

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

ACTIVITY

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?