

Quotes on trade

Short quotes and reflections on trade from church leaders and people in the field

People often wonder why, in a society that has everything going for it economically, there is so much self-boredom, fear and potential violence in relationships. May it not be that the human heart is for love and meaning? Lesser blessings may absorb and fascinate us, but if we are treated as passive fodder for consumer markets where is the human heart going to be challenged or expanded?

We only have to think of the rubrics and liturgy of football matches, or the temple-like layout of shopping malls to realise how religious the consumer culture can become. But where does it leave the human heart? And where does it lead our culture in the long term?

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"Trade creates artificial needs and people are made to be mere consumers."
Sarath Iddamalgoda, Sri Lanka

To be a living being of any sort on this wonderful planet is to be a consumer. From amoeba to you and me is to take in, from our environment, what comes from outside. To make our own what we need, and to discard what we don't. That is what life is. That enables us also to make creative contributions. It is our joy and privilege to be consumer-producers.

This is obviously true of the food, drink and air we consume but it is also true, in a way, of the highest gifts we enjoy.

Our knowledge of ultimate truths about God and about human beings has been revealed to us by God in the incarnation and resurrection of Jesus. This faith, in the mystery held secret by God but now made known to us is "revealed", in the sense that it comes to us as gift by God's initiative. Mediated through the liturgy, scriptures and teaching of the Church, it comes to us from **outside** ourselves. And then our own *metabolism*, in which the Spirit speaks to our spirit, makes it our own.

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