

Quotes From Vatican Documents Addressing Health Care

PACEM IN TERRIS - Pope John XXIII, Section 11 (1963)

But first We must speak of man's **rights**. Man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, **medical care**, rest, and, finally, the necessary social services. In consequence, he has the right to be looked after in the event of ill health; disability stemming from his work; widowhood; old age; enforced unemployment; or whenever through no fault of his own he is deprived of the means of livelihood.

LABOREM EXERCENS - Pope John Paul II, Section 19 (1981)

Besides wages, various *social benefits* intended to ensure the life and health of workers and their families play a part here. The expenses involved in **health care**, especially in the case of accidents at work, demand that **medical assistance** should be easily available for workers, and that as far as possible it should be cheap or even free of charge. Another sector regarding benefits is the sector associated with the *right to rest*. ... Within the sphere of these principal rights, there develops a whole system of particular rights which, together with remuneration for work, determine the correct relationship between worker and employer. Among these rights there should never be overlooked the right to a working environment and to manufacturing processes which are not harmful to the workers' physical health or to their moral integrity.

CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH, Sections 1908 and 2288 (1997)

Second, the common good requires the social well-being and development of the group itself. Development is the epitome of all social duties. Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, **health**, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.

Life and **physical health** are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good. **Concern for the health of its citizens requires that society help** in the attainment of living-conditions that allow them to grow and reach maturity: food and clothing, housing, **health care**, basic education, employment, and social assistance.

COMPENDIUM OF THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH, Section 166 (2004)

The demands of the common good are dependent on the social conditions of each historical period and are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his **fundamental rights** [349]. These demands concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State's powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time **human rights**: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, **basic health care**, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom. Nor must one forget the contribution that every nation is required in duty to make towards a true worldwide cooperation for the common good of the whole of humanity and for future generations also.