

Document Profile: "El Papa habla a los trabajadores"

Title: El Papa habla a los trabajadores (The Pope speaks to the workers)

Contributor: Organizing Committee for the Pope's Meeting with the Workers

Publisher: Organizing Committee for the Pope's Meeting with the Workers

Date: July 3, 1986

Description and Contents Summary:

Written by Pope John Paul II and his committee, the booklet *El Papa habla a los trabajadores* is a simplification of the papal encyclical *Laborem Exercens* published to coincide with the Pope's 1986 visit to Colombia. During the seven-day visit to various parts of Colombia, Pope John Paul II delivered speeches to government officials and to the general public, where he advocated for worker's rights. The booklet (as well as the original encyclical) explores the role of work in one's life and how it fits into God's doctrine. The booklet is divided into six sections, each led by a central theme. The first, "The human person and work" discusses how work is a fundamental part of human life. "Machines yes, but humans first" is about how machinery can be either a useful tool or a destructive force. "Human work and property," explains the church's belief that private property should contribute to the common good. "Working is a right and a man's duty" articulates one's right to work and respect from their employer. "My rights as a worker" insists workers have the right to unionize and live a dignified life. Lastly, "Christ the man of work" discusses one's obligation to work with God toward a more just and humane world. Aimed at members of the working class in Latin America, the booklet uses simple language as well as pictures and cartoons to ensure comprehension among all age groups and levels of education.

Significance:

This booklet presents the religious ideology of the Catholic Church as it applies to labor to promote the church's sociopolitical agenda. It encourages behaviors that benefit the worker and not necessarily their employers who benefit from more capitalist practices. The encyclical that this is based on (*Laborem Exercens*) was originally published in 1981 (this particular version was published in 1986) for the 90th anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, another encyclical discussing the rights of workers. *El Papa habla a los trabajadores* offers insight into the role of the Catholic Church in the political economy of Latin America, specifically Colombia, during the late-twentieth century. It is of great utility to those studying the entanglement of church and state in Latin America as well as the political disposition and agenda of the Catholic Church in the 1980s.

Page Count: 29

Dimensions (in centimeters): 15x21cm

Geographical Subject: Colombia

Subject: Catholicism; encyclical; labor; Laborem Exercens; Latin America; Pope; Pope John Paul II

Language: Spanish

Libraries Reporting Copies in WorldCat: Total number: 0

Works Cited

Juan Pablo II. "Laborem Exercens." 14 de Septiembre de 1981, www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/es/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_14091981_laborem-exercens.html.

"Laborem Exercens (On Human Work)." California Catholic Conference, www.cacatholic.org/teachings/catholic-social-teaching/social-encyclicals/laborem-exercens-human-work.

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