Food Justice and Nutrition:
Catholic Social Thought and Fast Food Companies

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The rapid pace of the global population increase has placed a great amount of strain and concern on the production of resources to meet the needs of the people. This is especially seen in how people produce and consume food. Given the fast-paced lifestyle of urban workers as well as its affordability, efficiency, and taste, fast food has become a primary way of consuming food. This comes with many advantages and disadvantages, as well as implications for people who consume fast food frequently. Thus, while there are other issues related to food ethics such as the proper stewardship of the earth's resources and the issue of population control, this paper will tackle the ethics of fast food and food justice using the see-judge-act framework or pastoral cycle.

See: The Fast Food Industry

Fast food has become a staple in many cultures all over the world. The existence of the "Big Mac Index" in economics as a "lighthearted guide" to currency alignment, based on the purchasing power parity, shows that fast food has affected many people in many different ways, not just as a way of feeding oneself.[1]

1 D. H. and L. D., "The Big Mac Index," 16 July 2015, *The Economist*, http://www.economist.com/content/big-mac-index (accessed 6 September 2015).

Broadly speaking, fast food can mean any food which is prepared and served quickly, often with prepared or precooked ingredients. This has many advantages, taking into account the contemporary context. First, the quick preparation and service time, as well as the efficiency in getting food to the diners, means time is not wasted, and so most people have more time for other things, such as work, leisure, or taking care of children. Second, efficiency, ideally, also means less food wastage, as fast food companies are able to predict and plan for demand and thus make only what is necessary for the day. Third, different fast food cuisines allow people to taste different foods that one would normally have found available in the locality, without necessarily being expensive. Taco Bell, for example, allows people to taste Mexican food in the Philippines— while these franchises may enculturate their food to suit the tastes of the people, it still allows people a glimpse into the food of other countries.

Alongside the positive aspect of this industry, fast food is also critiqued for its other influences on society. The most common charge against fast food is that it is not nutritious and is actually detrimental to the health of a person; similar to the criticisms hurled at the tobacco industry—that their product is addictive and harmful—fast food likewise can also be quite addicting and harmful if eaten as often as people eat it today. A documentary titled “Supersize Me” details the weight gain and nutrition changes a man undergoes after eating only McDonald’s food: in a month, he gains nearly twenty-four pounds, and his cholesterol and the fat in his liver increased as well, with doctors stating that his chances of having a heart attack may have increased permanently, even if he loses the

weight he gained over the month.[2] The documentary may sound exaggerated, but more and more people eat fast food on a daily basis, rather than the prescribed frequency of once a month, without choosing what to eat from the menu wisely nor coupling their diet with exercise. In the United States alone, a third of the children aged four to nineteen eat fast food regularly, and in the Philippines, families often eat out—at least once a week—at a fast food or casual dining restaurant.[3] The presence of high fructose corn syrup in the condiments and food is actually quite addicting and makes people want to come back for more. However, the ingredients used, which are not healthy options, are often the cheapest and quickest to prepare, and fast food chains prioritize the affordability and convenience over nutrition value, as this equates to a higher turnover of sales in a day and thus more profit.

Healthy bodies are not simply made by going to the gym—a bad diet would negate any gain one can get through exercise. The correlation between fast food and the rising obesity rates and instances of heart attack and other diseases related to bad diets thus cannot be ignored, as it is not simply nutritional content that is being questioned, but also portion sizes. Fast food companies have also been critiqued regarding the portion sizes of their food, which are often double or triple what a person should actually eat in one sitting, with a number of calories in one sitting equal to the daily recommended requirement of calories in one day. A controversial case—one among many—was also filed against McDonald's in the United States by people who purportedly became obese

2 Morgan Spurlock, *Supersize Me*, DVD, Documentary, 2004.
3 "Consumer Food Service in the Philippines," *Euromonitor International - Analysis*, http://www.portal.euromonitor.com/portal/analysis/tab (accessed September 24, 2015).

due to eating too much McDonald's.[4]

On the other hand, another man claims that one can eat McDonald's frequently, for so long as one does exercise regularly and limits one's nutrition and caloric intake to the prescribed numbers for one's body weight and age. His diet was also from McDonald's, but he planned his meals and limited his intake to two thousand calories and the prescribed nutrition for his height and age, usually eating the other value meals for lunch or dinner. He also walked for forty-five minutes a day. At the end of this experiment that lasted for three months, this man lost thirty-seven pounds and was even able to lower his cholesterol levels.[5] He thus wished to emphasize the importance of choice and discretion in choosing one's diet, and that there is no such thing as good or bad food, but rather good or bad choices in how one eats food.

Another common charge against fast food is how it manufactures its prepared and pre-cooked ingredients. Fast food restaurants have been accused of raising animals for their meals in inhumane ways, often crammed in places with limited ventilation, in order to maximize profit and minimize cost. An example is that of the case of Kentucky Fried Chicken, or KFC, where they have been accused of growing their chickens in cages, where they walk on their waste material and are drugged to grow bigger and meatier—to the point that their wings and legs break due to their large size and inability to

4 Jonathan Benloulouo, "Pelman v. McDonald's: An In-Depth Case Study of a Fast Food & Obesity Lawsuit." April 2005, Harvard University, https://dash.harvard.edu/bitstream/handle/1/8852143/Benloulou05.pdf?sequence=1.

5 Margot Peppers, "Man Lost 37lbs and Lowered His Cholesterol by Eating Only McDonald's," 3 January 2014, Mail Online, http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2533353/Forget-Super-Size-Me-Man-loses-37lbs-lowers-cholesterol-eating-McDonalds-three-months.html (accessed 6 September 2015).

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carry themselves.[6] Organizations against animal cruelty have opposed the ways fast food chains grew and slaughtered their animals for the food served at fast food chains. Undercover videos showing the brutal conditions of the animals as they are raised and finally slaughtered to become the ingredients used in fast food meals have gone viral and have made people more conscious about how their food is made.

This injustice is not just in the realm of caring for animals to be used in food—this extends to the vegetables and fruits harvested as part of the ingredients used in fast food. The working conditions of farmers and fruit and vegetable pickers have been described as modern-day slavery, with migrant workers having to work every day, living in squalid conditions, and being paid less than a living wage. Similar to the plight of the Thai agricultural workers in Israel documented by Human Rights Watch, the workers and pickers of tomatoes for Pizza Hut, Taco Bell, Wendy's, and Burger King in the United States are poorly paid by the wealthy growers and landowners.[7] The situation these workers in the United States find themselves in, majority of whom are migrants, is similar to the situation of farmers here in the Philippines—the people who themselves grow food are the ones who are hungry. The average Filipino farmer earns roughly PHP 23,000 or USD 529 a year, compared to the Chinese farmer who earns 6,000 Yuan or USD 967, or the Thai farmer who earns 44,000 Thai

6 "Treatment of Animals," *The Unhealthy Truth*, http://fastfoodnation-honorsproject.weebly.com/treatment-of-animals.html, (accessed 6 September 2015).

7 Miriam Alster, "Israel: Serious Abuse of Thai Migrant Workers," 16 July 2014, *Human Rights Watch,* https://www.hrw.org/news/2015/01/21/israel-serious-abuse-thai-migrant-workers (accessed 14 September 2015) and Robert Gottlieb and Anupama Joshi, *Food Justice: Food, Health, and the Environment*, 1st MIT Press paperback ed., (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 2013), 15.

Baht, or USD 1,370 a year.[8] Despite being so crucial to the value chain, being the farmers who grow the food that fast food industries need to feed their customers, the labor conditions they find themselves in are inhumane.

While there are other critiques levied against the fast food industry, such as accusations of shifting the eating patterns and habits of people from natural and traditional food to fast food, this paper would like to stick to these two issues: the nutrition value found in fast food, as well as the way the ingredients are sourced, raised and manufactured.

Judge: The Ethics of Fast Food

What can Catholic social thought say about the fast food industry and its effects on people today? First, certainly it would laud the efforts of the fast food industry to serve food in a convenient and timely manner while ensuring quality, taste, and affordability. The fast food industry also encourages creativity and innovation in coming up with good food for their customers. Such creativity and innovation are what help humanity develop and become better, and they are able to serve society, especially in the realm of food, which is a necessity for people to survive. *Pacem in Terris* explicitly states that "man has the right to live. He has the right to bodily integrity and to the means necessary for the proper development of life, particularly food, clothing, shelter, medical care, rest, and finally, the necessary social services."[9] As such, it is

8 Pia Ranada, "Pangilinan: Want Economic Growth? Put Farmers, Fisherfolk First," 15 July 2014, *Rappler*, http://www.rappler.com/business/industries/247-agriculture/63313-pangilinan-economic-growth-farmers-fishermen-first. (accessed 24 September 2015).

9 John XXIII, On Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty (Pacem in Terris), 11 April 1963, Vatican Archive, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/

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important to ensure that even with the limited resources that the earth has, we are able to be proper stewards and use these well in order to be able to let everyone have their due. Fast food helps make food more accessible to people through their efficient manufacturing process and as well as the ability to keep costs and prices low.

However, while the industry's efficiency, fast service time, and service to society are laudable, its effects on the health of people cannot be ignored. Poor health affects the person's entire life: his or her ability to work, to rest and develop other skills in leisure, and even his or her relationships with other people. Catholic social thought makes it clear that people are ends in themselves and not simply a means towards self-profit. While *Pacem in Terris* does not specify what kind of food people are entitled to, the implication is that this food should also be in line with the development of men and women, which is their right as well as part of their responsibility in order to take care of others and the rest of creation. Thus, food that contributes to one's health rather than derails it is what is needed.

Populorum Progressio also makes it clear that the development of people involves helping people escape from hunger, disease, and ignorance—people are "trying to secure a sure food supply, cures for diseases, and steady employment."[10] The document also talks about "truly human conditions," such as having access to life's necessities.[11] This includes access to good food, aside from shelter, clothing, and healthcare.

hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html (accessed October 2, 2015).

10 Paul VI, Populorum Progressio [On the Development of Peoples], 26 March 1967, Vatican Archive, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum.html (accessed 29 October 2015), par. 21.

11 Ibid.

Integral evangelization and development highlight the need to take care of not just the spiritual but also the temporal needs of people well, and as such, fast food that is not nutritious is not responding the temporal needs of a person well if it negatively affects a person's health, both physically by way of obesity or other heart-related diseases, or mentally by way of decreased intellectual capacity due to malnutrition. While one could argue that the affordability and availability of food is good and this, in a way, contributes to ending world hunger as more people now have access to affordable food which is prepared quickly, *Populorum Progressio* would emphasize that it is not simply about ending world hunger, or about a freedom from debilitating human conditions, rather, it is about "truly human conditions," building a community where people use their freedom for justice, to do the good, and to live authentically human lives with meaning.[12] Food is not simply there to fill one's stomach; food allows a person to be able to do his or her work or pursue his or her passion—it allows people to grow in mind, body, and indirectly in spirit. It is not simply about quantitative growth, but all aspects of the growth of the human person. Thus, fast food should not simply aim to be a way to fill one's hunger or to be a business for profit, which can be measured quantitatively through surveys on hunger or economic indicators, but fast food should be a way for people to live authentically human lives, be nourished well in order to be able to physically and mentally fit, and be able to work and make a livelihood for oneself while also having time for leisure and family. It is not simply about getting calories to people, but also getting the right kind of calories, vitamins, and minerals to a person. In any business, then, people's lives ought to be enriched, as will also be echoed in *Caritas in Veritate*. Fast food companies should also do the same—is the

fast food being sold by the company helping people carry out their work, leisure, or relationships, thus working toward the common good?

Octogesima Adveniens also highlights the phenomenon of urbanization, where people are drawn to city centers where there is more growth, technology, and industry, as well as opportunities to prosper. This changing lifestyle of urbanization affects "the family, the neighborhood, and the very framework of the Christian community."[13] The shift from the rural to urban areas, from an agrarian society with the cottage industry as a primary source of food and livelihood to a society that now focuses on technological industry, has also brought about shifts in how we eat. Rather than planting, raising, and harvesting our food, we now simply go to a supermarket to buy our groceries for the week—this is part of the "signs of the times" that we ought to reflect upon. The Church, aware that this shift has introduced much progress, has also acknowledged that it has also introduced new ethical and moral issues—"the Church directs her attention to those new 'poor'—the handicapped and maladjusted, the old, different groups of those on the fringe of society, and so on—in order to recognize them, help them; defend their place and dignity in a society hardened by competition and the attraction of success."[14] While it may not mention this explicitly, fast food that is simply quick and cheap, but with no nutritive value, can end up contributing to the "new poor" in the form of the obese and overweight. While it is not good

13 Paul VI, Apostolic Letter of Pope Paul VI on the Occasion of the Eightieth Anniversary of the Encyclical Rerum Novarum (Octagesima Adveniens), 14 May 1971, Vatican Archive, http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-vi_apl_19710514_octogesima-adveniens.html (accessed 3 November 2015).

14 Ibid., par. 15.

for them to choose such unhealthy food, if fast food is what is available, they may have no choice but to eat fast food, and in becoming obese, put themselves at risk not just for physical disease and disabilities, but also for discrimination.

While obesity bias in itself should also be tackled as a prejudice that should be torn down, that would be another topic altogether and would need more elaboration in another paper; however, suffice to say that this becomes part of the "various forms of discrimination that continually reappear."[15] A study in the International Journal of Obesity cited by TIME magazine indicates that obese women tend to have lower pay and are seen with less leadership or business potential by employers, compared to those who have the right body mass index.[16] Obesity bias is a new way of discriminating against people in the workplace, and have also become marginalized, alongside the old and the handicapped. There is a tendency to identify obese people with laziness, sloppiness, disorganization, and disgusting habits, and since some obese people may have difficulty doing the usual things people with a normal weight can due to their weight, or may come across as always sweating or out of breath, these occurrences reinforce the stereotype. Thus, in offering nutritious fast food gives people a choice as to whether or not they want to eat healthily, this helps lessen the chance of unhealthy eating and binge eating among people, which often leads to obesity. In offering fast food which is not simply full of empty calories, sugar, and oil, we allow for people to actually use their freedom to consciously choose to eat well, rather than having a structure

15 Ibid., par. 23.

16 Josh Sanburn, "Why Being Overweight Could Earn You a Lower Salary," 2 May 2012, Time, http://business.time.com/2012/05/02/why-being-overweight-could-earn-you-a-lower-salary (accessed 4 November 2015).

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that simply encourages convenience and instant gratification over human dignity and the common good.[17] While convenience is good, nutrition is also of equal importance.

Food justice, in terms of the way ingredients are sourced, raised, and manufactured, is also an important issue to address. *Caritas in Veritate* makes it clear that businesses should be ethical. While urbanization, globalization, culture, financialization, and growing technology constantly reshape how business is done, there is a tendency to narrow a business's purpose and responsibility to the owners alone and to focus simply on the individual owner's needs.[18] However, it is clear that businesses have a responsibility also towards its clients, its employees, and to society in general, including the environment.[19] *Caritas in Veritate* emphasizes a key aspect of developing and running a business:

17 Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Vocation of a Business Leader: A Reflection, 2012, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace (PCJP), Vocation of a Business Leader: A Reflection, 2012, Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, last modified 2012, accessed December 30, 2014, http://www.pcgp.it/pls/pcgp/rn_pcgp_new.r_select_abstract?dicastero=2&tema=4&argomento=0&sottoargomento=0&classe=1&id=3221&lingua=2&rif=256&rif1=256lunedi (accessed 30 December 2014).

18 Ibid., par. 18-24.

19 Benedict XVI, On Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth (Caritas in Veritate), 29 June 2009, Vatican Archive, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html (accessed 5 November 2015).

> In developing programs, the principle of the centrality of the human person, as the subject primarily responsible for development, must be preserved. The principal concern must be to improve the actual living conditions of the people in a given region, thus enabling them to carry out those duties which poverty does not presently allow them to fulfill.[20]

Aside from consumers, other people, such as the company's employees and society, in general, are also affected by the company's decisions. In terms of the company's supply chain, the fast food company ought to exercise responsibility in how it sources the ingredients it needs for its operations. The tendency is to always use cheaper ingredients, without necessarily understanding or taking into account what is being used. Thus, some companies buy cheap ingredients that are made up of items that should not actually be consumed. There are reports of fake food or food that should not be consumed being produced, used as ingredients by restaurants and fast food establishments, and consumed by people. An example of this can be seen in the different documentaries highlighting all the different ingredients found in McDonald's, which are not meant to be consumed and are actually used in other products such as cigarettes, toys, and mats.[21] While the fast food that McDonald's now serves is affordable and convenient for people to eat, even the patrons themselves realize that accessibility and affordability cannot justify the so-called "frankenfood"—named because of the food being made up of all manner of ingredients that should not be in food—being served to the people.

20 Ibid., par. 47.

21 Anthony Gucciardi, "McDonald's Sales Rapidly Decline as Americans Reject Fake Food," February 11, 2015, *Natural Society*, https://lockerdome.com/7712910122173505 (accessed 5 November 2015).

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The Vocation of a Business Leader by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace also highlights what *Caritas in Veritate* also highlights. The document also focuses on the practical ethical principles of making good goods, good work, and good wealth, in order to determine whether a business is on the right track in being an ethical business. Fast food companies should thus ensure that it is making good goods—goods that truly serve a need and not simply mere wants—fast food companies should not simply be feeding into a consumerist mindset, rather it should genuinely be responding to the need of people to have access to safe, quality, affordable, convenient, and reasonably nutritious food.[22] They should also be creating good work, by "fostering dignified work," that is, work that changes the person for the better, to exercise his or her creativity and talents in satisfying the needs of this world.[23] Finally, creating good wealth means not just creating financial wealth that is equitably and justly distributed among the stakeholders of the business, but also practicing responsible stewardship of resources—whether they be environmental, capital, or human, by using sustainable methods to minimize waste and ensuring that the environment is also cared for, as it echoes *Caritas in Veritate's* exhortation for the responsible stewardship of the environment.[24]

Food justice, both in terms of how food is made and how it is consumed, is an important step towards other authentically human conditions. Catholic social thought continues to push for authentic human development and care for the environment, underpinned by the Scriptural passages of Genesis—that people are *Imago Dei* and that people are meant to be

22 *Vocation of a Business Leader*, par. 42.
23 Ibid., par. 45.
24 *Caritas in Veritate*, par. 48 and *Vocation of a Business Leader*, par. 54.

stewards of creation, as well as the stories of the prophets' justice and Jesus' mercy and compassion towards all of humanity. Food justice will ensure that people are healthy and eating well, from the bounty of the earth, but at the same time ensures sustainability in the food we can produce from the earth.

Act: Towards Food Justice and Proper Nutrition

On the one hand, legislation may be a tremendous help in making sure fast food companies adhere to certain standards in terms of what should be in the food companies sell to people. While most of the laws are focused on how raw materials are handled, processed, prepared, and stored in order to ensure that people eat clean food that will not cause sickness or focused on ensuring fair competition among the very competitive fast food chains vying for a share of people's stomachs, there are still only a few that also regulate the nutrition aspect of food—the Philippines, for example, does not have specific laws on this, though each month is dedicated to encouraging the consumption of a certain nutritious food such as corn or brown rice, as seen alongside Quezon Circle. Laws requiring fast food companies to be transparent regarding the nutrition values of their food, or regulating the density of fast food establishments in a certain area is one step towards empowering people to choose good food for themselves.[25] Other laws regarding how much trans fatty acids products or certain minimum nutrition standards food should have is also another step.[26] While these can help enforce a structure that allows for

25 "Healthy Eating," 2015, *Public Health Law Center at William Mitchell College of Law*, 2015, http://publichealthlawcenter.org/topics/healthy-eating (accessed 5 November 2015).

26 Jen Christensen, "FDA on Trans Fat: Halt Use in U.S. Food within 3 Years - CNN.com," 16 June 2015, *CNN*, http://www.

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nutritious yet convenient fast food, legislation is not enough. As *Octagesima Adveniens* puts it, "legislation is necessary, but it is not sufficient for setting up true relationships of justice and equity."[27] This also pertains to true structure that will allow for authentic human development. There ought to be a conscious choice from both the fast food companies as well as the consumers to eat fast food which is not simply fast and convenient, but also reasonably good for a person and that will actually contribute to his or her well-being.

"Today's global, industrial food culture is a culture in exile because it exhibits the marks of injustice, estrangement, and bewilderment."[28] An urgent call for justice in terms of how we manufacture and consume food is thus of paramount importance. On the part of the fast food chains and manufacturers, two things ought to be given attention: the need to offer healthier options at a reasonable price and convenience, as well as the need to responsibly source food in a sustainable way. First, in terms of healthier options, this does not have to be all organic or all salads, but certainly should not also be simply full of oil, sugar, and salt. McDonald's in the United States offers fresh fruit salad and leafy vegetable salads alongside their hamburgers and fries. However, it can be as simple as having proper portions in restaurants and fast food establishments or having alternatives for certain staples. Some school cafeterias and even cafeterias in offices here in Manila also offer brown rice as an alternative for white rice or wheat bread as an alternative to white bread. In place of the usual french-fried potatoes, some restaurants such as

cnn.com/2015/06/16/health/fda-trans-fat/index.html (accessed 5 November 2015).

27 *Octagesima Adveniens*, par. 23.

28 Norman Wirzba, *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 71.

BonChon chicken offer crispy baked sweet potatoes—baked rather than deep-fried, not just for potatoes but even for other fried foods such as the chicken of Stacker's. Jollibee offers its hashbrowns for breakfast as baked rather than fried. Other fast food restaurants such as Bigoli and Tropical Hut offer vegetable sides and fruit salads to go with people's meals. It can be slightly more expensive, but it is reasonably priced while still being tasty and quick to prepare as fast food.

Second, an example of responsible sourcing of food would be the sourcing of locally made produce or those made in compliance with the Fair Trade foundation's principles: reasonable prices, decent working conditions, and fair terms between the farmers and workers as well as the middlemen or buyers.[29] The Fair Trade organization and system provide an alternative to the usual model of trade between producers and traders of food, especially small-time farmers or rural organizations that are prone to be abused by middlemen.[30] Ingredients marked as Fair Trade compliant are those which have been certified by Fair Trade to have met certain standards on labor, climate emissions, and contract production, such as having a certain default profit margin, participating in climate change projects, and giving a certain level of wages to the employees. More and more companies are getting certified as Fair Trade, ensuring that partner producers are earning a decent livelihood, while partner traders are getting quality products at reasonable prices, and companies have also begun consciously choosing to deal with companies who

29 Fair Trade Foundation, "What Fairtrade Does," 2015, *Fair Trade Foundation*, 2015, http://www.fairtrade.org.uk/en/what-is-fairtrade/what-fairtrade-does (accessed 5 November 2015).

30 Fair Trade International, "About Fair Trade," 2011, *Fair Trade International*, http://www.fairtrade.net/about-fairtrade.html (accessed 5 November 2015).

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pass these Fair Trade requirements. Thus, it creates a system or network of producers and traders of goods that deal in fair trade and who actively choose this way of producing food: a living wage for the laborers, mitigated impact on the environment, and a reasonable return on investment for the traders and businessmen. This also presents nutritious alternative choices for people to eat healthier. Aside from the Fair Trade system, other initiatives have come from grassroots organizations, students, or local communities, persuading large fast food chains to adopt policies of sourcing food only from growers who treat their farmers well or from small-time local farmers. Pressure from communities and consumers have persuaded different fast food chains such as Burger King into more sustainable and ethical ways of getting its tomatoes, onions, and lettuce.

When people consume food, the fast food companies, as well as the people themselves, have the responsibility of ensuring that they eat good and nutritious food. On the part of the consumers, there is a need to be more conscious of one's choices. In the same way that Catholic social thought exhorts fast food companies not to compromise justice and human development in favor of convenience and instant gratification, so, too, does Catholic social thought ask the same from people when it comes to their body: do not sacrifice one's health simply for instant gratification or consumerism today. If we are to live good lives, to truly live out integral human development, it is important to nourish both the physical and the spiritual. Moderation is key in choosing and consuming food.

Food justice for workers and creation is an important topic, not just for fast food companies but for the entire food industry: from the producers, the traders, to the restaurants and

chefs, all the way to the consumers and the environment. This affects everyone deeply, as everyone is dependent on food to eat. Thus, it is important that we have a sustainable food system. This implies sustainability, not just on the level of the environment, but also on the level of consumption. We cannot continue simply consuming fast food in its current form, as it puts a strain on people's health as well as the environment's health. While its convenience and affordability contribute to the accessibility of delicious and cheap food, it has, in the end, other consequences that need to be addressed, such as obesity, diseases, and sustainable food development. This compels us to continue reflecting upon the fast food industry and to continue reflecting upon how we can improve the system, not just for our sake, but for future generations.