

MATERIALS FOR MISSION EDUCATION

CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING POSTERS

This mission program is based on Jesus' teachings on how we must live in the world, loving and sharing our lives with others. Jesus taught this because in each century, before and after His time on earth, there has been conflict and war, starvation of many when others have plenty, of riches gained by some at the expense of others. By following these teachings, we can bring the Light of Christ to a darkened world.

One succinct way to help children understand this is to use Catholic Social Teachings.

A Very Brief History:

Catholic Social Teaching has its roots in the Hebrew Scriptures, Jesus' tradition. Many of his teachings form the basis for what we today call Catholic Social Teaching. While his wisdom has been acted upon for centuries, it was during the upheaval of the Industrial Revolution that Pope Leo XIII called for social reform. He began writing specifically on justice issues based on scripture.

In the years since, these beliefs have been summed up into several main principles, making it easier to present this all-important information that is both an inspiration and a call to action.

A Good Start:

As educators, we need to introduce Jesus' teachings to young Catholics. Below are the basic principles. Each one is presented three times, written for different grade levels.

We suggest you take the definitions most appropriate for the grade level you teach and make posters to hang in a clubhouse, classroom, hallway, or anywhere where they are likely to be seen frequently.

The point of the posters and indeed, the point of much of the work done in mission clubs, is to help children become so familiar with Catholic Social Teachings that they view all of life through this lens. This is seeing life as Jesus did.

For grades 2-8:

These can be made simply with markers and poster board, or on a computer, as long as it is large enough to be read from a short distance. Either adults or students can make them. They could also be copied onto 8-1/2 by 11 inch paper, laminated and given to each child, to be kept in a folder, handy for whenever Mission Club work is being done.

You may want to refer to these posters when:

- Reading the stories in *TO LOVE TENDERLY* or *TO ACT JUSTLY*. Challenge students to pick out which principles are touched on in a story, either showing what happens when a principle is not followed, or the joyful result when it is followed.
- Discussing current events in the light of a Christian perspective.
- Learning about a topic such as hunger.
- Dealing with classroom conflict.

For grades preK-1:

Make posters that portray the principles with pictures from magazines, websites and newspapers. Use photos that show people of many races and cultures, and in many countries. Mission magazines, such as *Maryknoll*, and websites for UNICEF, Catholic Relief Services, Maryknoll, Mercy Corps, and Heifer International will be especially helpful. Write the principle's phrase (i.e. Stewardship) on poster board, and then add the pictures. Keep the definition nearby so you can read it to the children, discuss this with them, and talk about the pictures on the poster.

THE PRINCIPLES:

The Dignity of the Human Person

(Grades PreK-Grade 1):

God made each of us, so each of us is very special. It is not important if you are tall or small, or happy or sad. It's not important if you have many toys or no toys. What is important is that each of us is special because of God's love. And we must treat others in a caring way because they were made by God too.

(Grades 2-4):

God made every single one of us. This makes us incredibly special. It doesn't matter who we are, who our friends are, what we own, or what we look like. What matters is that we are special because we are God's creations. This means too that we must treat others with great respect and fairness because God made them too.

(Grades 5-8)

God made us. What an extraordinary work of art that makes each of us! No matter who we are, what we own, what we look like, or who our friends are, we are incredible. And we must treat all others with respect and fairness, giving them great dignity, for God made them too.

We Are Called to Live as Family and Community

(Grades preK-1):

Jesus knows that people can only be happy if they have families and friends. He tells us that we can let these important people help us. He asks us to help them too.

(Grades 2-4):

Jesus understood that people greatly need other people. We all need our families, friends and neighbors. He tells us that these important people can help us. Jesus says we must help them too. Doing this, we create a loving community.

(Grades 5-8):

Jesus knew that people need other people. None of us will ever live our lives in complete isolation. We all need our families, friends and neighbors. He tells us that it is right that in our lives we have these important people who help us. And Jesus says we must help them too. Through this, we create a loving community.

Rights and Responsibilities

(Grades preK-1):

Every single person on earth needs these things: food, water, work, clothes, a home, a school, and a doctor. Some people have what they need, but many people

don't. Jesus wants the people who already have what they need to help these others. Jesus wants us to take care of this.

(Grades 2-4):

In order to live, every single person on earth must have food, water, work, clothes, a home, school and medical care. These are called 'rights'. But many people do not have them. Jesus wants those who enjoy these rights to help their sisters and brothers obtain their rights. It is not enough to feel badly for others. Jesus says it is our responsibility to see that they receive their rights.

(Grades 5-8):

All of God's people must have food, water, work, clothes, a home, school and medical care. These are basic 'rights' and all people must have them if they are to survive and live with dignity. But many do not. Jesus wants those who do have these rights to help others get their rights. It is a 'responsibility' to see that the others get their rights.

Stewardship

(Grades preK-1):

God made the earth and sky. God made all the people all over the world. God made the pandas and puppies and butterflies and tigers and all the other animals. God made the daisies, the trees, the tomatoes and all the other plants. God made the air, the ground and the water. And, God tells us we must take good care of them. It is an important job!

(Grades 2-4):

The earth and all life on it is God's creation. We are called to take care of it because it is a holy gift from God and the only place we can live. When we make thoughtless use of the earth's resources, many people suffer. When we make poor choices about how we treat other living things (people, animals, plants), life cannot be as wonderful as God wants. Making wise choices about the care of God's creation is called good stewardship.

(Grades 5-8):

The earth and all life on it is God's Creation. God calls us to be 'stewards' of this great gift. A steward is a manager, not an owner. Each of us has an obligation to

manage the earth and its resources in a morally responsible way, because mismanagement leads to great suffering. This means using wise ecology practices and also making certain others are not hurt by wasteful or dangerous practices. It also means taking care of our own health, and using our personal property carefully.

An Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

(Grades prek-1):

You need food, water, a house, your school, a good doctor and a job for the grown-up who takes care of you. So does everybody else on the whole Earth. But there are many people who do not have these things. Jesus wants us to take extra care of these people.

(Grades 2-4):

Every person needs food, water, work, housing, school, and medical care. Those who do not have these are poor. Our Church teaches that these brothers and sisters must be treated with extra respect and extra care and given what they need. Those who are not poor must share what they have with the others.

(Grades 5-8):

All people must have food, water, work, housing, school, and medical care. Those who do not are 'poor'. People who are more likely than others to be abused, neglected, or cheated, are 'vulnerable'. Our Church teaches that poor and vulnerable people must be treated with extra respect and care and given what they need. Those people who are not poor must share what they have with those who are poor. Those who are strong and safe must work to make others less vulnerable.

Dignity and Rights of Workers

(Grades prek-1):

All people work in some way. Their work should be safe and helpful to them because God made them and loves them. By our work, we help ourselves and others, and we show our love to God.

(Grades 2-4):

All persons work. There are many kinds of work. In each job, workers deserve to have safe conditions, reasonable hours, and fair wages. They deserve this because they are made by God. Our work gives us the means to live, but it can also be a chance to use the talents God gives us. Our work is our way of cooperating with God to create our world.

(Grades 5-8):

Through our work, we earn what we need to live. It can also be a chance to use the talents God gives us. In fact, it is our way of working with God to create our world. As work is so important on many levels, it is very important that in every job, each worker has safe conditions, reasonable hours and fair wages.

Solidarity

(Grades prek-1):

All people are God's children. That makes us brothers and sisters. We are connected to each other. It is as if everyone in the world held hands! We can be very different from each other, but we are still one family—God's family.

(Grades 2-4):

The world's peoples are interdependent. That means we need each other. We must work together if we are to go on living. And, when we share our lives with our sisters and brothers around the world, we will become the best we can be. Even though there are huge differences among us, we are still one family—the family of God.

(Grades 5-8):

The world's people are interdependent. That means we rely on each other for almost all of our bodily and social needs. Our languages, medical knowledge, food production and art are just a few examples of how humans have always worked together. Even though there are huge differences amongst us, we are still one family—the family of God. This means we should view family not just as our immediate relatives, nor just our neighborhood, or even just our country. Our family is all the people in the world. As a family, we must not only tolerate differences, but appreciate them. As a family, we must care about the well being of each other, making sure other family members have what they need and are being treated fairly.