to be exploited for the benefit of only a few or at the expense of future generations. It connects to the “green

ethic” and the “sustainability criterion” so prominent in current competitive strategy discussions (Elkington, 1998). However, it must be noted that this principle stops short of endorsing the Gaia Hypothesis (Lovelock 1979), which, in effect, deifies nature. In CST, nature is man’s garden, to be protected and enriched as an instrument of humanity, but not given autonomous status.