Catholic Social Teaching

Our tradition of justice

Material for 5-10 minute group or individual reflection on the Catholic social teaching videos

Introduction:
These are seven short sessions on principles of Catholic social teaching. They are intended to be used as 5-10 minute reflections, by groups or individuals.

Situations in which they may be used could include:

- Reflection after Communion
- At the beginning or end of a meeting, such as a meeting of a Parish council, Liturgy group, Parents’ group or other organisation
- Short discussion before or after Mass, or other gathering
- Individual reflection

Each reflection starts with a short introduction, which may be read out loud to a group or silently.

The introduction is followed by a viewing of the relevant Caritas Catholic social teaching video, which is available on DVD or on the Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand website: www.caritas.org.nz/resources/cst

Some questions for reflection are provided. This could be used for silent reflection or, if there is the opportunity, for sharing briefly with another member of the group.

The reflection ends with a short prayer.
INTRODUCTION

Catholic social teaching is our tradition of justice. It is based on Scriptural foundations and the practice of the Church in caring for those in need. The teachings of the Church give us guidance how to view social and economic issues through Gospel values and ethical principles.

Human Dignity is a key principle of Catholic social teaching. Each of us is made in God’s image, which means every person has an innate human dignity – te mana i te tangata. This is given to us by God and no one can this take away.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. The Hutt Valley Benefit Education Service Trust respects and upholds the human dignity of every person receiving a benefit.

Play Caritas Human Dignity video
Available on DVD or on the Caritas website:

REFLECTION

What stood out to you from the story of Hutt Valley Benefit Education Service Trust?
Where did you see in your week, someone living out ‘active love’ in the way they upheld the dignity of others? OR think of a situation when someone’s human dignity was not upheld or respected?
How does my appreciation of how each person is made in God’s image affect the way I relate to people in need?

CLOSING PRAYER

E te Wairua Tapu, Holy Spirit, come and change our attitudes that we may see the innate dignity of every human person. Enable us to recognise the dignity and beauty in those whom others in our society may overlook. Help us to see Jesus in all those we meet. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
Catholic Social Teaching  Our tradition of justice

INTRODUCTION  (This can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually)
Catholic social teaching is our tradition of justice. It is based on Scriptural foundations and the practice of the Church in caring for those in need. The teachings of the Church give us guidance on how to view social and economic issues through Gospel values and ethical principles.

Pope Francis has drawn the attention of the whole world in both his words and deeds to the Catholic tradition of the preferential option for the poor. Having a preferential protection for the poor and vulnerable – he whakaaro nui mō te hunga rawakore – compels us to think first of the needs of those who are most vulnerable.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. Student, parish and community volunteers with the Rotorua St Vincent de Paul Full Fill van show preferential option for the poor by providing food in vulnerable communities.

Play Caritas Preferential Option for the Poor and Vulnerable video
Available on DVD or on the Caritas website:

REFLECTION  (These questions can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually. If there is an opportunity in a group, share your reflections with the person next to you)

What inspired you most about this video? Why?

Who are ‘the least of my brothers as sisters’ in our family, our workplace, our church, and our society?

Who are the groups or individuals in our community who demonstrate a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable? How do they do this?

CLOSING PRAYER
E Hēhu Karaiti, Christ Jesus, during your life on earth you were often in the company of the poor, the outcasts, the working people, the lepers and the widows, those who had nothing to give you in a material sense. Teach us to be generous and always ready to share what we have with others and to seek justice so all can have their needs met. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
**5-10 minute reflection for group or individual reflection**

**INTRODUCTION** *(This can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually)*

Catholic social teaching is our tradition of justice. It is based on Scriptural foundations and the practice of the Church in caring for those in need. The teachings of the Church give us guidance how to view social and economic issues through Gospel values and ethical principles. The principle of the common good calls us to look beyond our own personal interests to the good of each person and the good of all people. Commitment to the common good means respecting the rights and responsibilities of all people. When we make decisions, we choose to consider the good of all – he painga mā te katoa.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. Te Roopu Haurongo works for the common good by supporting whānau and at risk young people in the Bay of Plenty.

**Reflection** *(These questions can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually. If there is an opportunity in a group, share your reflections with the person next to you)*

In what ways is Te Roopu Haurongo’s approach to support whānau and young people a ‘holistic approach’ that benefits the whole community?

What are some practical ways I can make seeking the common good central to my life?

How can I challenge the decision makers around me to remember those who often miss out on opportunities and slip between the cracks in society?

**Closing Prayer**

E te Ariki, Lord, Often we hear the phrase, ‘just look after yourself’, but we know that Christ came for everyone. Because no one is excluded from his care, help us to consider the good of each and everyone in our society. Help us to commit to the common good so that everyone can have the opportunity to flourish. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
Catholic Social Teaching *Our tradition of justice*

5-10 minute reflection for group or individual reflection

**INTRODUCTION** *(This can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually)*

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Promoting participation – *nāu te rourou, nāku te rourou* – means recognising we each have something unique and important to contribute to society. We are called to be active members of our local and global communities.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. At L'Arche Kapiti people with and without disabilities live together, each participating and contributing to the life of the community in daily tasks and in decision making.

*Play Caritas Participation video*

Available on DVD or on the Caritas website:

http://www.caritas.org.nz/resources/catholic-social-teaching/participation

**REFLECTION** *(These questions can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually. If there is an opportunity in a group, share your reflections with the person next to you)*

What are some inspiring ways that L'Arche help everyone participate and contribute to the life of the community?

When is a time when you felt excluded from participation in decision or an activity?

How can we as a church be more open, welcoming, inclusive and active in our community?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

E Hēhu Karaiti, Christ Jesus, thank you for creating each of us with unique gifts and capabilities. Help us to remember that everyone has something different and beautiful to contribute to our community. Give us the patience and wisdom to see the potential in all people and work creatively to be inclusive in our day to day life. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
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5-10 minute reflection for group or individual reflection

INTRODUCTION  (This can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually)

Catholic social teaching is our tradition of justice. It is based on Scriptural foundations and the practice of the Church in caring for those in need. The teachings of the Church give us guidance how to view social and economic issues through Gospel values and ethical principles.

The environmental challenges facing our world are increasingly drawing the attention of many people to the principle of Stewardship. We are kaitiaki – guardians of the earth. Exercising stewardship is caring for the gifts God has given us, including the environment, our own personal talents and other resources.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. A project of the Sisters of Mercy in Auckland, Papatūānuku ki Taurangi, upholds the value of stewardship in their community by caring for the land and teaching people how to grow food.

Play Caritas Stewardship video

Available on DVD or on the Caritas website:
http://www.caritas.org.nz/resources/catholic-social-teaching/stewardship

REFLECTION  (These questions can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually. If there is an opportunity in a group, share your reflections with the person next to you)

How do the people at Papatūānuku ki Taurangi use their land in a way demonstrates good stewardship?

What are the resources, talents and land that we have stewardship over as individuals, communities, churches and a nation?

How can we change the way we use our resources so that people from this and future generations can have enough to enjoy the fruits of the earth?

CLOSING PRAYER

E te Atua kaha rawa, te Kaihanga o te Ao, Almighty God, you are the creator of our beautiful world. Help us to be care for the local environment in which we live. Guide us to be good stewards of the resources that you bless us with so that all people will grow and flourish. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
5-10 minute reflection for group or individual reflection

**INTRODUCTION** *(This can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually)*

Catholic social teaching is our tradition of justice. It is based on Scriptural foundations and the practice of the Church in caring for those in need. The teachings of the Church give us guidance how to view social and economic issues through Gospel values and ethical principles.

Being in solidarity is recognising others as our brothers and sisters and actively working for their good. In our connected humanity, we are invited to build relationships – whakawhānaunatanga – to understand what life is like for others who are different from us.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. Marian College and Cathedral College students in Christchurch took part in Caritas challenge to raise money for the people of Solomon Islands.

**Play Caritas Solidarity video**

Available on DVD or on the Caritas website:

http://www.caritas.org.nz/resources/catholic-social-teaching/solidarity

**REFLECTION** *(These questions can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually. If there is an opportunity in a group, share your reflections with the person next to you)*

How did the students at Marian College and Cathedral College experience solidarity through the Caritas Challenge?

Think about what you had for breakfast, the clothes you wear, the news you read - how many people have touched and worked on the various objects that we use in our day to day life?

How does an understanding we are all connected as part of our human family affect the way we live?

**CLOSING PRAYER**

E tō mātou Matua, God our Father, remind us that our brothers and sisters are not just those we meet each day, but include those who live far away. We are all connected as part of the human family. Help us to make a difference by walking in solidarity with those who face injustice or live in need. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.
5-10 minute reflection for group or individual reflection

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The principle of Subsidiarity guides the way we work in groups and communities. Taking account of subsidiarity – mana whakahaere – means ensuring decision making happen at the most appropriate level, so all those affected can contribute.

This video shows how one group is inspired by and putting into practice Catholic social teaching in their daily lives. Following the devastation of Cyclone Haiyan, the people of the Philippines are supported by Caritas Philippines and the Caritas Internationalis network to rebuild their lives. This is not a top-down approach, but one in which local communities have a say.

**Play Caritas Subsidiarity video**
Available on DVD or on the Caritas website:
http://www.caritas.org.nz/resources/catholic-social-teaching/subsidiarity

REFLECTION  *(These questions can be read out loud by a speaker, or read in silence individually. If there is an opportunity in a group, share your reflections with the person next to you)*

After Cyclone Haiyan, who are the different groups involved and what different roles did they play?

Think of a situation where you were helped by another person or an organisation. Did they uphold your dignity and show you respect? How did they do this?

How can we ensure that we are listening to people around us, that we come with an attitude of humility to the people that we seeking to serve?

CLOSING PRAYER
E te Ariki, Lord help us to work together to build up your kingdom of justice and love. As we seek to meet the needs of our brothers and sisters, remind us to come with a heart that is willing to learn and eager to listen. May we engage and partner with individuals and communities as we seek together the good of all. We ask this through Christ our Lord, Amen.