

Rooted Growing Reaching Transforming

REACHING OUT... TO TRANSFORM THE WORLD

JUSTICE: *All are welcome, especially those most in need.*

As a virtue, it is the constant and permanent determination to give everyone his or her rightful due. It is a habitual inclination of the will and therefore always recognizes each one's rights, under any and all circumstances.

TIMELINE: March

READINGS: Matthew 25: 34-35

VIRTUES: Assertiveness, integrity, loyalty, tolerance

TEACHER REFLECTIONS: How is the key message of "All are welcome, especially those most in need" reflected in your school/workplace, your role, and your personal life?

SOCIAL SKILLS PROGRAMMING:

FIRST NATIONS/METIS CONNECTIONS:

WE CELEBRATE:

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES:

STUDENT REFLECTIONS:

Prayer Liturgy for Schools

Theme: Justice

Opening Song: (see table of suggested songs)

Leader: Let us begin our celebration with the sign of our faith.
In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us pray.
God, our loving Father, you have promised that those who work for
peace will be called your daughters and sons. Help us to work
without stopping for that justice that brings true and lasting peace.
We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Prince of Peace.

All: Amen.

Leader: Let us listen carefully to the Word of God.

*Readings should always be proclaimed clearly and loudly from a
Bible or lectionary.*

Choose one of the following options:

Reader 1: A reading from the book of the prophet Jeremiah

Thus says the LORD: Do not let the wise boast in their wisdom,
do not let the mighty boast in their might,
do not let the wealthy boast in their wealth;
but let those who boast boast in this,
that they understand and know me, that I am the LORD;
I act with steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth,
for in these things I delight, says the LORD.

The Word of the Lord.

OR

Reader 1: A reading from the book of the prophet Micah.

He has told you, O mortal, what is good;
and what does the LORD require of you
but to do justice,
and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?

The Word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Psalm Response: Psalm 112 (CBW III #124)

Gospel Acclamation: *Choose one that is familiar to your school community.*

Leader: A reading from the gospel according to John.

All: Glory to you, O Lord.

Leader: Jesus said, 'I can do nothing on my own.
As I hear, I judge; and my judgment is just,
because I seek to do not my own will
but the will of him who sent me.

The gospel of the Lord.

All: Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ.

Leader: *You may now share a prepared reflection on the readings that were just proclaimed and how they relate to the school community.*

Some points that you may wish to include are these:

- ⇒ As followers of Jesus, our mission is to work for justice and peace in our communities through the Church's social teaching.*
- ⇒ Encourage students to think of ways that they can, in their school and homes, promote the dignity of the human person, option for the poor, solidarity with the less fortunate, etc.*

Leader: Knowing how much God loves us and listens to our needs, we now bring those needs before God.

1. For all church leaders, called to be models of justice and peace for the people they serve, we pray to the Lord.
2. For leaders of countries, may they be led by the Spirit to pursue peaceful and good living conditions for their people, we pray to the Lord.
3. For people throughout the world who are struggling to achieve justice and peace, we pray to the Lord.
4. For our school community of _____, as we strive to act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with our God, we pray to the Lord.
5. For our own personal intentions that we hold deep in our hearts, we pray to the Lord.

Leader: Making what we hear and believe part of our everyday lives takes commitment and willingness. As a sign of our willingness to build up our community in this school, let us offer each other a sign of peace and reconciliation.

The community of Jesus' followers asked Jesus to teach them how to pray. He answered by teaching them to pray to their father in heaven and so we too can join in their prayer:

All: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. Lead us not into temptation and deliver us from evil. Amen.

Leader: Let us pray.
 Lord, with humble hearts, let us commit ourselves to the pursuit of God's promise of life abundant, life with dignity and worth, life with justice and peace for our brothers and sisters in neighbouring countries who, amidst their pain and suffering, continue to hope. We ask this in the name of Jesus, the Lord.

All: Amen.

Leader: May the God of hope give us faith in believing.
 May the God of love give us joy in our living.
 May the God of peace give us peace in all ways and all times.
 May we be blessed in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Closing Song: (see table or choose another song that fits the theme)

Music Suggestions (could work for either opening or closing)

CBW III	Spirit and Song
As We Gather at Your Table #583	Be Not Afraid # 170
Only This I Want #516	Christ Be Our Light #105
City Of God #345	Go Make a Difference #113
Here I am, Lord #520	Let the River Flow # 125
	Lead Me Lord # 107
	The Cry of the Poor #63
	With One Voice # 147

Prayer for the Millennium Goals

In a world where so many go hungry,
let us make the fruits of Creation
available for all.

In a world where one billion of our brothers and sisters
do not have safe drinking water,
let us help the waters run clear.

In a world where so many children
die so young,
and so many mothers die in childbirth,
and so many families
are ravaged by disease,
let us bring health and healing.

In a world where women carry
such heavy burdens,
let us recognize and restore
the rights of all.

Let us join together,
with a new sense of global community,
a new awareness
of our need for one another
and for this fragile planet,
to meet the clear challenges
of the Millennium Goals,
to bring hope as substantial as bread,
to make human dignity
as visible as wheat in the fields.

*From "Education for Justice," www.educationforjustice.org.
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The Voice of the Voiceless World

Creator God,
how can we fail to gather all humankind into prayer,
since your Divine Son, our brother Jesus Christ,
shed his blood for all people of all lands, of all times?

But hear, O Lord, my special prayer, for my people,
the voiceless ones.

There are thousands and thousands of human
creatures in poor countries and in the slums of
rich countries, with no right to raise their voices,
no possibility of claiming or protesting,
however just are the rights they have to uphold.

The homeless, the starving, the ragged, the wasted,
with no chance of education, no work, no future, no hope;

They may end up believing it was meant to be,
and losing heart –
become the silent, the voiceless ones.

If all of us who believed in you
had helped our rich brothers and sisters
by opening their eyes and stirring their consciences,
unjust people would not have advanced
and the gap between rich and poor,
between individuals and groups,
between countries,
even between continents would not be so glaring.

Do in us, O Lord, what we have failed and still fail to do.
How difficult it is to get beyond the barrier of aid,
of gifts, of assistance, and reach the realm of justice!

The privileged grow angry: our judgment is unfair, they say.
Meanwhile they discover subversion and communism
in the most democratic, the most human,
the most Christian gestures.

Dom Helder Camara, Brazil

A Creed from Indonesia

We believe in God the Creator of us all,
who has given the earth to all people.

We believe in Jesus Christ,
who came to encourage us and to heal us,
to deliver us from oppression,
to proclaim the peace of God to
humankind.

Christ has given himself to the world;
it is amongst all people that the Lord lives
– the living God.

We believe in the Spirit of God, who
works in every woman, man and child of
good will.

We believe in the Church, given as a
beacon for all nations,
moved by the Spirit to serve all people.
We believe that God shares with us
the power and responsibility
for the destruction of sin in all of us
and that all people will share in God's
everlasting life.

We do not believe in the right of the
strongest, nor the force of arms nor the
power of the oppressors.

We want to believe in human rights,
in the solidarity of all people, in the power
of non-violence.

We do not believe in racism, privilege, or
the established order.

We want to believe that all men, women
and children
are equally human, that order based on
violence is not order.

We do not believe we can ignore things
which happen far away.

We want to believe that the whole is our
home
and that the field we plough and the
harvest we reap belong to all.

We do not believe that we can fight
oppression far away
if we tolerate injustice here.

We want to believe that there is but one
right everywhere;
that we are not free if one person remains
enslaved.

We do not believe that war and hunger
are inevitable and peace unattainable.

We want to believe in the beauty of
simplicity,
in love with open hands, in peace on earth.

We do not believe that all suffering is
in vain, nor that our dreams will remain
dreams, nor that death is the end.

But we dare to believe,
always and in spite of everything,
in a new humanity; in God's own dream of
a new heaven
and a new earth where justice will flourish.
Amen.

A Franciscan Blessing

May God bless you with discomfort ...
at easy answers, hard hearts,
half-truths and superficial relationships.

May God bless you so that you may live
from deep within your heart
where God's Spirit dwells.

May God bless you with anger ...
at injustice, oppression and exploitation
of people.

May God bless you so that you may
work for justice, freedom and peace.

May God bless you with tears ...
to shed for those who suffer from pain,
rejection, starvation and war.

May God bless you
so that you may reach out your hand to
comfort them
and turn their pain into joy.

And may God bless you with enough
foolishness
to believe that you can make a difference
in this world, in your neighbourhood,
so that you will courageously try
what you don't think you can do, but,
in Jesus Christ, you'll have all the strength
necessary.

Anonymous

May God bless you to fearlessly
speak out about injustice,
unjust laws, corrupt politicians,
unjust and cruel treatment of prisoners,
and senseless wars,
genocides, starvations and poverty that is
so pervasive.

May God bless you that you remember
we are all called to continue God's
redemptive work
of love and healing
in God's place, in and through God's name,
in God's Spirit, continually creating
and breathing new life and grace
into everything and everyone we touch.

Litany Honouring the Past in Our Present

One: For all those who seek justice for and with Aboriginal peoples, calling us to honour and implement land, treaty and inherent rights and walking with all communities who long for right relations,

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all those who call us to ecological justice and to a renewed vision of our place on this Earth, God's creation,

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all those who walk alongside the peoples of Africa, supporting the cancellation of debt and the creation of economies which uphold fundamental human dignity and equality,

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all those who walk alongside the peoples of Asia, working for an end to impunity, standing in solidarity with migrant workers, and seeking an economy where all have a place,

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all those who walk alongside the peoples of Latin America, demanding an end to the violence of exploitative economies and human rights abuses.

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all those who stand beside migrants and refugees, demanding that the world recognize the rights of all uprooted peoples and enact laws and policies that reflect open hands and hearts,

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all those who educate and act for global justice,
walking alongside communities and people living in poverty
throughout Canada, offering spiritual, material and political support,

All: *We give you thanks and praise.*

One: For all this work and all these relationships, we give you thanks.
We honour those who continually breathed life
into the ecumenical coalitions,
recognizing the signs of your Spirit at work in the world.
We thank you for the decades of passionate struggle,
of hard work, of meetings, events, and demonstrations,
all in pursuit of a vision inspired by that Spirit.
Although the path to that vision may change,
though we may lose our way, the path never disappears.
In the fullness of your time, Creating Spirit, all hopes,
all struggles, all tears and all joy are held and transformed.
Be with us as we continue our journey through those moments
when the Spirit calls us forth into new life.
And we give you thanks for all that has gone before
and all that is yet to come.

All: *May it be so! Amen.*

Kairos: Service of Celebration Trinity-St-Paul's United Church, May 10, 2002. Copyright KAIROS:
Canadian Ecumenical Justice Initiatives, www.kairoscanada.org

Three ways young people can do the mission of the church

The A.R.T. of justice and peace

Young people get involved in service projects for a lot of reasons. Some do it so they can accumulate service hours for confirmation. Others do service so that their college applications will look better. Still others serve because of the good feeling they are left with. As Catholics we don't "do" service projects for any of those reasons. We serve the needs of others because it is part of the central mission of Jesus and his church.

Much has been written about our central call to justice and peace. This body of doctrine is often referred to as Catholic social teaching; it is the church's effort to apply the gospel to every human life. Looking broadly at Catholic social teaching, the church's message can be summed up in seven general themes:

1. Dignity of the human person
2. Call to family, community, and participation
3. Human rights
4. Option for the poor
5. The dignity of work and the rights of workers
6. Solidarity
7. Care for God's creation

(For more information on these themes, go to the United States bishops' Web site, tinyurl.com/yr57vm.)

No doubt this essential doctrine is well documented and defined, but how do you bring it into the classroom or youth ministry setting for young and older adolescents?

You do it through A.R.T.: act, reflect, transform. (See the U.S. bishops' resource *Leader's Guide to "Sharing Catholic Social Teaching."*)

Act

Some ways you could involve young people in meeting the needs of the poor include:

- providing food for pantries and feeding centers
- collecting clothing and supplies for homeless shelters
- raising and donating money to relief efforts
- adopting a highway, or cleaning up a park
- participating in gleaning projects and service work camps

Seek help from those who are often involved in these direct service efforts to help you find meaningful hands-on experiences for young people. Be careful not to expose the young people to situations that would be too dangerous, too difficult, or too detached from the poor.

Reflect

Things you could do to help youth reflect on justice include:

- discussing the seven themes of Catholic social teaching
- holding hunger awareness meals
- taking homelessness awareness tours
- praying for victims of war, violence, and injustice
- showing videos and other educational opportunities

Make sure the reflection experiences are age appropriate. Give young people adequate time to process what they have learned.

Transform

Although older adolescents may be better equipped than young adolescents to promote transformation, both younger and older adolescents should be provided with a chance to make a difference in the world. Activities and strategies that could transform unjust situations include:

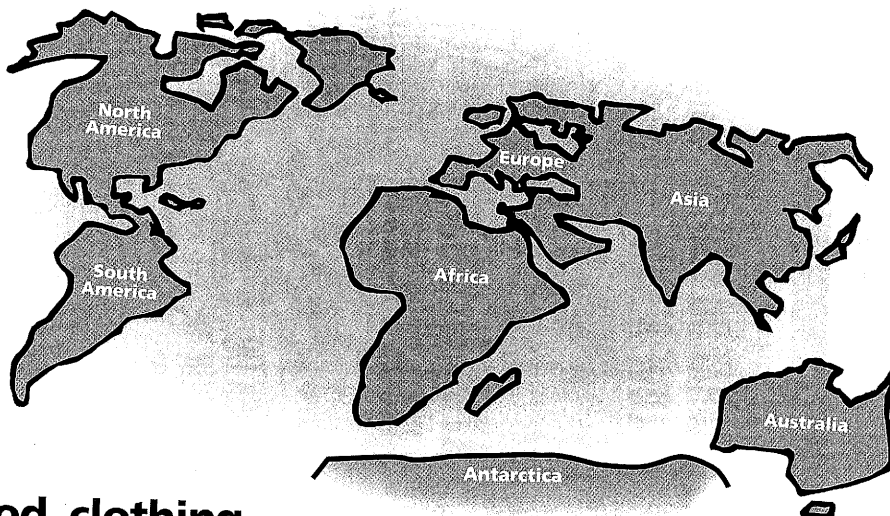
- writing letters or petitions to legislators that attempt to influence the lawmaking process in a more just way
- supporting or boycotting businesses based on their fair employment practice and environmental sensitivities
- providing more opportunities for the poor, such as helping build low-income housing
- supporting educational opportunities, language studies, and formal schooling for new immigrants to the U.S.
- building positive relationships, especially with people of a different culture (for example, those in foreign exchange programs)
- inviting different persons, especially those "left out," to participate with the youth in civic and social activities (sports teams, social outings, jobs, church youth group, etc.) **RTJ**



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MISSION!

What do you think?



Is making sure **every child** in the world has access to **clean water, food, clothing, shelter**, and **love** mission possible or mission impossible?

One of the organizations that think it is "Mission Possible" is *Holy Childhood Association*. This is an organization now found in most countries of the world and its mission is to animate the young faithful to a universal missionary spirit and to gather support from these children for the service of the local churches of Africa, Asia, remote regions of Latin America, and the Pacific Islands among the poorest of the world's children.

WOW—what an opportunity, to join with children from around the world to help other children! It only takes one person to make a difference, and here are some ways you can make a difference:

Give some of your allowance each week to the *Holy Childhood Association*.

Using the map of the world on this page pray for the children of each continent. Take a continent a week and pray for it each day. Write your prayer for the continents below:

Loving God,

I pray this day for the continent of _____

May the children there _____

Help me to _____

I ask this prayer in the name of Jesus the Risen Lord, Amen.

3. Visit the *Holy Childhood Association* Web site and learn more about it: worldmissions-catholicchurch.org. There are lots of activities there for young people like yourself!

Remember, a few good people can make a huge difference! Be a person who believes in mission possible and shares what they have to make the world better for others!