



- The “disposition in virtue of which a man has the firm and constant will **to render everyone his due**” (St. Thomas Aquinas).
- The Classical Doctrine (Thomas Aquinas) divides justice into—commutative: justice in relations of individuals with each other; distributive: justice in relations of society (family, Church, State) with its individual members whereby they are given a share in the common good; and legal or social justice: justice in the individual’s relations to society, whereby for his part he subordinates himself to the common good.
- Justice ranks as the highest moral good; in its Christian form, justice is inseparable from love. Therefore, the images that place charity and Justice as parallel are inaccurate. It is love/charity that is the basis for all that we do. Justice is the doing of that love.[The giving of food to the hungry may be viewed as an act of commutative justice (reflecting our charity/love).] What is the opposite of love?
- In the Old Testament the poor, the oppressed and the persecuted are the just.
- In the New Testament, the news of that justice which makes man really pleasing to God which God imparts to him of grace because of faith. [source: Rahner & Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary]
- **Commutative justice** is concerned with the *relationships, which bind individual to individual in the sphere of private transactions*. The core concept here is the equal dignity and freedom of the persons involved. However, the uniqueness and dignity of the human persons never exists in isolation from their relations with the larger community. Thus.....
- **Distributive justice** is concerned with public or political life that is with the relationships, which exist between *society as a whole and its individual members*. Distributive justice determines how public social goods are to be allocated to individuals or groups. Public goods belong to individuals only to the extent that individuals belong to society.
- **Social justice** specifies how the activities of individuals and groups are to be aggregated so that they converge to create the social good.
- **A Scriptural snapshot:** Matthew 22:36—40, Which is the Greatest Commandment; Morning Prayer and Mass for Monday of the 1st week of Lent. Then look at Leviticus 19: 1-2; 11-18; Matthew 25: 31—46.
- **A Sequence of Items:**
 - a. The 10 Commandments are the grounding for the 2 great ones;
 - b. The 10 Commandments define a starting point for what Love of Neighbor is;
 - c. The 10 Commandments define a baseline not end line;
 - d. Catholic Social Teaching takes us to higher level of acting;
 - e. For in the language of justice—
 - **Commutative** is sort of the Golden Rule;
 - **Distributive** is sort of non-discrimination, fair play, equality of treatment;
 - **Social** is ground rules for the larger game;
 - f. *Social justice* is the hardest because we are asked to give up or subordinate legitimate goods for the sake of all; things, stuff, attachments. Our privileges are given up or not invoked so that others might have more—freedom, self-reliance, dignity, a share of the bounty of society and creation—which they are entitled to as Children of God. Social Justice is about the Common Good, about how the activities of individuals and groups are to be aggregated so that they converge to create social good. Translated: we are asked to give up perfectly legitimate goods (wealth, status, power) for the sake of all. Think golf.