



## PURPOSE

Use this template to structure sessions to engage youth in Catholic social teaching principles through prayer, activities and Stories of Hope from CRS Rice Bowl.

## INSTRUCTIONS

This Lent, engage your youth in one or more sessions on how our Catholic faith relates to the world and our one human family.

## FOR EACH SESSION

### STEP 1

Choose one of the following Catholic social teaching principles as your focus.

- Option for the Poor
- Sacredness and Dignity of the Human Person
- Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- Call to Family, Community and Participation
- Care for God's Creation
- Solidarity

Each Catholic social teaching principle has a corresponding CRS Rice Bowl Story of Hope video or story, prayer and activity found at [crsricebowl.org/youth](https://crsricebowl.org/youth).

### STEP 2

Lead a 20 minute discussion with youth using the Catholic social teaching principle handout and corresponding Story of Hope.

- Read the Catholic social teaching principle's definition and have participants discuss their understanding of the principle as a large group or in pairs.
- Read or watch the video of the Story of Hope that corresponds to the Catholic social teaching principle you have selected.
  - What stands out to you in the story?
  - Where do you see the Catholic social teaching principle illustrated in the Story of Hope?

### STEP 3

Facilitate the 20 minute activity from the following pages that corresponds to your Catholic social teaching principle.

### STEP 4

Close by reading the 5 minute prayer that corresponds with the Catholic social teaching principle the participants explored in their discussion and activity.

### STEP 5

Ask youth to read or watch the video of the Story of Hope and review the discussion questions at home with their family.

## CALL US FORTH

### **Good Shepherd,**

*You who does not rest until each  
of your sheep is counted,  
you have willed us to do in  
your name what you have done  
for us.*

*But we are reluctant, we are afraid,  
and we long to hear your voice.  
And so we pray ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, who stands amid the violence  
and deprivation of war ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, who stands amid the rising  
waters of floods ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, who walks upon the parched  
land of droughts ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, who stands with the victims  
of every disaster, through every dark  
night, beside them till morning ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, who walks the long walk  
with those refugees who  
call their crude shelter  
in a strange land "home" ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, who remains with the sick,  
reaches out to comfort the dying ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*Lord, brother to the persecuted,  
the enslaved, the marginalized ...*

### **Call us forth.**

*As you called Peter forth from  
the safety of the boat, and bid him  
to forsake his fear and hold fast  
to his faith ...*

*As you called Paul forth from  
the allure of worldly power,  
and bid him to forsake his sin  
and hold fast to your truth ...*

### **Call us forth to bless.**

### **Call us forth to heal.**

*Call us forth to speak your Word,  
to feed your sheep, into encounter,  
into solidarity, into love.*

*Call us forth from our comfort, from  
our indulgence, from our doubt,  
from our fearful blindness, our  
willful deafness.*

*For the sake of our sisters and  
brothers, for the sake of our world,  
for the sake of your Kingdom,  
we pray ...*

### **Call us forth.**

### **Amen**

## BIASED THINKING

### OBJECTIVE

Youth will explore the Catholic social teaching principle Option for the Poor by reflecting on their biases about people living in poverty.

### MATERIALS

- Copies of the “Cross Out Six Letters” handout for each small group
- 1 pencil for each small group
- 1 piece of blank paper for each small group

### INSTRUCTIONS

#### Step 1:

- Distribute one copy of the handout to each small group.
- Instruct them to cross out six letters to discover a common word.
- Tell them they will have 5 minutes to do this.
- At the end of 5 minutes, ask them to stop. It is unlikely anyone will have solved the puzzle, unless they have done this before.
- Point out the instructions on the handout: cross out six letters. Then tell them to cross out the letters S, I, X, L, E, T, T, E, R, S. When they do this, they will arrive at the word “banana.”
- Point out that they were unable to solve the puzzle because they were operating under biased thinking—what they thought they heard or what they thought you meant.

#### Step 2:

- Give each small group a blank piece of paper.
- Ask the groups to title their paper, “Things We Can Do to Help the Poor.” Ask them to brainstorm a list of helpful actions.
- After 5 minutes, ask them to stop and count the number of items on their list. Some may even congratulate themselves that their list is long.
- Ask them to turn over the piece of paper and number it with the same number of items as the front. If they came up with 10 items for the original list, they should number 1 to 10 on the back.
- Now tell them to title this side of the paper, “Things the Poor Can Do to Help Others.” Tell them they must brainstorm as many items as they had for the first list.
- Go around the room and help them with possible answers. Suggest things like teaching others resilience, perseverance, trust, flexibility or simplicity.

### PROCESSING

- Have the small groups report on their second list.
- Ask them what they learned from this activity.

**CROSS OUT SIX LETTERS**

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**BSAINXLEATNTEARS**

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**BSAINXLEATNTEARS**

## A LENTEN PRAYER

**Creator,**

*Help us respond to your call  
to be members of one family.  
Guide us to feel constant, peaceful  
concern for our sisters and brothers  
throughout the world.*

*Make us mindful of the needs of those  
who must endure, day by day, the  
injustice of hunger and poverty.*

*Bless us all this Lenten season, that  
we may live in unity with others.*

*Renew our Christian commitment  
to our global family.*

**Amen**

Photo by Karen Karmanski for CRS

## RESPECTING HUMAN DIGNITY

### OBJECTIVE

Youth will analyze the Catholic social teaching principle Sacredness and Dignity of the Human Person by reflecting on the value of all people and the difficulties they encounter in upholding another's dignity.

### MATERIALS AND PREPARATION

- Make copies of the handout, "All Human Life Is Sacred." Make one copy for each small group and one copy for yourself.
- Set aside your copy of the handout. Stack the remaining copies together with several pieces of blank paper. Cut them all at once into 10 uniform pieces. Make sure there are no complete words on any one piece.
- Place electric fans on the floor of the activity area.
- Post your copy of the handout where all youth can see it.
- Mix all the pieces and scatter them on the floor.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask youth to gather around the pieces on the floor.
- Point to the posted copy of the handout and ask each small group to reassemble the handout from the pieces.
- They may not use anything other than their hands to hold the pieces in place.
- Invite them to begin.
- Turn on the fans.
- The first group to assemble the handout is the winner.

### PROCESSING

- What made assembling the handout difficult?
- What are some of the difficulties people face in protecting the sacredness of life?
- There were many blank pieces of paper to mislead you. What are some false indicators of a person's value?
- Even when you found connecting pieces, it was hard to keep them together. What are some things that make it hard to remember that all people, including you, possess an inherent dignity that comes directly from God? What are some things that can chip away at your sense of self-worth or how you see others?
- What can you do this Lent to remember your own value and worth? And what can you do to respect the dignity and sacredness of others?



RESPECTING HUMAN DIGNITY

ALL  
HUMAN  
LIFE  
IS  
SACRED

## PRAYER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE



Photo by Oscar Leiva/Silverlight for CRS

**God, source of all light,**

*We are surrounded by the darkness  
of the injustices experienced by  
your people:*

*The poor, who are hungry and  
search for shelter,*

*The sick, who seek relief,*

*The downtrodden, who search for  
help in their hopelessness.*

*Surround us, and fill us with your  
Spirit, who is light.*

*Lead us to be a light to your people.*

*Help our parishes to be salt for the  
world as we share your love with  
those caught in the struggles of life.*

*We desire to be your presence to  
the least among us and to  
know your presence in them  
as we work through you to  
bring justice and peace to this  
world in desperate need.*

*We ask this through our Lord, Jesus  
Christ, your Son, who lives and  
reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
one God, forever and ever.*

**Amen**

USCCB, Communities of Salt and Light Resource Manual



## BALLOON TOSS DISCUSSION

### OBJECTIVE

Youth will examine the Catholic social teaching principle Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers by participating in a group activity and reflecting on their responsibilities to uphold each other's right to flourish.

### MATERIALS

- Toothpicks
- Masking tape
- Balloons
- Simple prizes, like candy

### PREPARATION

- Prior to the session, fully inflate one balloon for each small group. Youth will be divided into groups of six.
- Ask youth to help each other tape toothpicks on the ends of their fingers with the toothpicks extended out at least half an inch.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Divide youth into groups. Ask each group to form a circle, with group members standing 4 feet apart from one another.
- Explain that each group will be given a balloon, which they will toss from one member to another. There will be 10 rounds, or tosses. During each round, the balloon will represent a different basic human right.
- Explain that you will announce a different human right before every toss. Tell the students that when the balloon is tossed to them, they must state why that right is important and give an example of how or where that right is currently being violated.
- People may only speak if the balloon is tossed to them. They may not repeat answers already given, and every student should receive the balloon twice during the game.

- The group member who has just shared should hold the balloon until you announce the next human right. They then should toss it to a group member who has not already shared twice.
- Warn students that they must protect their balloon. If a group pops its balloon, its members will be divided into the remaining groups and the game will continue.
- Begin the game and continue for 10 rounds. Before each pass, announce one of the following human rights:

1. Right to food	7. Right to information
2. Right to clothing	8. Right to privacy
3. Right to shelter	9. Right to follow one's conscience
4. Right to education	10. Right to freedom of religion
5. Right to work	
6. Right to respect	
- Any groups with an intact balloon at the end are declared human rights champions. Award their prizes.

### PROCESSING

- How did it feel to be responsible for your group's balloon when it was passed to you?
- Did you want to take responsibility for your group's balloon? How did you feel about others sharing the responsibility for your group's balloon?
- What are the important ways that we can ensure that all people have their work protected and respected?

## PRAYER FOR LIFE

### ***Embracing Father,***

*You grace each of us with equal  
measure in your love.*

*Let us learn to love our neighbors  
more deeply, so that we can create  
peaceful and just communities.*

*Inspire us to use our creative energies  
to build the structures we need  
to overcome the obstacles of  
intolerance and indifference.*

*May Jesus provide us the example  
needed and send the Spirit to warm  
our hearts for the journey.*

***Amen***

*Being Neighbor: The Catechism and Social Justice Catholic Campaign  
for Human Development, United States Catholic Conference*



Photo by Oscar Leiva/Silverlight for CRS

## SIMULATION ON CHANGE

### OBJECTIVE

Youth will explore the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation by playing a game and reflecting on how they are called to support others.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask youth to each choose a partner and ask them to study their partner's characteristics.
- Invite them to stand back-to-back and then change five things about themselves. Give an example, like taking their watch off their left wrist and putting it on their right wrist.
- When each person has changed five things, invite them to stand, face each other and identify the five changes they see in their partner.
- Observe how well youth fared. Ask how many of them were able to identify all five changes in their partner.
- Ask youth to try again, this time changing 10 things about themselves.
- Observe how successful they were during their second round. How many could identify 10 changes? Could they find more changes in the second round than in the first?
- If time allows, invite youth to do a third "championship" round, where they will change 15 things about themselves.

### PROCESSING

- Ask what strategy they could have used to easily change 20 or more things about themselves? If they haven't already mentioned it, point out that they could have exchanged items with people in other groups. If you observed anyone doing this, credit them. Ask if anyone got ideas by observing other people.
- Ask youth what some significant differences were (besides the number of changes) between their first and second round. Was it easier? Faster? More exciting? Were the changes riskier or more subtle?
- Explain that this activity shows us that we can change some things by ourselves, but we need others to help if we want to achieve significant change, such as change that involves risk or a difference in long-standing habits. We need others to give us ideas and to support us. We need a community.
- How can we build an inclusive community that supports the well-being of all?

## PRAYER OF STEWARDSHIP

**God of all creation,**

*At the beginning of time, you placed  
a single mandate on humankind:*

*To be stewards of creation,  
to replenish and nurture,  
through all generations,  
what you have made.*

*We kneel today amid that same  
creation—a world that is, in many  
ways, more splendid than ever, but,  
in too many ways, scarred beyond  
recognition.*

*Turn us from our unmindfulness.*

*Help our touch be light.*

*Help us renew the world that supports  
us, so we may once more know  
creation, as it was in the beginning.*

**Amen**



Photo by Oscar Leiva/Silverlight for CRS



## ECOSNAP

### OBJECTIVE

Youth will have the opportunity to reflect on their connection to their environment and the Catholic social teaching principle Care for God's Creation.

### MATERIALS

- One camera or phone with a camera per student; share in groups if necessary
- Projector to show photos

### PROCESSING

- Have youth either project their photos to the group or pass around their phone or camera while explaining their reasoning for capturing the images that they did.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Tell the students to grab a phone or camera and go out into their immediate environment.
- Ask youth to take two photos: one illustrating why it is important to care for creation and another where they see the mistreatment of creation.
- Tell them to be prepared to share their reflections with the group.



## THE TEARS OF SOLIDARITY



Photo by Peterik Wiggins for CRS

### **God of compassion,**

*Pope Francis challenges us to learn how to cry, to brave that pain, and so enter into true solidarity with your people.*

*For those who face hunger, for those who face war, for those who face exploitation, for those who face displacement, I stand in solidarity.*

*For those who face unjust discrimination, for those who face indifference, for those who face a lack of opportunity, for those who face a lack of health care, I stand in solidarity.*

*But, in truth, I stand with a little reluctance.*

*And I stand a little far off—detached and apart from the great human drama, lingering in the orchestra, even as you call me to the center stage.*

*Lord, help me to look again at what has been done to your people, to their lives and to their dignity, so that slowly, and then more strongly, I will allow myself to cry.*

*For it is only in those tears that we truly become one.*

*My trepidations fall away and I step forward and stand anew.*

*Teach me to cry.*

**Amen**



## INDEX CARD REVIEW

### OBJECTIVE

Youth will discuss the Catholic social teaching principle Solidarity by reflecting on the principle's definition and how they see it in their lives.

### MATERIALS

- Index cards, five per person
- Markers, one per person
- Piece of paper with the word "Solidarity" written on it as large as possible
- Roll of masking or painter's tape

### PREPARATION

- Write the word "Solidarity" on a piece of paper and tape it to a blank wall.
- Give each person five index cards, a strip of masking or painter's tape and a marker.

### INSTRUCTIONS

- Ask youth to write one noun, adjective or adverb that describes solidarity on each card. Ask them to write it as big as they can. Give them an example like "listening" or "compassion."
- Tell them that when they are finished writing, they should rip the tape into enough pieces to roll and place on the back of their index cards. That way, they will be able to tape their cards to the wall.
- Invite those who are finished to post their cards on the wall under the "Solidarity" sign, taping any duplicates on top of the previous cards.
- As more youth finish, invite them to come up in pairs to tape their cards, always putting duplicates on top of each other.

### PROCESSING

- When everyone has posted their cards, read them out loud and ask youth if they have any comments or questions about them.
- What strikes you about the words we've used to describe solidarity?
- What experiences have you had with this principle in your own life?
- Where and how can we grow as a community, both locally and globally, in living out this principle?