



Office of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry
Directory for Catechesis

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

THE CATHOLIC CHURCH TEACHES:

“The principle of the common good, to which every aspect of social life must be related if it is to attain its fullest meaning stems from the dignity, unity, and equality of all people. According to its primary and broadly accepted sense, the common good indicates “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily” (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, p 164).

“Catholic Social Teaching is based on and inseparable from our understanding of human life and human dignity. Every human being is created in the image of God and redeemed by Jesus Christ and therefore is invaluable and worthy of respect. As a member of the human family, every person, from the moment of conception to natural death, has inherent dignity and a right to life consistent with that dignity. Human dignity comes from God, not from any human quality or accomplishment” (Sharing Catholic Social Teaching Challenges and Directions, USCCB).

“With her social teaching the Church seeks to proclaim the Gospel and make it present in the complex network of social relations. It is not simply a matter of reaching out to man in society—man as a recipient of the proclamation of the Gospel—but of enriching and permeating society itself with the Gospel” (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, p 62).

“The duty of making oneself a neighbor to others and actively serving them becomes even more urgent when it involves the disadvantaged, in whatever area this may be. “As you did it to one of the least of these brethren, you did it to me” (Catechism of the Catholic Church #1932).

INTRODUCTION

Catholic Social Teaching 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., care of God's creation: responsible use of resources, pollution and climate change, global inequality; 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. Catholic Social Teaching is two-fold: study and action for justice.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING THROUGH STUDY

- Teach the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching: life and dignity of the human person; call to family, community and participation; rights and responsibilities; option for the poor and vulnerable; the dignity of work and the rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God's creation.
- Teach Catholic Social Teaching principles separately 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, current world events and mission education collections to address Catholic Social Teaching principles.
- Develop special projects or units such as heroes/heroines of integrity and compassion or field trips to agencies that provide assistance to those who are poor and vulnerable.
- Use the Catholic Social Teaching resources available through the of Faith Formation and Lay Ecclesial Ministry Library and <https://catechistcafe.weebly.com/>. Consult the Curriculum for Catechesis for learning objectives relating to CST.
- Provide periodic in-service for catechetical personnel.
- Designate a coordinator to obtain and distribute Catholic Social Teaching materials in the parish or school or establish a committee for the purpose.

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING THROUGH ACTION

- Join efforts with other educational institutions and/or parish communities and with other community based organizations to support one or more of the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching.
- Incorporate Catholic Social Teaching more fully and explicitly into Catholic educational programs and link service and action, charity and justice.
- Create additional resources and programs that will address various current issues that involve Catholic Social Teaching with all age groups.
- Focus on Catholic Social Teaching in meetings and publications, especially as public policy issues evolve.

EVALUATION

The parish faith formation leader will annually examine the parish/school involvement in Catholic Social Teaching and provide a report to the Parish.