

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

INTRODUCTION

Social Justice can be defined as working for peace and the realization of justice in social structures that promote the well-being and development of all persons. Parishes and schools should be looking for ways to implement practical education on social justice issues e.g., economic issues: hunger, poverty, unemployment; human rights issues: race, age, sex discrimination; violence in society: crime, domestic violence, media violence, death penalty; and global interdependence issues: nationalism, war, peace. Christians have a responsibility to both personal and social morality as the Gospel commands. Social Justice education is two-fold: study and action for justice.

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION THROUGH STUDY

- Teach separately social justice education for children, youth, and adults or incorporate it into other educational endeavors by linking the strands of the Curriculum for Catechesis and curriculum for other subject areas.
- Use “teachable moments” such as moments of cultural significance, liturgical seasons, and mission education collections to address social justice issues.
- Develop special projects or units such as heroes/heroines of justice or field trips to social service agencies.
- Use the social justice resources available through the Office of Social Action and the Office of Religious Education Library and consult the Curriculum for Catechesis.
- Provide periodic in-service for catechetical personnel.
- Designate a Social Justice Coordinator to obtain and disseminate social justice materials in the parish or school or establish a committee for the purpose.

SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION THROUGH ACTION

- Join efforts with other educational institutions and/or parish committees and with other community-based organizations to support an issue.
- Organize special action projects for children, youth, and adults, e.g. adoption of charities in need; helping in soup kitchens or food pantries; contributions to overseas aid; or adoption of sister school/parish in the inner city.
- Include both charity and justice based activities.

EVALUATION

The parish catechetical leader will annually examine the parish/school involvement in Social Justice Education and provide a report to the Parish.