

# Catholic Social Teaching

Prosperity Gospel

Religion is a private matter

Wealth is Evil

**Social Justice**

# Prosperity Gospel - Old Testament

- Success is a sign of God's blessing
  - Now Abram was very rich in livestock, in silver, and in gold. Gen 13:2
  - And I will give to you and to your offspring after you the land of your sojournings, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession, and I will be their God. Gen 17:8-9
- Responsibility to help others
  - Those who walk blamelessly, and do what is right, . . . who do not lend money at interest. Ps 15:2-5
  - If any of your kin fall into difficulty and become dependent on you, you shall support them; Lev 25:35
- Anger at the rich
  - Therefore because you trample on the poor and take from them levies of grain, you have built houses of hewn stone, but you shall not live in them; Amos 5:11

# Christianity - Prosperity Gospel

- Started in the US in the 1950s with Healing Revivals
  - Australia e.g. Hillsong
- Biblical basis(?)
  - Bring to the storehouse a full tenth of what you earn so there will be food in my house . . . . I will open the windows of heaven for you and pour out all the blessings you need. Malachi 3:10
  - I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly John 10:10
  - My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus Philippians 4:19:
  - Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth. 3 John 1:2

# Religion is a private matter

- “Jesus never intended to give instructions to political leaders on how to run a country.” (Jerry Falwell on Donald Trump and Pope Francis)
- “I hope I'm not going to get castigated for saying this by my priest back home, but I don't get economic policy from my bishops or my cardinal or my pope. (Jeb Bush on Pope Francis)
- “Those who say, ‘I love God,’ and hate their brothers or sisters, are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen” (1 John 4:20).
- “Anyone who thinks sitting in church can make you a Christian must also think that sitting in a garage can make you a car.” (Garrison Keillor)

# Money is the root of all evil

- For the **love of money** is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows. 1 Timothy 6:10 (KJ)
- So therefore, none of you can become my disciple if you do not give up all your possessions. Luke 14:33
- No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon. Matt 6:24 (KJ)
- I tell you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God. Matt 19: 23-26
- **The Beatitudes**
- Anchorites and hermits
- St Francis

# Beatitudes

- Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God.
  - Blessed are ye that hunger now: for ye shall be filled.
  - Blessed are ye that weep now: for ye shall laugh.
  - Blessed are ye, when men shall hate you, and when they shall separate you from their company, and shall reproach you, and cast out your name as evil, for the Son of man's sake. Luke 6:20-22
- 
- Woe to you who are rich, for you have already received your comfort.
  - Woe to you who are well fed now, for you will go hungry.
  - Woe to you who laugh now, for you will mourn and weep.
  - Woe to you when everyone speaks well of you, for that is how their ancestors treated the false prophets. Luke 6:24-26

# Social Justice - Jesus

- The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, Luke 4: 18-19
- Go and tell John what you have seen and heard: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, the poor have good news brought to them. Luke 7:22



# Social Justice - us

- And the crowds asked him, “What then should we do?” In reply he said to them, “Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.” Even tax collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, “Teacher, what should we do?” He said to them, “Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.” Soldiers also asked him, “And we, what should we do?” He said to them, “Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.” Luke 3 10-14

# Catholic Social Teaching

- Rerum novarum (1891)
- Quadragesimo anno (1931)
- Mater et magistra (1961)
- Pacem in terris (1963)
- Dignitatis humanae (1965)
- Populorum progressio (1967)
- Humanae vitae (1968)
- Octogesima adveniens (1971)
- Laborem exercens (1981)
- Sollicitudo rei socialis (1987)
- Centesimus annus (1991)
- Evangelium vitae (1995)
- Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (2004)
- Deus caritas est (2005)
- Caritas in veritate (2009)
- Evangelii gaudium (2013)
- Laudato si' (2015)

# Rerum Novarum (1891 Leo XIII)

## *Rights and Duties of Capital and Labor*

- Time of rampant capitalism and industrialisation
  - emergence of socialism and communism
- Spelt out the obligations of both employers and workers
  - Employers to provide a fair wage and working conditions
  - Workers to work responsibly
- The primary purpose of the state is the common good - the good of all
  - All people have equal dignity regardless of social class,
  - Government should protect the rights and cares for the needs of all its members, both rich and poor.
  - Everyone is in some way a contributor to the common good and everyone's contribution is important.
- The intrinsic value of every individual
- Preferential option for the poor

# Rerum Novarum

- Noted the obligations of wealth (while confirming the right to private property):
  - "He that hath a talent, let him see that he hide it not; he that hath abundance, let him quicken himself to mercy and generosity; he that hath art and skill, let him do his best to share the use and the utility hereof with his neighbor." Gregory the Great, 6<sup>th</sup> Cent
- Prescribed unions and collective bargaining (rather than government intervention)
  - "Let the working man and the employer make free agreements, and in particular let them agree freely as to the wages; nevertheless, there underlies a dictate of natural justice more imperious and ancient than any bargain between man and man, namely, that wages ought not to be insufficient to support a frugal and well-behaved wage-earner. If through necessity or fear of a worse evil the workman accept harder conditions because an employer or contractor will afford him no better, he is made the victim of force and injustice."

# Pacem in Terris (1963 John XXIII)

- A letter to everyone, not just Catholics, at the height of the Cold War
- In essence: Rerum Novarum for international relations.
  - Once again we exhort our people to take an active part in public life, and to contribute towards the attainment of the common good of the entire human family as well as to that of their own country. They should endeavor, therefore, in the light of the Faith and with the strength of love, to ensure that the various institutions—whether economic, social, cultural or political in purpose – should be such as not to create obstacles, but rather to facilitate or render less arduous people's perfectioning of themselves both in the natural order as well as in the supernatural.
- Endorsed the UN

# Populorum Progressio (1967 Paul VI)

- Emphasised the disparities between the industrialized West and the Third World
- free international trade alone is not adequate to correct these disparities
- supports the role of international organizations in addressing this need.
- Obligations of rich nations to poor nations
- Pointed out the relationship between development and peace.
- The intention of the church is not to take sides, but to be an advocate for basic human dignity:
  - **“There can be no progress towards the complete development of individuals without the simultaneous development of all humanity in the spirit of solidarity.”**

# Laborem Exercens (1981 John Paul II)

The church "has always understood this right within the broader context of the right common to all to use the goods of the whole creation: the right to private property is subordinated to the right to common use, to the fact that goods are meant for everyone."

# Evangelium Vitae (1995 John Paul II)

On one hand there is a growing moral sensitivity alert to the value of every individual as a human being without any distinction of race, nationality, religion, political opinion, or social class. On the other hand these proclamations are contradicted in practice. How can these solemn affirmations be reconciled with the widespread attacks on human life and the refusal to accept those who are weak, needy, elderly, or just conceived? These attacks go directly against respect for life; they threaten the very meaning of democratic coexistence, and our cities risk becoming societies of people who are rejected, marginalized, uprooted, and oppressed, instead of communities of "people living together."



# Evangelii Gaudium (2013 Francis)

- explicitly affirms "the right of states" to intervene in the economy to promote "the common good".
  - While the earnings of a minority are growing exponentially, so too is the gap separating the majority from the prosperity enjoyed by those happy few. This imbalance is the result of ideologies which defend the absolute autonomy of the marketplace and financial speculation. Consequently, they reject the right of states, charged with vigilance for the common good, to exercise any form of control. A new tyranny is thus born, invisible and often virtual, which unilaterally and relentlessly imposes its own laws and rules.

# Evangelii Gaudium

“some people continue to defend trickle-down theories which assume that economic growth, encouraged by a free market, will inevitably succeed in bringing about greater justice and inclusiveness in the world. This opinion, which has never been confirmed by the facts, expresses a crude and naïve trust in the goodness of those wielding economic power and in the sacralized workings of the prevailing economic system.”

# Laudato Si' (2015 Francis)

## On care of our common home

- Not really about global warming
- Extending the ideas of Rerum Novarum not just to international relations but to how we use resources
- Concern for the natural world is no longer optional but an integral part of Church teaching on social justice
- a biting critique and call for action.
  - "Although the post-industrial period may well be remembered as one of the most irresponsible in history, nonetheless there is reason to hope that humanity at the dawn of the twenty-first century will be remembered for having generously shouldered its grave responsibilities."

“As often occurs in periods of deep crisis which require bold decisions, we are tempted to think that what is happening is not entirely clear ... Such evasiveness serves as a licence to carry on with our present life-styles and models of production and consumption. This is the way human beings contrive to feed their self-destructive vices: trying not to see them, trying not to acknowledge them, delaying the important decisions and pretending that nothing will happen.”

(Some of the wealthy) “have not the slightest idea of what to do with their possessions, vainly showing off their supposed superiority and leaving behind them so much waste which, if it were the case everywhere, would destroy the planet”.

“It must be said that some committed and prayerful Christians, with the excuse of realism and pragmatism, tend to ridicule expressions of concern for the environment. Others are passive; they choose not to change their habits and become inconsistent.”

“The warming of the planet is a symptom of a greater problem: the developed world's indifference to the destruction of the planet as they pursue short-term economic gains. This has resulted in a "throwaway culture" in which unwanted items and unwanted people, such as the unborn, the elderly, and the poor, are discarded as waste.”

“A politics concerned with immediate results, supported by consumerist sectors of the population, is driven to produce short-term growth. In response to electoral interests, governments are reluctant to upset the public with measures which could affect the level of consumption or create risks for foreign investment. The myopia of power politics delays the inclusion of a far-sighted environmental agenda within the overall agenda of governments.”



“In the present state of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably, a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters. This option entails recognizing the implications of the universal destination of the world’s goods... it demands before all else an appreciation of the immense dignity of the poor in the light of our deepest convictions as believers.”

# Key issues

- We no longer see God as the Creator.
- So we see "other living beings as mere objects subjected to arbitrary human domination"
- Instead of viewing humanity as having "dominion" over the earth, we must see that everything is interconnected and that all of creation is a "kind of universal family".
- Nature cannot be seen as something apart from humanity, or merely the place where we live.
- Our social and environmental crises are thus one complex crisis that must be solved holistically
  - “we cannot presume to heal our relationship with nature and the environment without healing all fundamental human relationships.”

# Differences from Gore et al

- Francis criticises eco-capitalism and technoscience that might clean the water and the air, or cope with rising sea levels,
- but would still preserve the cult of unlimited growth
  - and promote open-ended consumption, reinforce an inequitable distribution of goods,
  - and protect a market economy that continues to ravage the poor
  - an approach that “leads to the planet being squeezed dry beyond every limit.”

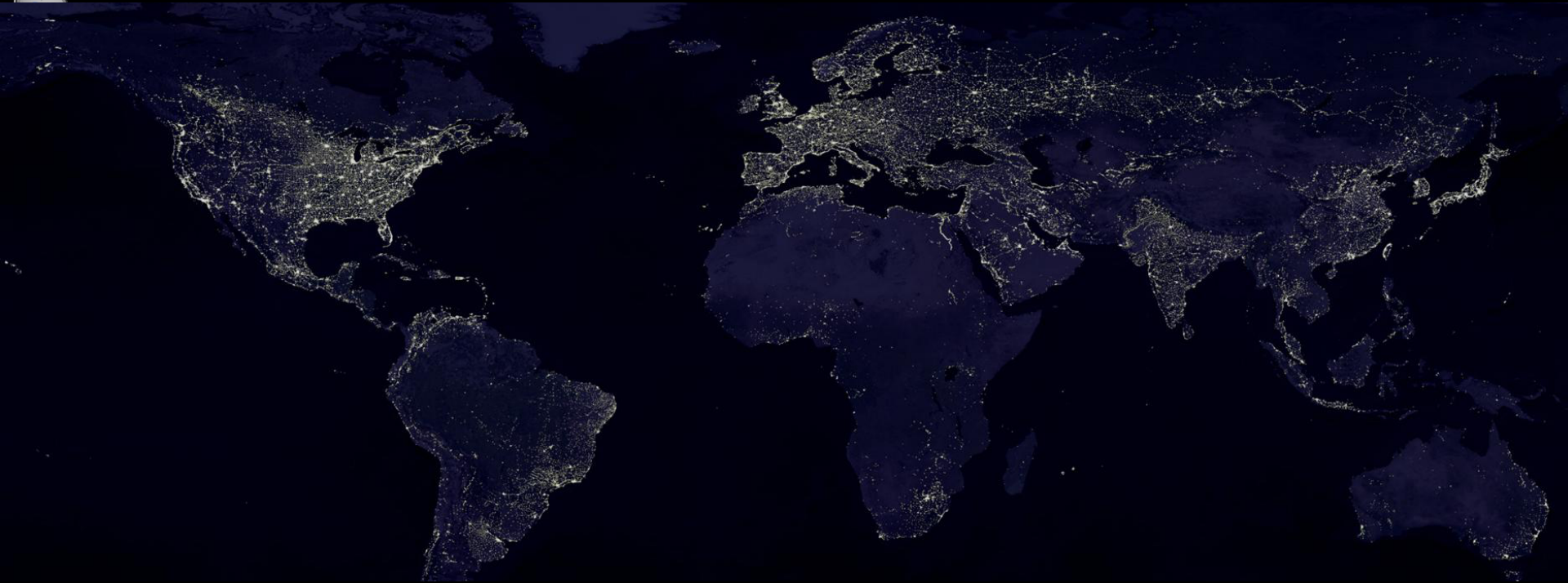
- There are not “two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but ... one complex crisis which is both social and environmental.”
- “A sense of deep communion with the rest of nature cannot be real if our hearts lack tenderness, compassion and concern for our fellow human beings.”
- Rather than being indignant we are hardly aware of the poor.
  - “the globalisation of indifference”.

- “Some strategies for lowering pollutant gas emissions call for the internationalization of environmental costs, which would entail imposing on countries with fewer resources burdensome commitments to reducing emissions comparable to those of the more industrialized countries. Imposing such measures penalizes those countries most in need of development. A further injustice is perpetrated under the guise of protecting the environment. As usual, the poor end up paying the price. ... there is a need for common and differentiated responsibilities. As the bishops of Bolivia have stated, ‘the countries which have benefited from a high degree of industrialization, at the cost of enormous emissions of greenhouse gases, have a greater responsibility for providing a solution to the problems they have caused.’”

- “In order to make society more human, more worthy of the human person, love in social life—political, economic and cultural—must be given renewed value, becoming the constant and highest norm for all activity.’...social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation and to encourage a ‘culture of care’ which permeates all of society. When we feel that God is calling us to intervene with others in these social dynamics, we should realize that this too is part of our spirituality, which is an exercise of charity and, as such, matures and sanctifies us.”

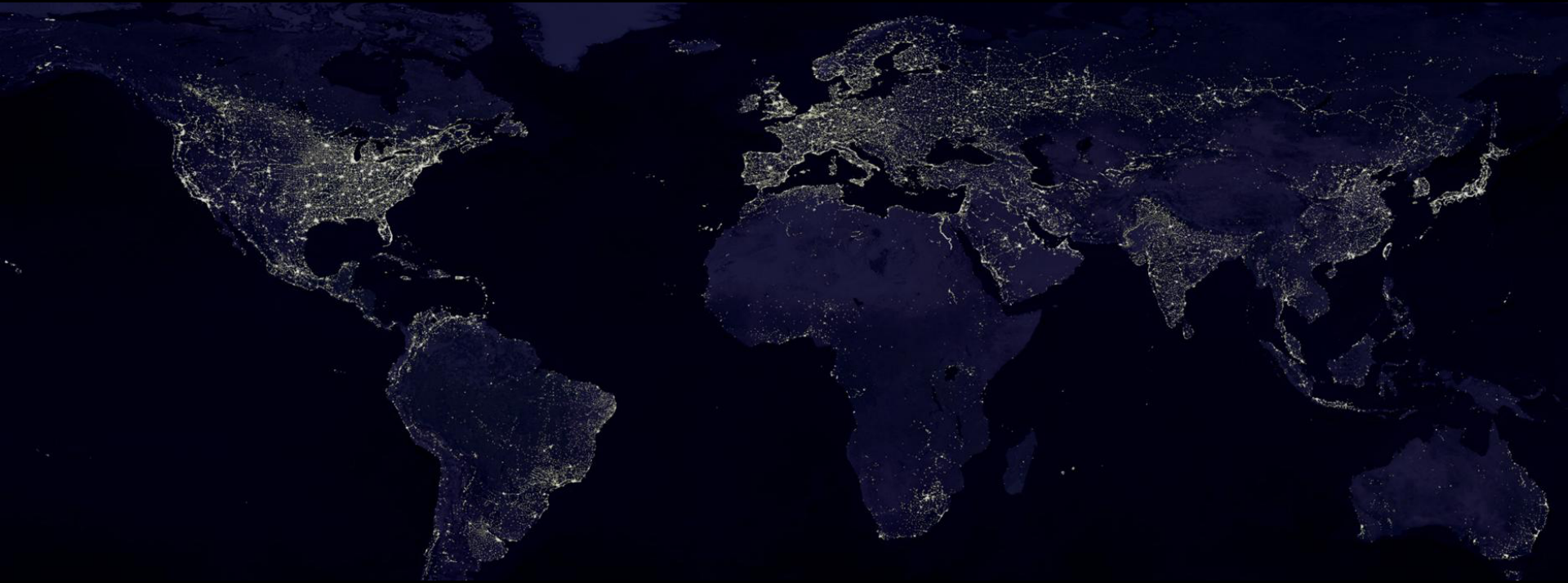
# Key themes of Catholic Social Justice Teaching

- Dignity of the human person
  - Right to life, living wage – for all
- Subsidiarity
  - The role of people in power is to look after the good of all
- Solidarity
  - Commit ourselves to the good of all
- The common good
  - Life is meant to be in relationship with others
- Preferential option for the poor
  - Despite our vast wealth, many miss out
- Stewardship of creation
  - We are responsible for the world we live in because we are responsible for each other

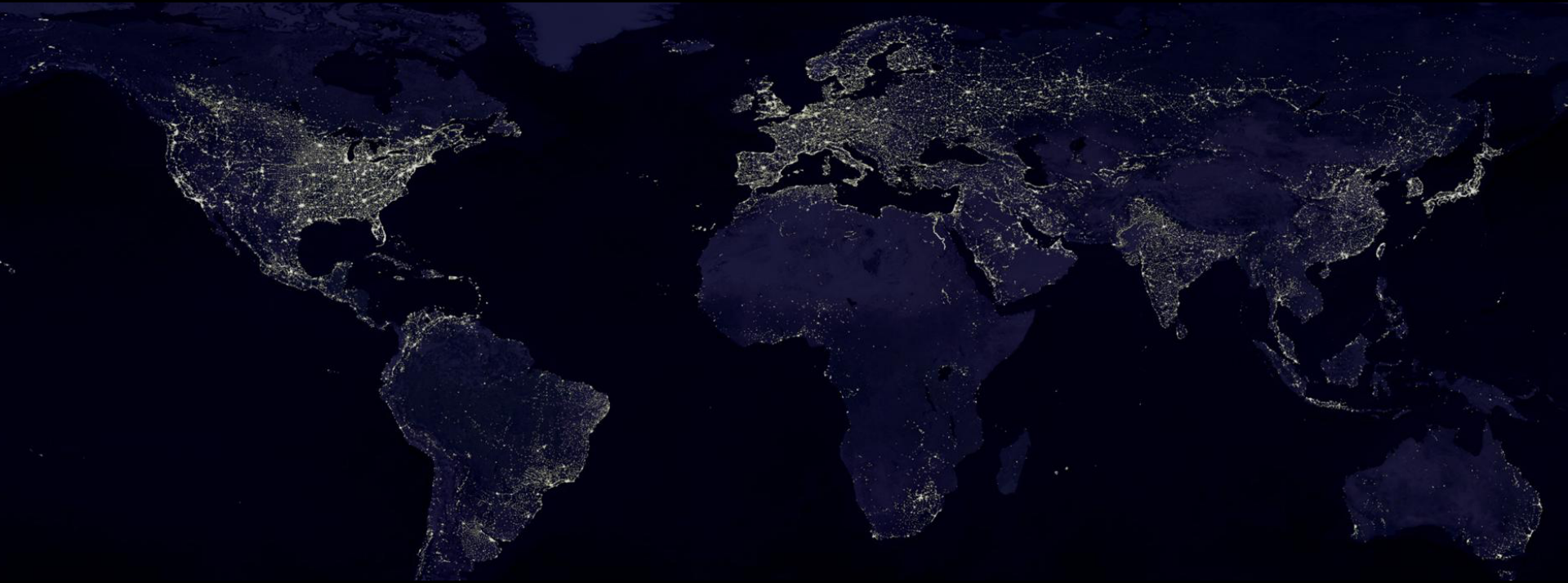


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You are there when we call on your name.  
You are there, always the same.  
You are there in the softness of the rain.  
Always there.



You are there at the end of a life.  
You are there to lead us to light.  
You are there at the baby's first cry.  
Always there.

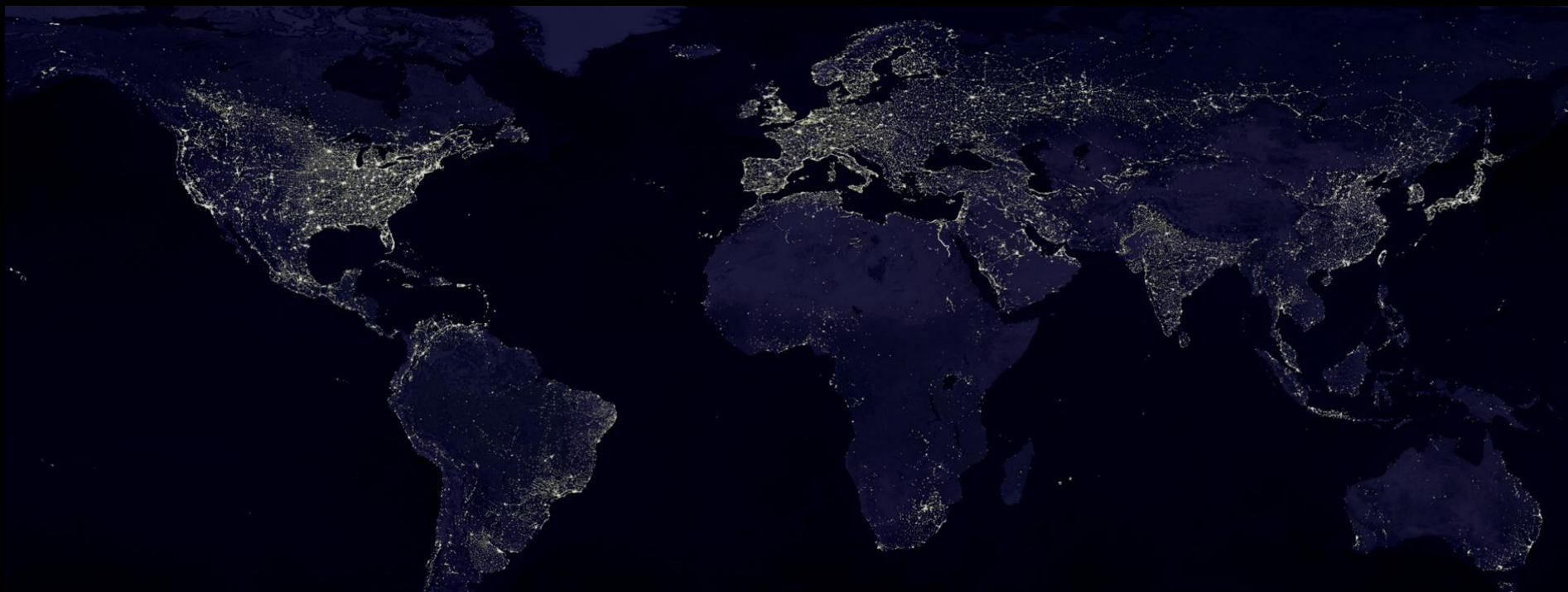


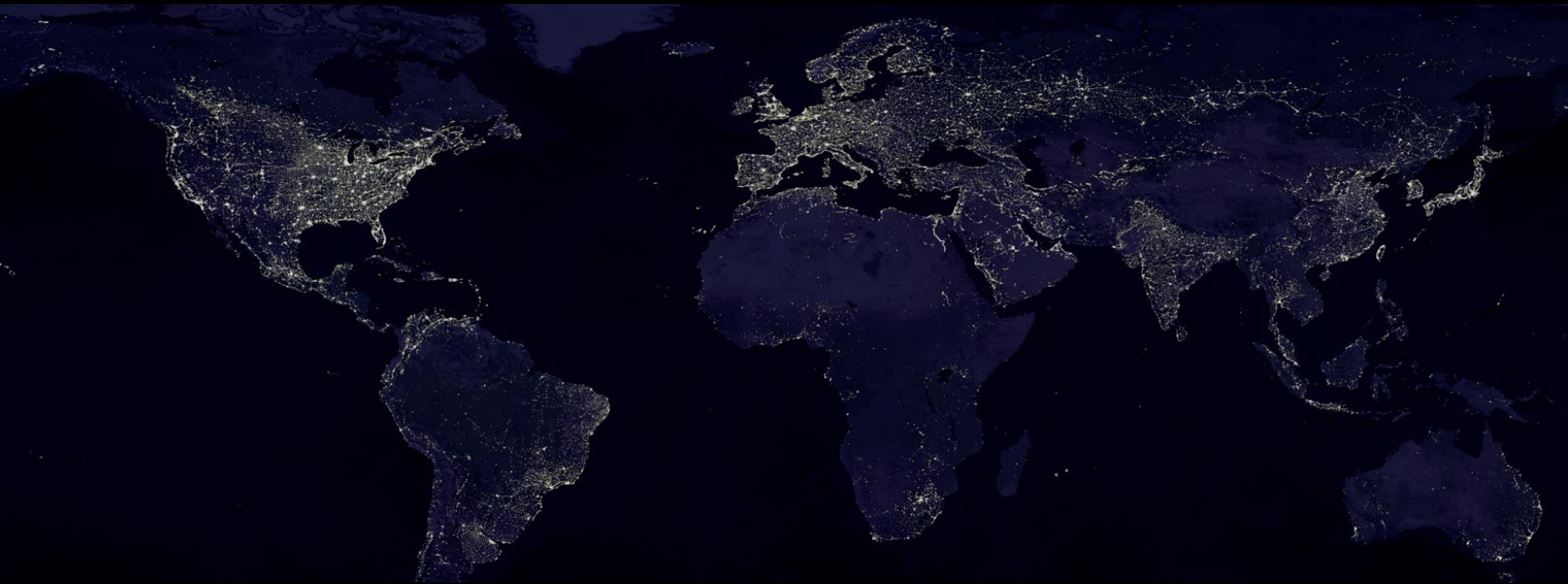
You are there like a mist on a hill.  
You are there in the factory and mill.  
You are there for the beggar and the king.  
Always there.





You are there in the forest and street.  
You are there in the faces we meet.  
You are there in the hungry and weak.  
Always there.





You are there when we call on your name.  
You are there, always the same.  
You are there in the softness of the rain.  
Always there.