Putting Catholic Social Teaching into Practice:

What's New in the USCCB Investment Guidelines?

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

Artificial Intelligence & Emerging Technology

New investment standards address AI's impact on human dignity, privacy, children, workers, health care, education, and the environment. The guidelines identify concerns including autonomous weapons, high-risk surveillance, manipulation and disinformation, and AI systems that make consequential decisions without meaningful human oversight.

New and Emerging Financial Risks

Additional guidance on cryptocurrency, prediction markets, and private equity, emphasizing ethical risks, appropriate safeguards, and oversight.

Private Prisons & Immigration Detention

A specific policy against investing in companies that build or administer private prisons or detention facilities for either criminal justice or immigration enforcement.

Environmental Stewardship

Recognizes impact of environmental destruction on indigenous communities and the need to make changes to protect the most vulnerable communities, especially in the global south. In addition, scrutinizes AI data centers' resource use and the extraction of rare-earth materials.

Stronger Investment Oversight

A more structured approach to accountability, including annual implementation reports from investment advisers, examples of shareholder engagement and proxy voting, and a focus on measurable outcomes and systemic change.

Human Dignity & Human Rights

Expanded attention to human rights, including child labor, food speculation, exploitation of personal data, and accountability for corporate practices. New provisions address companies involved in interventions intended to alter the body to express an identity incongruent with biological sex.

Three Complementary Strategies for Ethical Investment

Drawing primarily on Mensuram bonam (2022), the guidelines deepen the USCCB's three-part approach to ethical investing:
Do no harm, actively seek change, and promote the common good. Together, these strategies move beyond avoiding harmful investments to using investment as a tool for advancing human dignity and social justice.