



# The Future of Christian Democracy

**Sohrab Ahmari, with responses from Joseph A. McCartin, Lisa Sowle Cahill,  
Patrick McKinley Brennan, and John J. Dilulio Jr.**

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## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Writing about the potential of labor unions to secure fair wages and working conditions, Sohrab Ahmari says that “the Catholic task is to repair and reempower...unions” in the face of the AI “Torment Nexus.” Are unions a powerful enough antidote to AI’s power? Why is this a particularly Catholic task? What contemporary policies might help reinvigorate the bargaining power of unions and other associative bodies?
2. While Ahmari calls for compromise between conservatives and progressives on the subject of AI and labor, Joseph A. McCartin points out that Ahmari ignores other pressing issues like mass deportation, union busting, and the defunding of aid programs. Is there a single issue that stands out among these as the most pressing? Is it possible to prioritize the challenges we face? If so, what do you perceive to be the most important issue for Americans to collaborate on now?
3. According to Ahmari, both Pope Leo XIII and Karl Marx recognized that class-based antagonism was essential to market societies. For Ahmari, “an awareness of such constitutive antagonism” is the first principle of a Catholic social doctrine. Why would this awareness be so important?
4. In “The Primacy of Politics,” Lisa Sowle Cahill revises Sohrab Ahmari’s principles of Catholic social teaching. Do you agree with her analysis and revision? What would you change or add to her list?
5. Quoting C. S. Lewis, John J. Dilulio Jr. writes that Christian Democrats should resist AI and commit to “doing sensible and human things” without AI’s help or interference. Do you use AI, and in what ways? Are you concerned about the increasing prevalence of AI in daily life? Why or why not? What activities make you feel human and grounded amid rapid technological development?
6. Patrick McKinley Brennan argues that the leadership of nations should be “wholly conformed to the principles of Christian wisdom.” Is it possible—or desirable—to enact policies informed by Christian wisdom in America’s multireligious society? How could lawmakers integrate Christian wisdom while still upholding American values of religious freedom and the separation of church and state?

## SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER READING & LISTENING:

Phil Christman, “Creatures, not Calculators,” September 2025:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/phil-christman-economics-mill-hayek-christians>

Regina Munch, “The Case Against Consolidation,” June 2023:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/anti-trust-consolidation-economy-sandel-reich-mccarraher>

Anthony Annett, “A Conservative’s Case for Social Democracy,” December 5, 2023:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/sohrab-ahmari-social-democracy-anthony-annett-fdr-roosevelt>

*The Commonwealth Podcast*, “The Counterweight: The Common Good & American Liberalism,” September 11, 2025:

<https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/podcast/counterweight-common-good-american-liberalism>