

Summary



The Reception of Pope Leo XIII's Encyclical *Rerum novarum* in the United States of America, 1891–1919

The author of this book analyses the influence of the encyclical mentioned in the title on the situation of the Roman Catholic Church in the United States of America, and especially on how the social issue and workers' problems were perceived by the main figures in the American clergy. The basic research questions concern how sensitivity to social problems was fostered in the American clergy before and after the encyclical's publication (i.e. before and after 1891), and its influence on Catholic social teaching in the United States and on US federal legislation. The author posits that under the influence of the encyclical *Rerum novarum*, a unified social thought was formed in Catholics in the United States which was adapted to the realities and peculiarities of the American economy and society.

The work focuses on the years 1891–1919, i.e. the period between the publication of the encyclical *Rerum novarum* and the publication of the *Bishops' Program of Social Reconstruction*. However, in order to present the particular conditions in which the Catholic Church functioned in the USA and the broader context related to its attitude to what was called 'the workers' question', the author draws on the Third Plenary Synod in Baltimore in 1884. In turn, after presenting the long-term effects of the reception of the demands contained in Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, he traces the influence of the Catholic social programme on federal legislation up to the 1930s.

Translated by Rob Pagett