



# ***A Discussion Paper on Catholic Social Teaching and the philosophy behind the “Big Society”***

From a seminar held at  
Archbishops' House, Westminster  
9<sup>th</sup> February 2011



The second stage of the Catholic  
Bishops' Programme  
***A Call to Deeper Social Engagement***

## PREFACE

*The current crisis obliges us to re-plan our journey, to set ourselves new rules and to discover new forms of commitment, to build on positive experiences and to reject negative ones. The crisis thus becomes an opportunity for discernment, in which to shape a new vision for the future. In this spirit, with confidence rather than resignation, it is appropriate to address the difficulties of the present time.<sup>1</sup>*

Pope Benedict XVI

As part of our response to the visit of Pope Benedict XVI, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales issued *A Call to a Deeper Social Engagement* in a statement released on 19 November, 2010. The aim of this was to launch a programme to enable the Catholic community to contribute as fully as possible to a new culture of social responsibility.

The programme began with a large gathering of those engaged in Catholic Social Action in Liverpool in February 2011 to get a better understanding of what currently takes place and the challenges and opportunities we face in these difficult economic times. Secondly, in April 2011, a gathering in London to widen the dialogue to Parliamentarians of all parties, civil servants, think tanks and commentators, and members of central and local Government. Our longer term aim is to explore new models for the Church's social action and to find more effective ways of working in partnership with others, including Government, other churches and faiths.

But what has perhaps been lacking in the public debate so far, is any clear understanding of the theological or intellectual underpinning on which new approaches to social responsibility for the welfare of all must be based. It is of course for politicians to determine the practical courses of action to be taken in any given circumstances; that is their right. But there is particular need to clarify the moral rationale which should inform those decisions. People of faith have a particular contribution to make here. This is especially true of the Catholic Church, with its well-developed tradition of Catholic Social Teaching,

That is why we convened a seminar of academics, theologians, thinkers and writers on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011 to explore the issues raised by changes to social policy in the current economic and social climate. This document is not an exact record of those discussions, but it presents an analysis based on them. It does not claim to be comprehensive or authoritative, and its purpose is simply to provoke further reflection and discussion. I am most grateful to Paul Vallely for producing it, and to the various contributors who created such a stimulating exchange of views.

I offer it now as a contribution to the understanding of society as a whole, and I hope that it will prove equally useful whatever the reader's perspective on the varying political approaches proposed.

+Vincent Nichols, Archbishop of Westminster  
March 2011

## **A Catholic Social Teaching**

1. Every individual, being made in the image of God, possesses an inherent human dignity<sup>2</sup>. The rights of each individual must therefore be respected. Catholic Social Teaching takes this as its starting point for a moral vision of society.
2. Men and women are social beings<sup>3</sup>. We realise our dignity and rights in relationship with others, in community. The well-being of each person is connected to the good of others. We must therefore understand and organise our society so as to understand and promote the common good to enable every individual to flourish and participate. The common good embraces all those social conditions which enable every individual to achieve fulfilment. Everyone has that right, but also the responsibility, to contribute to the good of the whole society<sup>4</sup>. Work – any action by which the world is transformed, shaped or maintained – is a quintessential human activity<sup>5</sup>.
3. The moral test of a society is how it treats its most vulnerable members. That is intrinsic to the common good. A healthy community can be achieved only if its members give special attention to those with special needs, to those who are vulnerable or poor, or on the margins of society. We must show this solidarity not just in local or national terms, but also globally. We are our brother's keeper<sup>6</sup>.
4. Everyone has the right and responsibility to participate in society and to make choices. That means political decisions should be taken at the lowest level possible which is compatible with good government. This principle of subsidiarity means that it is wrong for the State to take over what individuals or groups can accomplish by their own enterprise or industry<sup>7</sup>.
5. The principles of human dignity, the common good, solidarity and subsidiarity are the pillars of Catholic Social Teaching as set out by a succession of Popes in 17 key social encyclicals which have developed this body of thought for more than a century, in application to changing circumstances.

## **B An Approach from Secular Philosophy**

6. One of the key questions of philosophy has long been: from what source can a government be said to draw its legitimacy? In the words of Pope Benedict XVI, in his address to representatives of British society in Westminster Hall: "Each generation, as it seeks to advance the common good, must ask anew: what are the requirements that governments may reasonably impose upon citizens, and how far do they extend? By appeal to what authority can moral dilemmas be resolved?"<sup>8</sup> These are not just theoretical questions. How we answer them has a direct impact on how we decide, in terms of practical policies:
  - What should be the right balance between the individual and the State?
  - What are their respective rights and responsibilities? And
  - What is the role of the wide range of relationships and institutions that stand between the individual and the State – marriages, the family, clubs and associations, sports and arts groups, youth clubs, community

associations, lobby and pressure groups, professional associations, business groups, charities and churches?

7. In Britain the answer to the question about the source of legitimacy for government may be traced back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century philosopher Hobbes who suggested that individuals yield a degree of control over their lives to the State in return for the State providing security.
8. But that notion has a number of implications. Firstly, it builds in a presupposition in favour of the State and against the individual. Secondly, it leaves out two key elements:
  - an understanding of the richness and variety of human life;
  - and everything that stands between the individual and State – from the Women’s Institute, the bridge club, the parish church and Liverpool Football Club – which are the things that give life its emotional, cognitive and spiritual meaning.

It also leaves out any working philosophy of how those institutions act and interact. Hobbes’ construct, in other words, leaves out everything that gives value to life. Throughout history many on both the Left and Right have intuitively understood that deficiency. But in recent times there has been a tendency for political positions to polarise around the State or the market in ways which squeeze out that crucial value-driven middle ground.

9. Both Catholic Social Teaching, as it has been formulated over the past 120 years, and those now beginning their tentative explorations of new social approaches, understand the deficiencies of this – as have previous thinkers like Edmund Burke who famously said that “to love the little platoon we belong to in society... is the first link in the series by which we proceed towards a love to our country, and to mankind<sup>9</sup>”. Man’s natural state is to be in society. Man is a social animal, as Aristotle said: Man is political in the sense of naturally inhabiting a *polis* or city, and cannot be understood independently of the society in which he or she lives.
10. What is the nature of that society? The philosopher Michael Oakeshott said societies divide into two main types – civil societies and enterprise societies. In a **civil society** citizens associate as equals, freely under the rule of law which referees any conflicts between their individual interests; in such a society the citizens have much in common but no common cause. By contrast, in an **enterprise society** life is organised towards some common purpose or goal. The civil society model, as with Hobbes, is an enabling mechanism that leaves out all that gives meaning to life. But the enterprise society leads us down the path to authoritarianism; it starts with public service targets, goes through ‘five year plans’, and ends with the unlimited infringement of individual freedom characteristic of totalitarian states<sup>10</sup>.
11. Jesse Norman MP argues that what we need is something else: a **connected society** which takes the best and leaves out the worst of both. Adam Smith, in *The Theory Of Moral Sentiments*, takes as his founding moral principle the idea of sympathy – and of the individual as able to connect with others. This sympathy is not compassion understood as pity, but compassion understood as fellow-feeling, as com-*passion*.

12. Compassion is not an optional altruistic extra. It springs from something natural, and provides enormous sources of psychological and spiritual reward. "Compassion gives purpose to our lives and as such is deeply spiritually and psychologically rewarding. Several studies suggest that people who give money, time or support to others enjoy better physical and mental health, have lower levels of suicide and increased longevity, compared to those who do not. Those who donate to charity report higher levels of happiness<sup>11</sup>". People who volunteer have lower mortality rates, better bodily functioning, lower rates of depression. These advantages are increased the more volunteering they do and the greater the personal contact they have with others.
13. Society does not merely need to harness that. It needs to nurture institutions and relationships that shape the capacity of individuals to act in a compassionate way. It will not do so simply by exhortation. It will need to create incentives to certain kinds of behaviour by demonstrating the rewards of growing up in mutually-supportive and dependable families, networks and communities.
14. The moral character referred to here is character in the Aristotelian sense. It is not character built up out of cost-benefit calculations or conceptions derived from economics of how to motivate people. It is character built up out of habitual good behaviour<sup>a</sup>. Getting people to do something public-spirited once is the first step to getting them to change their lives and their character. It offers "a route out of couch-potatodom<sup>12</sup>".
15. The renewed freedom which this offers to individuals is not the debased liberal conception in which freedom is the mere absence of impediment to the unfettered individual will. Rather it speaks of freedom as a kind of freely-entered-into self-constraint. It is freedom as a kind of ordering which enables and liberates, by locating individuals within society and allowing them to express themselves through it.

### **C Practical Policy – a Specimen Approach from Phillip Blond**

16. Commentators such as Phillip Blond argue that the politics of both the Left and Right have ruined Britain<sup>13</sup>, and the political legacy of both is exhausted and inadequate to the challenges facing us in the 21st century. Unfettered neo-liberal capitalism has failed to lift many of the poor out of poverty – but so has the Welfare State, despite spending billions upon billions on welfare, poverty relief, and various State actions. The poor are still with us.
17. Why, for Blond, is this? In the 1930s, based on the analysis of the seminal economist John Maynard Keynes, it was argued on the Left that "We can't challenge monopoly ownership of capital. But what we can do is tax it – and use that tax to redistribute its benefits to the poor<sup>14</sup>." For those who see the State as the solution to everything, that has been a consistent approach, but one which has created a culture of welfare dependency.

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<sup>a</sup> "People do not learn these human qualities just by being lectured, just by being exalted or even inspired in a rather vague way. They learn them by growing up in dependable communities, in families, in local communities and associations where they know they're taken seriously." *How Should churches Respond to the Big Society*, Dr Rowan Williams, <http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/2956>

18. By contrast, the problem with the *laissez-faire* approach of the Right is that it has not generated more capital for the poor. Markets are not, in fact, genuinely free but have been captured by monopolies and cartels. As a result in 1976 the bottom 50 per cent of the country had 12 per cent of liquid capital in savings, cash and shares. By 2006 this had fallen to just 1 per cent. So the bottom half of the population has essentially been stripped of the little capital it had. Since individuals need capital to start businesses, to fund education, and improve their life in other ways, the poor have become more entrapped in their poverty.
19. What is needed, argues Blond, is a completely new model which allows the market to re-endow the poor. This means no longer thinking of markets as evils which must be regulated to control those monopolies, cartels and vested interests. Because what regulation does is make it even harder for poorer people to enter the markets with what little capital they can muster. At present markets are not for the many, but for the privileged few, and access to markets for the poor is getting more and more difficult.
20. According to Blond, what this requires is to create a society where those at the bottom can own and trade. How can that be achieved? By allowing poorer people to come together in groups, associations and communities to begin to participate in the market. The market model can be re-thought, by challenging the accounts of the market the Right and the Left have given us, and by challenging the current model of the State.
21. One of Blond's examples is the housing market. Over the years the government has spent tens of billions of pounds on housing benefit. But neither the State nor the poor people in rented accommodation have benefited. The beneficiaries have been private sector landlords and also local councils who use the money to maintain public expenditure in other fields. The system, says Blond, needs to be altered so that housing benefit turns into capital for the poor. Private individuals should be given control of the money the State spends supposedly on their behalf. They can do that by coming together in community groups, mutual associations or group networks that pool the risks.
22. Blond also argues that something similar could be done on the provision of electricity, for which the poor currently can pay twice the going market rate, through pre-payment and other schemes. Whole communities could then buy into new green models of energy generation and even sell power back to the national grid. Net costs would be turned into community benefits.
23. Blond's third example is failing shops on rundown estates. Their value would rise significantly if they were taken over by the local community and run more successfully. There would be far greater chance of this happening if local people were in charge since peer-pressure from them would be most likely to curb the anti-social behaviour which plagues such estate shopping parades at present. Poor communities could then borrow against the value of these assets to invest in other ways to improve local life. Changes like these could have a massive multiplier effect on the lives of poor people.
24. Such communities – whether operating through co-operatives, mutual societies and associations, charities or other social enterprises – should be accountable to local

bodies and networks (horizontal accountability) rather than, as at present, to central government and national standards (vertical accountability). An example of this is the internet marketplace eBay where a price is put upon reputation. On eBay the reputation of a trader or buyer is always worth more to them than the profit they might make on any one individual transaction. The market polices behaviour without the need for any central authority. Thus “the wisdom of crowds” is preferred over “the fallibility of central control<sup>15</sup>”. The emphasis is not on “what the State can do for you” or “what you can do for the State” but “what we can do for each other”.

#### **D Testing philosophy and policy against Catholic Social Teaching**

25. From the point of view of Catholic Social Teaching, there are four particular questions to explore:

- What is the social nature of the human person? And how is that understood?
- Which institutions are foundational civil society? How do we nurture them?
- How should power be transferred to groups and individuals?
- How do we care for the poor and the marginalised?

Let us look at these issues in detail.

#### **D (i) The nature of the human person**

26. An emphasis on the myriad institutions which stand between the individual and State – which some say are what give emotional, cognitive and spiritual meaning to life – sits well with the Catholic Social Teaching. There is some concern, however, as to whether this emphasis on institutions limits the adequacy of its vision of the identity of the human person. The idea of autonomous Enlightenment individuals, who yield a degree of control over their lives to the State in return for the State providing security in a kind of social contract, only takes us so far. It is a rather thin notion of the human person compared with the more richly-textured sense of the individual in Catholic theology. It has overtones of a passive utilitarian, crudely-economic concept of the self. Catholic Social Teaching prefers an understanding of personhood which is more optimistic, social and oriented to human potential.

27. A person is not just what they do. Acts do not define a human being, nor can they exhaust our definition of what it means to be a person. An individual who is sick, incapacitated or vulnerable is no less a person. To suggest otherwise risks a society which will always suppress the individual when it comes to a clash of priorities.

28. An integral part of personhood is that we exist in relation to others (see **The Common Good below**). But there is more to it than that. Just as our relationship to others is not static but constantly developing, so we too as individuals are constantly in the process of developing or becoming. We are not bound purely by our finite and material and historical world. The capacity within the human person for self-transcendence means that society can only flourish if it is open in terms of accessibility to knowledge and education and if it has a real respect for truth. Without access to knowledge individuals are denied the means of their own realisation. They are thus degraded.

Human beings cannot be simply reduced just to material needs, nor even to their relationships with others, they also have a relationship to their own potential which must be facilitated and nourished.

29. There is also something else. The Catholic tradition will always recognise the frailty of the human person and the capacity of individuals and societies for alienation and radical evil. Theologically we speak of sin. Where a society does not have a knowledge of good and evil it is at least as likely to choose evil. We must identify the qualities that people need to develop if they are to co-operate effectively and to live with integrity. And under Aristotelian notions of virtue, that character is best built through habitual good behaviour.
30. In *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI writes that the human being, with his transcendent dimension, is made for gift and gratuity. But the presence of gift in our lives is too often obscured by a consumerist and utilitarian understanding of human existence. To combat this we need to recognise that “I cannot “give” what is mine to the other, without first giving him what pertains to him in justice.”<sup>16</sup>
31. Human beings have rights, but they also have responsibilities. Allowing individuals to blossom as moral agents, acting on a sense of rights but also on a sense of duties<sup>a</sup>, is essential to a proper understanding of what it means to be fully human.

#### **D (ii) The Common Good**

32. It is a central tenet of Catholic Social Teaching that the human person in our tradition is always ordered towards others. But there is more to this than the suggestion that Man is a social animal who cannot be understood independently of the society in which he or she lives. Man is political more than just in the sense of naturally inhabiting a *polis*. From Aquinas onwards, re-appropriating Aristotle, the individual is seen as both social and political by nature; our capacity to grow and flourish as individuals, and develop to full moral maturity, is dependent on engaging in exactly the kind of practices of civil association.
33. But the principle of the common good gives Catholic Social Teaching a very different emphasis to that of Michael Oakeshott. Oakeshott’s thinking must be highly suspicious of the notion of the common good, which is unmistakably both an “overall project for society” and a “designated goal”<sup>17</sup>. The concepts of subsidiarity and solidarity (*see below*) are secondary to this purpose which has a bias to justice for the poor at its centre.
34. Without strong civil associations a society cannot be flourishing, stable or just. Compassion is more than a natural source of psychological and spiritual reward; people who do voluntary work may do better on indicators of human well-being and flourishing than do non-volunteers. But those who participate in forms of social interaction – from simply sustaining at least one friendship to volunteering for a charity or belonging to a church, synagogue, temple or mosque – also find it easier to get help when they need it. Political agendas of choice, whether from Left or from Right, are largely meaningless without access to networks of civil association. Civil

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<sup>a</sup> *It is also demanded by the common good that civil authorities should make earnest efforts to bring about a situation in which individual citizens can easily exercise their rights and fulfil their duties as well. Pacem in Terris, 63*



association is good for the wellbeing of society as well as those individuals who participate.

35. In part this is because civil association promotes empathy and the ability to feel and see something from another's point of view. This leads to an awareness that what is good for you is somehow woven into what is good for others. "The kind of human society that God wants to see flourishing and spreading across the globe, is one in which people have a keen, active sense of their dependence upon each other – the all-consuming sense that everyone has something to give into the common life," as the Archbishop of Canterbury recently put it<sup>18</sup>. If one person is prevented from giving, then everyone is poorer. This is in a social sense what both Aristotle and St Paul meant by *koinonia*, a real sharing of goods, material and spiritual. But it goes to the very core of being too. It is what Africans call *ubuntu*: I am myself because of you<sup>19</sup>.
36. Christian theology offers here the mystery of the Trinity. By analogy, the relational understanding of the Trinity allows for the idea of difference in relation in such a way that this destroys neither person nor community, but is in fact their condition. Father, Son and Spirit open for us a new understanding of selflessness and self-giving. In other words, "I am fully myself, the more I live with others and give them space". The common good is in part determined by the space we create for others, how we work together to do something together which we cannot do on our own. This is one of the reasons why, for Catholic Social Teaching, it does not make sense to think of the human person – or of the Church or any other form of civil association – as in any sense private or only semi-public.
37. The test of any society will be the extent to which it reflects this. It must identify the qualities people need to co-operate effectively and to live together with integrity<sup>a</sup>. It must nurture people's ability to create committed relationships and mutually-beneficial networks. It must find a way to build compassion into our administrative systems. Only then can any political programme truly deliver a beneficial society.

#### **D (iii) Solidarity and the Poor**

38. Social theorists show a commendable concern for the poor. Man's natural state is to be in society, from which sympathy is a natural outworking: "This sympathy is not compassion understood as pity, but compassion understood as fellow-feeling, as compassion"<sup>20</sup>. This chimes well with what Pope John Paul II has to say on the necessary virtue of solidarity – the idea that we are all answerable for one another: "This then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say, to the good of all and of each individual because we are all really responsible for all"<sup>21</sup>.
39. The real question is how that is to be translated into practical politics. People have been talking about sharing power for decade upon decade. Indeed in 1991 in the Papal Encyclical *Centesimus Annus* Pope John Paul II wrote: "It will be necessary above all to abandon a mentality in which the poor – as individuals and as peoples – are considered a burden, as irksome intruders trying to consume what others have produced... The advancement of the poor constitutes a great opportunity for the moral, cultural and even economic growth of all humanity"<sup>22</sup>. More recently Pope

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<sup>a</sup> See §29 above

Benedict XVI wrote in *Caritas in Veritate*: “It is nevertheless erroneous to hold that the market economy has an inbuilt need for a quota of poverty and underdevelopment in order to function at its best. It is in the interests of the market to promote emancipation.”<sup>23</sup>

40. But such exhortations have not shifted anything, some would argue. What therefore is wrong with this approach, or this vision, that has prevented it being realised? Power-sharing is always a top-down initiative, and those at the top usually only pay lip service to the notion, ensuring that they do not cede much effective control. There is never any sense that the poor can do anything in return or that anybody at the bottom has any power. We like the words but it does not happen.
41. Pope John Paul II offers an insight as to how the necessary changes should be analysed to ensure that warm words are not all that is offered to the powerless. The opposite of solidarity, he says, is social sin – the accumulation and concentration of “the very personal sins of those who cause or support evil or who exploit it; of those who are in a position to avoid, eliminate or at least limit certain social evils but who fail to do so out of laziness, fear or the conspiracy of silence, through secret complicity or indifference; of those who take refuge in the supposed impossibility of changing the world, and also of those who sidestep the effort and sacrifice required, producing specious reasons of a higher order. The real responsibility, then, lies with individuals. A situation - or likewise an institution, a structure, society itself - is not in itself the subject of moral acts. Hence a situation cannot in itself be good or bad.” The Pope speaks of systems which create: “influences and obstacles which go far beyond the actions and brief life span of an individual<sup>24</sup>”. These, he says in the encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, amount to “structures of sin” which work “against a true awareness of the universal common good”. These structural wrongs are “rooted in personal sin and thus always linked to the concrete acts of individuals who introduce these structures, consolidate them, and make them difficult to remove<sup>25</sup>”. The sin of people and the sinful structures built into systems reinforce one another.
42. If society is genuinely to reduce social exclusion it will require honest attempts to ensure that measures to reduce bureaucracy are not at the expense of those who need the State as a supporting institution. Power sharing must be done with special attention to the weakest members of society. Then sharing power with the poor will be an instrument for social innovation.
43. The other important question in the area of solidarity is to ask: who is included in the our vision of Society? What provision will be made for ensuring that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard (*see Participation below*)?
44. Finally, solidarity with the poor also has an international dimension. As Pope Benedict XVI has argued, “Perhaps at one time it was conceivable that first the creation of wealth could be entrusted to the economy, and then the task of distributing it could be assigned to politics. Today that would be more difficult, given that economic activity is no longer circumscribed within territorial limits, while the authority of governments continues to be principally local. Hence the canons of justice must be respected from the outset, as the economic process unfolds, and not just afterwards or incidentally”<sup>26</sup>.

#### D (iv) Subsidiarity and Society

45. The Catholic notion of subsidiarity states that, because everyone has the right and responsibility to participate in society, political decisions should be taken at the lowest level possible – by those who will be most directly involved and affected by them.
46. “This principle of subsidiarity means that it is wrong for the State to take over what individuals or groups can accomplish by their own enterprise or industry”<sup>27</sup> Pius XI wrote in 1931 in the encyclical *Quadragesimo Anno*. Central government should discharge only those tasks which cannot be performed effectively at a more immediate or local level. “A community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good”<sup>28</sup>.
47. The principle of subsidiarity sets limits for State intervention<sup>29</sup>. Excessive intervention by the State can threaten personal freedom and initiative<sup>30</sup>. Centralisation, bureaucratisation, and welfare dependency are all results of the violation of the principle of subsidiarity<sup>31</sup>. As Pope Benedict XVI has expressed it, “subsidiarity is the most effective antidote against any form of all-encompassing welfare state.”<sup>32</sup> Positively, it is the recognition on the part of a higher authority of the legitimate competence of a lower authority. It is not, therefore, a delegation of power but the recognition of a power or competence that already exists.
48. Between the individual and the State a wide range of organisations stand – the family, neighbourhood groups, sports clubs, social co-operatives, the Church, charities, private sector companies, trade unions, local government and many more. “It is impossible to promote the dignity of the person without showing concern for the family, groups, associations, local territorial realities<sup>33</sup>”. There will be legitimate debate about the level at which detailed decisions are best taken in this community of communities. But the determining principle should be that needs are best understood and satisfied by people who are closest to them and who act as neighbours to those in need<sup>34</sup>.
49. There are important questions too about the appropriate methods and levels of financing. Increased voluntary activism in our society is to be welcomed, but we should not fool ourselves that this will be without costs to the public purse; volunteers need infrastructure, and the guidance of experts and professionals and that will require investment from government. A government cannot simply cut expenditure, wash its hands of responsibilities, and simply assume that the slack will be taken up by greater voluntary activity: the activity may well be there, but it needs intelligent support.
50. The principle of subsidiarity cuts both ways. It is an insult for the State to accrue to itself what can be done by local smaller scale more organic institutions. But is it also an insult for the State to fail to exercise its capacity to facilitate, affect intervention, regulation, or distribution of goods towards the common good of persons in the wider society. Both become forms of structural injustice.

## **D (v) The State**

51. So what is correct function of the State? Catholic Social Teaching suggests that it is to promote the growth of “a society of free work, of enterprise and of participation<sup>35</sup>”. To do that it must create the framework to facilitate the working of the market economy, guarantee individual freedom and private property, as well as a stable currency and efficient public services<sup>36</sup>. It also should promote stability, guard against the corruption of public officials and the spread of improper sources of growing rich and of easy profits deriving from illegal or purely speculative activities<sup>37</sup>.
52. Government is not the provider of answers to all problems. But it also has far greater duties than arbitrating between the competing interests of individuals and groups. Among the basic responsibilities of the State as a moral agent is a duty to establish and safeguard a stable framework for civil society. “The complex circumstances of our day make it necessary for public authority to intervene more often in social, economic and cultural matters to bring about conditions which are conducive to citizens and groups in their free pursuit of human well-being”<sup>38</sup>. That means it is the State’s responsibility to establish and safeguard a stable framework within which civil society can prosper and develop.
53. The State must also create the conditions in which individuals can blossom as moral agents in acting out both their rights and their responsibilities. It must not weaken social relationships. There is a potent argument that this is exactly what it has done through a welfare policy which has had the unintended consequence of attenuating the right and duty to work and created a culture of welfare dependency in some sectors of society. Welfare without work has ended up entrapping many people in poverty and depriving them of the right and responsibility of self-determination.
54. But the State also has a responsibility to prevent people from abusing their private property to the detriment of the common good<sup>39</sup>. Catholic Social Teaching insists that private property comes with a social responsibility. It is the State’s responsibility to set the boundaries on markets and creative incentives to more socially responsible behaviour. The failure of politicians of all parties to consider how the City of London should be organised and regulated has been a significant omission in recent decades. There are needs and common goods that cannot be satisfied by the market system. It is the task of the State and of all society to defend them<sup>40</sup>.
55. The State needs also to be realistic about the amount of time that people, who are working full-time to pay mortgages in an economically-difficult period, have to engage in voluntary activities. And it needs to acknowledge that some tasks require professional expertise or support and might be unsuited to being placed solely in the hands of volunteers, however well-motivated.

## **D (vi) The Market**

56. Catholic Social Teaching is clear that the free market appears to be the most efficient tool for utilising resources and responding to needs<sup>41</sup>. But this is true only if you are able to buy and sell. Justice and truth demand that basic human needs should be met and that none should be left to perish. There are many human needs which find no place on the market<sup>42</sup>.

57. Controls on the market, to guarantee that the basic needs of the whole of society are satisfied, must be applied by the State but also by all society<sup>43</sup>. The organisations of civil society have an essential role in that.
58. That includes private sector business companies. The Church acknowledges the legitimate role of profit as an indication that a business is functioning well. But the purpose of a business firm is not simply to make a profit; it is also a community of persons who in various ways are at the service of the whole of society<sup>44</sup>. A balance has to be struck here. The opening of large out-of-town supermarkets, for example, provides customers with keenly-priced food but they can also close down parades of local shops in residential areas, which are the public spaces in which social relationships are formed and maintained. Here, the market is providing cheap food but risks emptying out the arena for civil engagements. Civil society, through local government planning processes, and through the lobbying of community groups and local people, is important in arriving at the correct balance. The private sector has a role and a responsibility for developing Society too.
59. Businesses have a responsibility here. Many are finding that their long-term interests are not in conflict with those of the community. The head of one international company, for example, recently indicated that, with a company that spans scores of nations and cultures, it has concluded that the values it wants to uphold in its dealings with customers, suppliers and staff, were the importance of individuals' self expression and the importance of the family. These had been arrived at not from a consideration of need to serve the community but out of a sense what was good for their business.
60. Businesses are more than commercial enterprises. They can colonise the identity of their customers. A local football club is a good example of that; as a private company it is a capitalist institution with a duty to shareholders' profit. But it also enters into the identity of its fans who have a legitimate sense of ownership of a different kind; the directors and shareholders also have a duty not to manipulate, exploit or abuse that.
61. Catholic Social Teaching could never endorse a vision of society that was simply a combination of a market-based approach and a determination to shrink the State for its own sake. Society has to be about something much richer and broader and orientated to the common good. The State has an obligation to provide the mechanisms, money and information needed to augment what the market can supply.
62. Some delicate judgements on balance are required. We need to re-embed the economy within society and redirect business towards the good, a process described by Pope Benedict XVI as "civilising the economy"<sup>45</sup>. That means escaping, on the one hand, from the Manichean vision which sees our economic life as somehow profane and separate from our deeper social purposes. Business is not a necessary evil which does nothing more than provide taxes for us to do social goods. It helps satisfy important human needs, both directly and indirectly. It is not money but the "love of money" which St Paul described as the root of all evil<sup>46</sup>. But the mechanisms of the market "carry the risk of an 'idolatry' of the market, an idolatry which ignores the existence of goods which by their nature are not and cannot be mere commodities<sup>47</sup>". Both the market and the State need to be orientated to the common good. That

process is put at risk by approaches which are, on the one hand, overly-statist, or, on the other hand, by excessive liberal individualism.

63. In his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* Pope Benedict XVI puts forward the idea of “gift” as a way of resolving this conflict:

***“The great challenge before us, accentuated by the problems of development in this global era and made even more urgent by the economic and financial crisis, is to demonstrate, in thinking and behaviour, not only that traditional principles of social ethics like transparency, honesty and responsibility cannot be ignored or attenuated, but also that in commercial relationships the principle of gratuitousness and the logic of gift as an expression of fraternity can and must find their place within normal economic activity. This is a human demand at the present time, but it is also demanded by economic logic. It is a demand both of charity and of truth.”<sup>48</sup>***

This is a very fertile idea ripe for further exploration and development.

#### **D (vii) Freedom**

64. True freedom is not the debased liberal conception in which freedom is the mere absence of impediment to the unfettered individual will<sup>a</sup>.
65. True freedom is to place ourselves at the service of others. This is because we are creatures who live in relation to our Creator and to the others He has created. In parts of modern society freedom is understood as nothing more than “the ability to do whatever I please.” This is indeed a debased notion of freedom because it gives the strong the ‘freedom’ to dominate and exploit and the bully the ‘freedom’ to enslave the meek<sup>49</sup>.
66. In the Catholic tradition the human person is free only in so far as society creates the conditions for *all* to be free. Individual choices are to be endorsed only when they do not infringe upon the common good<sup>50</sup>. Freedom and choice do not sit at the top of the hierarchy of values. Among the freedoms which must be protected for the common good is religious freedom – which must include the freedom of religious individuals and organisations to set up projects and charities which witness freely to their faith without having a narrative imposed upon them by State in a way which undermines their vitality and their integrity.

#### **D (viii) Participation**

67. Catholic Social Teaching is clear that everyone in society counts; indeed Catholic thinking sees this conviction as built into the very idea of what a society is. This means ensuring that those the Bible describes as the widow and the orphan – by which we now understand, the weak and the meek, the frail and the sick, the poor and the unemployed, the addict and the prisoner, the unborn and the elderly, the refugee and the asylum seeker, the alienated, the marginalised and the disenfranchised – are part of society. And being part of it means being able either to participate fully in it or to have their best interests weighed. They must have a voice in the community which is guaranteed a hearing.

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<sup>a</sup> See §15 above

68. In a good society provision must be made for ensuring that the voices of the most vulnerable are heard so that they can take part in the sharing of power as that is devolved from the centralised State. Everyone must be included in power-sharing. “The very nature of the common good requires that all members of the State be entitled to share in it, although in different ways according to each one’s tasks, merits and circumstances. For this reason, every civil authority must take pains to promote the common good of all, without preference for any single citizen or civic group,” says Pope John XXIII in the papal encyclical *Pacem In Terris*<sup>51</sup>.
69. Power-sharing must also be done with special attention to the weakest members of society. It is easy to empower those who are flexible and innovative and young. But it is much more difficult to devolve power to those who are fragile and frail and weak. Special provision needs to be made to include the weakest members of society in the sharing of power. That must go beyond ensuring that everyone has a voice; mechanisms must be put in place to ensure that the voice of the weak is heard and their desires are addressed.
70. The principle of subsidiarity requires that certain forms of centralisation, bureaucracy and the unjustified presence of the State should be eliminated or reduced. In doing so a wide range of institutions – from families through local societies and faith groups to local government – must be strengthened. But power-sharing must not undermine the basic responsibilities of the State as a moral agent. An increase in local volunteer groups caring for offenders as they leave prison, for example, does not absolve the State of the responsibility to provide the professional drug, alcohol and mental health professionals whose skills are essential to rehabilitative care as prisoners return to the community. Power-sharing must enhance not undermine public service and the common good. Paradoxically, power may actually be increased by sharing it.
71. But the principle of solidarity requires an additional quality to the business of power-sharing. The logic of the market is that we give in order to receive ourselves. The logic of the State is that we should give through civic duty. But there is also within a Catholic understanding of the common good a gratuitous quality to giving; we give simply to affirm other people’s humanity and in the process our own humanity. “Certain kinds of demands often call for a response which is not simply material but which is capable of perceiving the deeper human need,” as Pope John Paul II put it. “One thinks of the condition of refugees, immigrants, the elderly, the sick, and all those in circumstances which call for assistance, such as drug abusers: all these people can be helped effectively only by those who offer them genuine fraternal support, in addition to the necessary care<sup>52</sup>.”
72. There is a tendency in some quarters of society which must be staunchly resisted: it is the idea that there are certain people who are somehow second-class citizens, by virtue of what they have done or who they are. An example of this is the idea that there are, in prison, some recidivists who are incorrigible and incapable of rehabilitation. Such people at the margins are felt not to matter or to warrant only a lesser respect. That is utterly unacceptable in a Christian anthropology. It is a form of despair. Everyone can be redeemed, which is why our penal system must provide opportunities for reform and rehabilitation at every stage for all those in its care<sup>53</sup>. More generally a discourse of contempt towards the poor has to be replaced by a discourse of honour. The generalised description of the poor as benefit scroungers is unacceptable as well as counter-productive.

73. Without a revival in something like religious faith many people find it hard to see how we can get back to generosity as society's default setting. But nobody, despite how far back they are, can be left out. More than that, there must be a bias to the poor and vulnerable, so that particular attempts are made to empower them. It is also necessary to help such individuals to acquire expertise, to enter the circle of exchange, and to develop their skills<sup>54</sup>. Markets cannot be only for the privileged few; they must be made to work for the many.
74. The Church already has such enterprises at the heart of its social mission. It nurtures a commitment to civic virtue by cultivating personal virtues like fidelity in marriage, honesty in financial dealings, and generosity and sensitivity to the needs of others in family life; in the wider community it encourages its members to serve others in the community locally, nationally and internationally. Church organisations run projects for many of those whom no other organisations helps, such as the homeless, excluded school pupils and prisoners returning to the community after their sentences are complete. Particular emphasis is laid on imaginative projects, like running credit unions and micro-finance developments, which have an educative and transformative role in society.
75. Society must encourage and nurture such work so that that sharing power with the poor becomes an instrument for creative social innovation.

**D (ix)            Accountability**

76. How can society ensure that it can deliver what it promises? With power – however it is shared – comes responsibility, and with responsibility the need for accountability. Traditional styles of accountability have been described as “the most centralising force in our society<sup>55</sup>”. Reputation may be a more effective policeman than law or national standards. In a system of “horizontal accountability<sup>a</sup>” – that is where individuals and associations are accountable to local bodies and networks rather than to central government or national standards - local groups themselves can use new technology and social media to place what they do before their peers for approval. This will also cut costs by reducing the need for central bureaucracies.
77. Is this really a practical alternative? Elements of this collectivist vision existed in the 1930s and 1940s in Scotland when local people joined together to deliver services required by the local community. Local power plants were relatively common in Scottish council house estates in that period where a communal coal-fired boiler house provided heat and hot water for the whole area. But these did not prove durable models for a variety of reasons including the split ownership and the lack of capital investment that resulted.
78. But there is a wider problem. In our contemporary political culture it would be extremely difficult to hand over revenues to small groups and local bodies without putting in place expensive accounting systems. Were such a shift to be instituted on a basis of trust then questions would be asked in Parliament by the Public Accounts Committee and others about the proper monitoring of the use of public resources. The flows of information which would be required from civil servants by ministers would swiftly reassert a *de facto* centralised control. On subjects like standards of

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<sup>a</sup> See §24 above



healthcare or education – or indeed the issue of the protection of children – it is hard to imagine that sets of minimum standards, inspections, interventions, and challenges would not follow. A more optimistic conception of what it means to be a human being will not suffice here.

79. What is to be the role of local government in this? There is an ambivalence in government attitudes to local authorities. The very concept of local government implies a transfer of power down to local communities, but at the same time there remains a directive and centralising control from Whitehall, whether on standards, targets or resourcing.
80. In addition more thought needs to be given to how charities and third sector organisations are to be held accountable for what is devolved to them by the State or what is allowed to grow organically among them. If such bodies were to fail to deliver – which could have serious implications for the individuals involved, particularly the most vulnerable – who would then step in? If the safety net of civil society organisations fails – with the safety net of the welfare state having already failed or been removed because of increased pressure on public spending – what then?
81. The spur to localism is a very valid expression of subsidiarity, but there is a major potential tension between accountability and localism. If individuals are dissatisfied with local government or local voluntary organisations they may well complain to the central government. If individuals, their constituency MPs, local news media or party officials put pressure on the central government there is a high likelihood that ministers will get involved. Localism will be undermined and the principle of subsidiarity not fully respected. All of this would be driven by essentially good intentions – MPs, under pressure from the local news media and lobby groups, would demand action. Since Parliament's formal position is that government ministers can be held responsible for almost everything the consequence of this is likely to be that MPs will unleash a barrage of parliamentary questions, select committees will raise queries, and ministers will then feel compelled to become involved whether or not they have the statutory powers to do anything. This pressure will be exacerbated because localism, by definition, will not deliver uniformity. Issues of equity or equality – couched as fairness or "postcode lottery" – will then arise. Localism may deliver responsiveness, and a local feeling of engagement and empowerment, but it will not deliver accountability as it has traditionally been practiced in British polity. Accepting that will require a major paradigm shift.

## **E Nurturing the Key Institutions of Civil Society**

82. Civil Society is generally understood by political theorists to cover everything in the semi-public space between the State and the individual, populated by a host of voluntary associations from the family to neighbourhood groups and clubs, social co-operatives and trade unions, professional associations and business corporations. Some include schools, hospitals, local councils and quangos; though others might argue those are extensions of the State. Which of these might be regarded as essential or foundational?
83. Some civil institutions thrive for a while and then die. Others carry on indefinitely. Some have large memberships or can guarantee a large turn-out in support of their aims. Others appear uninfluential. Most would make the case for themselves to be

numbered among the key institutions. The Church would, both by reason of the transcendent spirituality it offers as well as for its influential interventions on a range of social issues from education and care of the needy to specific campaigns in support of the living wage and protection of the vulnerable. Trade unions would make their own powerful case. So would many other bodies and groups.

84. By what principles might we prioritise the bodies which should form the key institutions of our society. Catholic Social Teaching would suggest that they should be:

- Corporate bodies which are distinguished by both internal and external bonds. The internal bonds are shared effort, shared experience and shared goals; the external bonds are an orientation towards the common good.
- Their power and their efficacy as groups comes first of all from the faithfulness with which they discharge their professional duties and their capacity to excel in them. That is not to be measured in their success in promoting their own interests, or those of their members; it is also about the capacity of the institution to promote the common interest of the whole group.
- Their operation must be consonant with justice according the common good<sup>56</sup>.
- They must be free-forming groups. They should be free to select their own form and methodology; and no-one can be coerced to participate.
- They arise from the social nature of the person and that alone, and they have to serve both the interests of the individual and the interests of society as a whole. That is why Catholic Social Teaching insists that it does not make sense to think of either the human person – or the Church or other forms of civil association – as in any sense private or only semi-public. In that balance – and in that mediation between the interests of the individual and the State – lies the profound social wisdom of civil society.

85. An important question here is whether society can transform looser forms of network and association into foundational civil institutions or whether it might turn out to undermine them. Should we expand State funding of charities because they can discharge the responsibilities of the State more cheaply than the State could through public services? Charities can also do such work more effectively. To return to the example of ex-offenders leaving gaol, for example, church charities provide not just a house and job but also support through personal relationships in programmes which have been shown to reduce rates of re-offending from 61 per cent to as low as 15 per cent. The fraternal support – or, in Christian theology, the love – which is on offer is a key part of that success. Love is not something the State can provide.

86. But the difficulties of the current economic climate could mean that the State, rather than increasing financial support to charities, will instead be withdrawing it. Some have suggested that where civil society institutions like charities are dependent on State money it saps their vitality. Certainly it can be the case that charities sometimes compromise their independence and bend their policies to the line approved by the

State to secure funding. But the greater risk is that valuable work will be sacrificed if State funds are withdrawn from many charities.

## F The Role of the Church

87. So where are the points of overlap and divergence between Catholic Social Teaching and the different policies considered? Some argue that the Church should not involve itself in such questions, insisting that the role of the Church ought to be to remain a prophetic voice outside practical policy. Jesus, they say, marginalised himself in order to marginalise the world. The values of the Kingdom of Heaven involve a disjunction with present secular realities. A form of renunciation is integral to witnessing to a God's eye view of poverty and power. The Church should not allow itself to be co-opted into the political agenda with its inevitable failings.
88. This is not the position of Catholic Social Teaching which insists that the gospel is to be lived among the untidiness of contemporary life. Being prophetic means trying to identify what lies beyond narrow sectional advantage<sup>57</sup>. It means bringing the insights of the Christian perspective to bear upon current political debate as a service to all who are engaged in it.
89. In one sense this is what the Church has been doing for centuries. So much so that many of those insights have been absorbed into classic secular post-Enlightenment thought. In the ancient world the classical virtues of generosity and liberality normally did not include gifts to the poor. This was because the poor were not thought of as worthy recipients since they could not reciprocate and reflect honour back to the donor. Christianity re-described that language, changing the shape of the virtues in to include poor relief within generosity and justice and *philanthropia*. From medieval times care of the poor became central to Western understanding of what it is to be Christian and this is something that has been inherited from Catholicism into what Charles Taylor calls "the modern moral order"<sup>58</sup>. It has now become a universal truth that we have a responsibility to everybody simply because they are a human being.
90. But that responsibility has been shorn of something in its transformation from a Christian truth to a universal one. What has been lost is that sense of relationship. It has become impersonal, with the poor being considered as merely the passive recipients of benefits. It is no longer about the poor as individuals. It has lost that sense of fraternal identity and the necessity of empowerment.
91. Restoring that sense of relationship is essential. For that plays into our sense of who counts and who is pushed away into at best a liminal membership of society. It is critical if 'creative citizenship' is to be discovered and unleashed among the poor and alienated. For it will involve a recognition that civic virtue can only be rooted in those institutions and associations which *do* recognise the weaker members of society as those with whom we have a two-way relationship, not simply as passive recipients of whatever we deign to give them. Successful government policies need to work with established and trusted institutions including the Church.
92. That shift in power needs to be rooted in the radical democratisation inherent in a Trinitarian theology which puts relationship at the heart of a Creation which is still a work in progress<sup>a</sup>. It means an exercise of power which is co-operative rather than

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<sup>a</sup> See §35 above

competitive, and where everybody contributes according to the vision of the common good. Crucially, Catholic Social Teaching insists that decision-making at the most local levels – subsidiarity – must always be held in tension with solidarity, which, as we have seen, goes beyond fellow-feeling to an insistence that structures and formal institutions must ensure justice – so that the poor are never left out. It is also crucial to any system when it comes to deciding how to proceed when the social wisdom of civil association fundamentally conflicts with the ideology of a government. It must also be the key determinant when an agenda of public spending cuts comes into conflict with the ideal of genuine empowerment.

93. Catholic Social Teaching can offer pointers here but it can offer no Erastian bargain with social philosophers. There is always more to discover about human beings who are made in the image of God. No political process can exhaust the mystery of humanity. But any social construct will undoubtedly work better if it is guided by the insights of Catholic Social Teaching. There can be no sustainable and deep change of structures without a change of attitudes. This places special responsibility on the demands of leadership. But fundamentally, for society to change, people need to change.

### Some Key questions for reflection

1. Who is a member of Society? Do some people have a more liminal membership than others? Are active citizens to be more empowered than sick, vulnerable or marginalised? What about prisoners, refugees and asylum seekers?
2. What constitutes human flourishing? Is it purely materialistic? Does it focus on the present at the expense of the potential? Does it include an appreciation of the importance of the transcendental?
3. How do national government and other institutions create a culture in which the right kind of personal virtues are nurtured?
4. Do we sufficiently understand the importance of relationships in sustaining society?
5. Are the poor more important than anyone else? Are they seen in terms of potential or as a burden?
6. What structures and formal institutions will ensure that the poor are never left out?
7. How can the market be used to re-endow the poor with capital?
8. Do private sector business companies not have a role in social development? Is enough attention given to this?
9. How can individuals be given control of the money the State spends supposedly on their behalf?
10. How do we build compassion into our administrative systems?
11. What creates good communities?
12. What measures can ensure that the vulnerable do not suffer if provisions run by the voluntary sector fail?
13. Which takes precedence when a civil society organisation fundamentally conflicts with the ideology of a government?
14. What are the social, political and economic conditions for the development and support of meaningful civil association? What role can the State play in promoting those conditions?
15. How can the power of creative citizenship be best unleashed among the poor, vulnerable and alienated? How will established institutions and networks be strengthened in poor areas?
16. How can we strengthen the local? By emphasising local over central government? By shifting service provision to local communities? By 'participatory budgeting' techniques already being developed in our cities as well as in mainstream developmental practice abroad?

17. How do we prevent power-sharing from being a top-down initiative which only pays lip service to localism?
18. Will power-sharing be done with special attention to the weakest members of society?
19. Are we being realistic about the amount of time that people, who are working full-time to pay mortgages in an economically-difficult period, have to engage in voluntary activities?
20. How do we prevent the State from using local empowerment as an excuse to dodge its proper responsibilities?
21. What are the 'structures of sin' working against a true awareness of the universal common good in our society? How do we address those problems?
22. How can centralised bureaucracy be reduced without jeopardising systems of accountability for the spending of public money? Is 'horizontal accountability' politically realistic?
23. Which takes priority when public spending cuts and the needs of an empowered local society clash?

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## NOTES:

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- <sup>1</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 21
- <sup>2</sup> Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 31
- <sup>3</sup> "It is not good for man to be alone" Genesis. 2,18
- <sup>4</sup> Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum*, 51
- <sup>5</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Laborem Exercens*
- <sup>6</sup> "Every man is his "brother's keeper", because God entrusts us to one another" *Evangelium Vitae*, 19
- <sup>7</sup> Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, 79
- <sup>8</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, 17 September 2010, Westminster Hall
- <sup>9</sup> Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*, Penguin, 1968
- <sup>10</sup> *The Big Society: the Anatomy of the New Politics*, Jesse Norman, University of Buckingham Press, 2010
- <sup>11</sup> *The Big Society: the Anatomy of the New Politics*, Jesse Norman, University of Buckingham Press, 2010
- <sup>12</sup> Jesse Norman, MP, to a seminar entitled "What are the Conditions for the renewal of civil society?" for the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011.
- <sup>13</sup> *Red Tory: How Left and Right Have Broken Britain and How We Can Fix It*, Phillip Blond, Faber & Faber, 2010
- <sup>14</sup> précis by Phillip Blond
- <sup>15</sup> John Battle, book review, *The Big Society: An Anatomy of the New Politics* by Jesse Norman, Thinking Faith, the online journal of the British Jesuits.  
[http://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/BOOK\\_20110107\\_1.htm](http://www.thinkingfaith.org/articles/BOOK_20110107_1.htm)
- <sup>16</sup> *Caritas in Veritate*, 6
- <sup>17</sup> see p 100 of *The Big Society: the Anatomy of the New Politics*, Jesse Norman, University of Buckingham Press, 2010
- <sup>18</sup> How should churches respond to the Big Society, Dr Rowan Williams,  
<http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/2956>
- <sup>19</sup> "A person is a person through other persons; we belong in the bundle of life; I want you to be all you can be because that way I can be all I can be", Desmond Tutu, Semester at Sea, 2007  
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ftjdDOftzBk>
- <sup>20</sup> Jesse Norman MP, to a seminar entitled "What are the Conditions for the renewal of civil society?" for the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales, 9<sup>th</sup> February 2011.
- <sup>21</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 38

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- <sup>22</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 28
- <sup>23</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 35
- <sup>24</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 36
- <sup>25</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, 36
- <sup>26</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 37
- <sup>27</sup> Pope Pius XI, *Quadragesimo Anno*, 79
- <sup>28</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 48
- <sup>29</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1885
- <sup>30</sup> Catechism of the Catholic Church, §1883
- <sup>31</sup> Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 187
- <sup>32</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 57
- <sup>33</sup> Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, 185
- <sup>34</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 48
- <sup>35</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 35
- <sup>36</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 48
- <sup>37</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 48
- <sup>38</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, 75
- <sup>39</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, 71
- <sup>40</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 140
- <sup>41</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 34
- <sup>42</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 40
- <sup>43</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 35
- <sup>44</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 35
- <sup>45</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 38
- <sup>46</sup> *Timothy 6:10*
- <sup>47</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 40
- <sup>48</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, 36
- <sup>49</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 19



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<sup>50</sup> “The choice of certain ways of acting is radically incompatible with the love of God and with the dignity of the person created in his image.” Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 75

<sup>51</sup> Pope John XXIII, *Pacem in Terris*, 56

<sup>52</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 34

<sup>53</sup> *qv A Place of Redemption, A Christian approach to Punishment and Prison*, Catholic Bishops’ Conference of England and Wales, 2004. §150

<sup>54</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, 34

<sup>55</sup> Phillip Blond, director of the think-tank *ResPublica*, to a seminar entitled “What are the Conditions for the renewal of civil society?” for the Catholic Bishops of England and Wales.

<sup>56</sup> The following is synthesised from *Quadragesimo Anno* by Dr Anna Rowlands of the Margaret Beaufort Institute, Cambridge.

<sup>57</sup> Dr Rowan Williams, in a lecture on *Relations between Church and State Today*, Manchester University, March 2011

<sup>58</sup> *A Secular Age*, Charles Taylor, Harvard University Press, 2007

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## **Seminar Participants**

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Most Rev Peter Smith, Archbishop of Southwark

Nick Spencer

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## Further Reading

A comprehensive summary of Catholic Social Teaching can be found in the Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, written by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (Continuum, 2006, ISBN 0860124363). The major social encyclicals referred to – in particular, *Caritas in Veritate* – can be obtained from the Vatican web-site ([www.vatican.va](http://www.vatican.va)) or in printed form from the Catholic Truth Society.

In addition, the following books may be of interest to those wishing to further explore some of the questions raised by this discussion paper. Please note that this is not a list of “recommended reading” and we do not agree with all of the arguments advanced in these texts.

*The Big Society*, Jesse Norman MP, The University of Buckingham Press, 2010, ISBN 9780956395207

*Red Tory: How left and right have broken Britain and how we can fix it*, Phillip Blond, Faber and Faber, 2010, ISBN 0571251676

*Why the Third Way Failed: Economics, Morality and the Origins of the 'Big Society'*, Bill Jordan, Policy Press, 2010, ISBN 9781847426567

*Unnecessary Suffering: Management, Markets and the Liquidation of Solidarity*, Maurice Glasman, Verso, 1996, ISBN 185984071X

*Faithful Citizens: A Practical Guide to Catholic Social Teaching and Community Organising*, Austen Ivereigh, Darton, Longman and Todd, 2010, ISBN 023252789X

*The Idea of Justice*, Amartya Sen, Penguin, 2010, ISBN 9780141037851

*The Spirit Level: Why More Equal Societies Almost Always Do Better*, Richard Wilkinson and Kate Pickett, Penguin, 2010, ISBN 9780241954294