

# Earth belongs to God and to all his children



## PRAY

Creator of this world, You created everything: heaven, earth, water and air. You created these in such a way that men can live in a world which holds everything for them unless they destroy their natural habitat by self-will and greed for profit. Listen to our complaint, Lord, and make us strong and prophetic in the resistance against those who take the land from the poor, buy its resources, pollute its air and make the water dirty. Give knowledge and conversion to the exploiters. Don't let us get tired of being by their side. Amen.



## CONTEMPLATE

One person reads the Bible passage aloud.  
Short silence.

**Exchange:** *What particularly appealed to you?*



## STUDY

1. Read DOCAT text sentence-for-sentence. Then one person reads the text aloud in full.
2. Three minutes of silence.
3. Each person reads a word or phrase aloud (without comment) that he or she has noticed.
4. Explain briefly in the next round why you have chosen the sentence (e.g. memories, questions, etc.).



## DISCUSS

**Also discuss your own questions on this topic!**

**Treasure Book:** *Take five minutes to write down what you don't want to forget.*



## CHALLENGE

Our **CHALLENGES** are just suggestions you can make in addition to your study guide meetings. You can also replace them with stronger, more fitting, more original or better ones. Just let us know at [feedback@youcat.org](mailto:feedback@youcat.org).

**#DOCATChallenge:** *Share your experience on Facebook or Instagram.*



## Ps 85:12-13

Yes, the Lord will give what is good, and our land will yield its increase. Righteousness will go before him and make his footsteps a way.

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## How does social teaching react to the upheavals in agriculture worldwide?

More than other branches of the economy, agriculture makes a distinctive mark on the landscape and culture of a society. Therefore, the preservation of a viable farming industry is important even for the highly developed industrial nations. In most countries of the world, however, the agrarian sector is now, as always, the most important sector of the economy by far. Most of the people work in it, too. This is true particularly of the poor countries and regions of the world. Often the basic problem is that the farmland is in the hands of a few major landowners. Where such land ownership leads to the exploitation of the rural population, is detrimental to the common good, and stands in the way of a positive development of the national economy, the Church's social teaching calls for agrarian reform and a new distribution of the land. Such steps must be taken in an orderly, legal way. Old injustice must not be fought with new injustice.

1. The statement „The earth is the Lord's“ comes from Pope Saint John II. What derives, therefore, concerning the issue of large land ownership? See also Docat question 91 „What are the limits of private property“.
2. Why is „rural exodus“ leading to human tragedies — and how can we stop that?
3. In territories where large parts of the land are in the hands of large landowners and land reforms are urgently needed, there is often a call for armed revolution. Although the social doctrine is in favor of the poor, it is also against violent means. What options are there for the implementation of land reforms and the establishment of just ownership structures?
4. Do you pay attention when doing grocery shopping if the farmers in the countries of origin are given a fair share of profit?

Go to the nearest supermarket and look at the grocery range. Which food is marked for giving the producers a direct benefit to their subsistence?

Do you take on this challenge?

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## DOCAT Study guide



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