

Quotes from Pacem in Terris

This encyclical by Pope John XXIII in April 1963 (translated as “On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity and Liberty”) focuses on why conflicts “should not be resolved by recourse to arms, but rather by negotiation”

“And yet there is a disunity among individuals and among nations which is in striking contrast to this perfect order of the universe. One would think that the relationships that bind men together could only be governed by force. But the world’s Creator has stamped man’s inmost being with an order revealed to man by his conscience; and his conscience insists on his preserving it.” (4-5)

“Any well-regulated and productive association of men in society demands the acceptance of one fundamental principle: that each individual man is truly a person. His is a nature, that is, endowed with intelligence and free will. As such he has rights and duties, which together flow as a direct consequence from his nature. These rights and duties are universal and inviolable, and therefore altogether inalienable.”(9)

“Since men are social by nature, they must live together and consult each other’s interests. That men should recognise and perform their respective rights and duties is imperative to a well-ordered society.” (31)

“Before a society can be considered well-ordered, creative, and consonant with human dignity, it must be based on truth. St. Paul expresses this as follows: ‘Putting away lying, speak ye the truth every man with his neighbour, for we are members of one another.’” (35)

“Human society... demands that men be guided by justice, respect the rights of others and do their duty. It demands too that they be animated by such love as will make them feel the needs of others as their own, and induce them to share their goods with others, and to strive in the world to make all men alike heirs to the noblest of intellectual and spiritual values. Nor is this enough; for human society thrives on freedom, namely, on the use of means which are consistent with the dignity of its individual members, who, being endowed with reason, assume responsibility for their own actions.” (35)

“Truth calls for the elimination of every trace of racial discrimination.”(86)

“The best interests of justice are served by those public authorities who do all they can to improve human conditions of the members of [minority groups obliged to live within the territories of a nation of different ethnic origin], especially in what concerns their language, culture, ancient traditions, and their economic activity and enterprise.” (96)

“There are many parts of the world where we find groupings of people of more or less different ethnic origin. Nothing must be allowed to prevent reciprocal relations between them.”(100)

“Peace is but an empty word, if it does not rest upon that order...that is founded on truth, built up on justice, nurtured and animated by charity and brought into effect under the auspices of freedom.... Human resources alone, even though inspired by the most praiseworthy good will, cannot hope to achieve it. God himself must come to man’s aid...” (167-8)