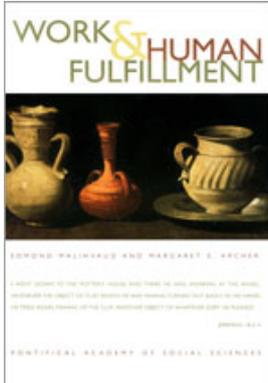




Work and Human Fulfillment



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This book of the Pontifical Academy of Social Sciences is addressed to those concerned with the interplay between the implementation of ethical values and the knowledge of social phenomena. It is an outcome and presentation of the scientific exchanges and deliberations held by the young Academy on a subject of major importance for human fulfilment: work and employment. In his Encyclical *Laborem exercens* (1981), Pope John Paul II argues that work is "the decisive key of the social question". He has therefore stressed the right and duty of the Church to proclaim again and again the dignity of human work, to denounce situations in which this dignity is violated, and to contribute to the solution of the urgent problems that work now faces. As the same Pope said in *Centesimus annus* (1991), this is particularly urgent after the breakdown of Marxism and the re-emergence of the ideology of economic liberalism.

Aware of this major interest of the Church and concerned about the critical challenges faced by contemporary societies, well documented within the social sciences, the Academy decided to dedicate its first major efforts to the question of work and employment. Challenges are now arising because the nature and conditions of work are changing everywhere and the practical achievement of the human right to work is exposed to risk. Three plenary sessions (1996, 1997 and 1999) were devoted to this subject. The present volume is one result of these encounters.

This book begins with an expression of the teaching of the Catholic Church. At the beginning we present the background paper by Professor Johannes Schasching, S.J. on the key positions taken by the Church on work and employment. This paper was written in the summer of 1995 and was used as a point of reference by speakers at the three plenary sessions.

The central and longest part of the book contains extracts of the papers presented and discussed at the three plenary sessions. Full texts of the papers with, in most cases, reports of the discussions may be found in the published proceedings of the sessions. These short contributions by academicians or outside experts are classified under six headings:

1. Work across the world: the present situation and current trends;
2. The globalised economy;
3. Contemporary institutions and their response to unemployment;
4. Capital and labour;
5. An analysis of policy options; and,
6. The culture of work.

Reflecting her contribution to this book, Professor Margaret Archer, who chaired the programme committee that was responsible for organising the scientific exchanges during the three sessions and who also acted as editor of the published proceedings, has written a personal thematic introduction. In it, she explains the motives that inspired her during those years when the committee had to decide about the subjects of the papers to be delivered and when she approached potential authors and wrote her introductions to the published proceedings. This rich thematic introduction, written *ex post*, is published here before the extracts.

Similarly, acting more as an Academician than as the president of the Academy, Professor Edmond Malinvaud undertook a personal synthesis of the papers and discussions that had taken place at the sessions. A first and incomplete draft of the synthesis was discussed in 1998 by Academicians at their fourth plenary session and this led to a number of comments and suggestions. In revised and completed form, this synthesis is published here after the extracts.

Edmond Malinvaud and Johannes Schasching, S.J.