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## Bishop Blaire's powerful Labor Day statement

by Michael Sean Winters

Distinctly Catholic

Bishop Stephen Blaire of Stockton, California, the head of the U.S. bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, **has issued a statement for Labor Day** that is simply put one of the most forceful statements from the USCCB in a long time.

He notes the long and fruitful collaboration between unions and the Church, the Church's long-standing commitment to workers' rights, especially the right to organize, and he sets forth a vision for the nation's economic and political life that could scarcely be more at odds with the Ayn Rand-inspired Tea Party social Darwinism that has come to dominate so much of public discourse.

Bishop Blaire's witness, in this document and in his efforts over the past few months to get Congress and the White House to look at their budgetary decisions through the lens of Matthew 25 -- "whatever you do to these the least of my brethren, you do to me" -- rank him among the great churchmen in our nation's history.

I read his letter and I thought of Cardinal Gibbons and Msgr. Ryan, of Bishop Steven Levin and Bishop Francis Haas, of Cardinal Dearden and Cardinal Shehan. From heaven, Cardinal O'Connor is surely smiling at Blaire's powerful defense of the rights of workingmen and women.

Please, take a moment and read this statement. Please, print it out and give it to your pastor. Ask him to publish it in your church bulletin. Ask your local newspapers, not just the Church papers but all papers, to reprint excerpts.

The Tea Party social Darwinists have Fox News. But we have Bishop Blaire and I wouldn't trade him for all the Tea in Texas.

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