



Focus on Religious Freedom

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We are now facing the final confrontation between the Church and the anti-church, between the gospel and the anti-gospel, between Christ and the antichrist."

Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, the future Pope John Paul II, 1976

Five Popes Reflect on Socialism and Communism:

American Heritage Dictionary: *"Socialism is any of various theories or systems of social organization in which the means of producing and distributing goods is owned collectively or by a centralized government that often plans and controls the economy."*

Catholic Social Teaching (catholic.org): "Only persons are made in the image of God... The dignity of man, the concept of personhood, cannot be built upon agnostic or atheistic foundations."

Pope John Paul II (1978-2005) "Socialism considers the individual person simply as an element, a molecule within the social organism, so that the good of the individual is completely subordinated to the functioning of the socio-economic mechanism."

Pope Benedict XVI (2005-2013) "We do not need a State which regulates and controls everything, but a State which ... generously acknowledges and supports initiatives arising from (those)...closest to those in need (government power ought to reside at the local or regional level and least centralized competent authority.)

Pope Paul VI (1963-1978) "Too often Christians attracted by socialism tend to idealize it in terms which are very general: a will for justice, solidarity and equality. They refuse to recognize the limitations of the historical socialist movements, ..."

Pope John XXIII (1958-1963) "Pope Pius XI emphasized the fundamental opposition between Communism and Christianity, and made it clear that no Catholic could subscribe even to moderate Socialism. The reason is that Socialism is founded on a doctrine of human society which ... takes no account of any objective other than that of material well-being... it places too severe a restraint on human liberty..."

Pope Leo XIII (1878-1903) "To remedy these wrongs (in society) the socialists, working on the poor man's envy of the rich, are striving to do away with private property, and contend that individual possessions should become the common property of all, to be administered by the State or by municipal bodies. They hold that by thus transferring property from private individuals to the community, the present mischievous state of things will be set to rights, inasmuch as each citizen will then get his fair share of whatever there is to enjoy. But (if) their contentions ... were carried into effect, the working man himself would be among the first to suffer."

<https://www.tfp.org/what-the-popes-have-to-say-about-socialism/>