

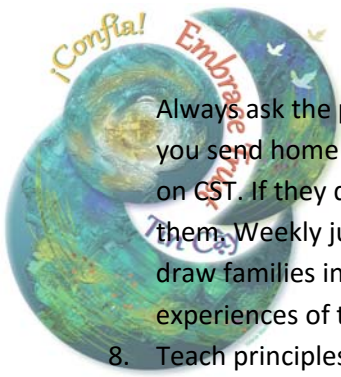
Religious Education Congress 2017
Joan Weber
Inspiring Young People with Catholic Social Teaching
Session 8-24

1. Inspire your young people with **the history of Catholic social tradition and Catholic social teaching**. Tell the story of Pope Leo XIII and why he wrote *Rerum Novarum*.
2. Utilize **videos**.
 - **Catholic Social Teaching in 3 Minutes (Trocaire)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ELyLdMIFdzA>
 - **Top 10 Things You Need to Know about Pope Francis' Laudato Si' (with Fr. Jim Martin, SJ)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_lqFTYLc_4
 - **Catholic Relief Services and the USCCB (in development)**
<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/index.cfm>So far, they have three completed: ***CST 101: Life and Dignity***; ***CST 101: Call to Family, Community, and Participation***; and ***CST 101: Care for Creation***.
3. Try **graffiti**.

Divide your participants into seven small groups. Assign each group one of the seven principles of Catholic social teaching. Then give them a very brief summary of the principle (<http://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/seven-themes-of-catholic-social-teaching.cfm>). This one from the USCCB is really great. After they have read and discussed the meaning of the principle and applied it to their own lives, have them take sheets of black paper and colored chalk and create graffiti art illustrating their principle. Post the art in a prominent area where all parishioners will be able to see it. Other ways of expressing the meaning of a principle can be used, such as clay or Play-Doh, mosaic pieces, or wordles.
4. Get creative with **social media**. Again, divide the group into seven small teams, assign each team a principle, have them read up on it (recommend the USCCB website), then share a message with the parish they want everyone to know about their principle. Assign a different medium to each team (Instagram, Twitter, Snapchat, Facebook, PSA on YouTube, Text, Pinterest). After they've done their work, make sure the messages are actually delivered!
5. Tell **real-life stories** which illustrate a principle.

Share your own experiences of living a principle, or tell someone else's powerful story. Mazen and Rami are a great example of the common good!
6. Make the **connection to Scripture**.

It's important that young people understand that Catholic social teaching isn't original. It is rooted in the Word of God. It's great for them to connect St. Paul to giving people dignity, or Genesis to care for God's creation, or Acts of the Apostles to solidarity. Don't throw Scripture at young people. Find ways to have them wrestle with the meaning of the passage, apply it to their lives, and take action.
7. Make the **parent connection**.



Always ask the parent question when sharing Catholic social teaching with young people. What can you send home for families to discuss/share/do? Many parents will have had little or no education on CST. If they don't understand what their adolescent children are learning, they may not support them. Weekly justice challenges in the bulletin or on the parish's website or Facebook page can draw families into thinking through the lens of justice. Invite parents to be part of the service experiences of the youth—as chaperones or as participants.

8. Teach principles **in context**—while people are actually **servicing those in need**.
 - Service experiences with theological reflection after the work
 - Mission trips with parents as chaperones; do the pastoral circle
 - Mission trips/service experiences for families (FOAM); highlight a theme which matches the service the families are doing
9. Help your young people know the second foot of justice, **doing advocacy** on behalf of the voiceless.
 - Teach them faith-based advocacy.
 - Help them experience a state lobby day or even national advocacy with their Congressional representatives.
 - Challenge them to create a campaign around a theme of justice.
10. Apply CST to participants' **lifestyles and choices**.
 - Fair Trade (see http://www.crsfairtrade.org/wp-content/uploads/CRS_Infographic_Sign.pdf)
 - “Fair trade recognizes the DIGNITY OF THE WORK of artisans and farmers and ensures that they earn fair wages. Fair trade producers CARE FOR GOD’S CREATION by treating the environment with respect. When you purchase fair trade products, you are standing in SOLIDARITY with the poor and vulnerable.”
 - Green bag shopping
 - Carbon Footprints (<http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/>)
 - How many planets would it take to sustain life if everyone lived like me?
 - Simulation Games (e.g., Star Power, Access)
 - These can be powerful experiences for young people. Of course, it is in the processing discussion after the simulation where most of the learning usually takes place.
 - Needs. Wants, Haves
 - Create a list of “things” which young people have—items of clothing, social media devices and smartphones, backpacks, jewelry, etc. Include three vertical columns with the list, with the words NEED, WANT, and HAVE at the top. Invite the young people to spend a bit of time checking off if they need the item, if they want it, and if they have it. Then engage them in a conversation about how people their age in developing countries would have checked that same list.
 - Inspire them with stories about **saints/saintly people who embodied justice and service**. Consider people like St. Oscar Romero, Blessed Teresa of Calcutta, St. Francis of Assisi, St. Elizabeth Ann Seton, St. Martin de Porres, Dorothy Day, or your favorite saint.
11. Carpe Diem! Quote **Pope Francis**.

“Things have a price and are valuable, but persons have a dignity, they are worth more than things and they have no price. Because of this, attention to human life in its totality has become in recent times a real and proper priority of the Magisterium of the Church, particularly for life



which is largely defenseless, namely, that of the disabled, the sick, the unborn, children, the elderly. ... They cannot be discarded!”

12. Do game shows which unpack Catholic social teaching.

- Jeopardy
- Faith Family Feud
- Life-size Chutes and Ladders/Life-Size Hungry Hippos

13. Engage them in **prayer** which asks God’s help to bring the principles to fulfillment.

14. Challenge them with the **BIG ASK!** Sometimes we fail to give youth the big picture. We take them to a nursing home for an hour and feel that our “justice” work is done for the month. We don’t connect living the principles of Catholic social teaching with being missionary disciples. We can start by planting seeds in the young people—asking them the big life questions:

- What would Jesus do if he were me?
- What are the gifts and talents God gave me?
- What does the world need me to do?

Scripture Methods—Engaging Youth with God’s Word

1. Re-write Scripture in modern settings.
2. Do skits – act out the Word.
3. Use Lectio Divina or Visio Divina. Read, meditate, pray, and contemplate. Then act!
4. Offer art to image the Word.
5. Be eyewitnesses (Ignatius).
6. Show videos.
7. Play contemporary Christian music based on the Word of God.
8. Write the sequel.
9. Paraphrase.
10. Use multiple intelligences: word-smart, people-smart, art/vision-smart, body-smart, self-smart, music/rhythm-smart, math/logic-smart, nature-smart
11. Tweet or use other forms of social media.
12. Do jigsaw learning.
13. Create wordles.

Catholic Social Teaching Scripture Journey for Families

Cut out the Scripture quotes below and place them in a bowl on the dining room table. Place a Bible near the bowl. One family member is invited to take a Scripture reference from the bowl. That person looks it up in the Bible and shares it with the rest of the family. This can be done after the mealtime prayer is said and after everyone has begun eating. The Scripture is offered as spiritual nourishment as we take in the food as physical nourishment. The person then places the strip of paper in the Bible as a marker for that passage. A different family member picks out the Scripture quote the next day. Continue to do this each day until all the passages have been read. All of the Scripture quotes are taken from readings that pertain to the seven principles of Catholic social teaching.



- John 21:1-17 “Breakfast on the Beach”
 - Genesis 1:27 “Created in God’s Image”
 - Matthew 19:13-14 “Important in God’s Eyes”
 - Acts 2:43-47 “Sharing is Holy Work”
 - Ecclesiastes 3:1-8 “A Time for All Things”
 - Matthew 25:31-46 “Last Judgment”
 - Luke 19:1-10 “Lazarus”
 - Luke 10:25-37 “Good Samaritan”
 - I Corinthians 12:14-26 “On Love”
 - Romans 12:5-6 “Unity in Diversity”
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Isaiah Paraphrase

And the Lord said, “Go!” And I said, “Who me?”

And He said, “Yes, you!”

And I said, “But I’m not ready yet, and there is company coming, and I can’t leave my kids. You know there’s no one to take my place.”

And God said, “You’re stalling.”

Again the Lord said, “Go!”

And I said, “But I don’t want to.”

And God said, “I didn’t ask if you wanted to.”

And I said, “Listen I’m not the kind of person to get involved in controversy. Besides, my family won’t like it,

And what will the neighbors think?”

And God said, “Baloney!”

And yet a third time the Lord said, “Go!”

And I said, “Do I have to?”

And God said, “Do you love me?”

And I said, “Look I’m scared. People are going to hate me and cut me into little pieces. I can’t take it all by myself.”

And God said, “Where do you think I’ll be?”

And the Lord said, “Go!”

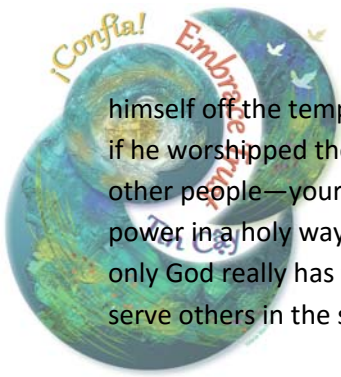
And I sighed, “Here I am, send me!”

Anonymous, from the Internet

Justice Challenges, Spring, Year A

1st Week of Lent Justice Challenge

The Gospel recounts Jesus’ experience of being tempted by the devil after 40 days of retreat in the desert. Jesus was tempted to indulge in physical satisfaction (eating bread), ego satisfaction (throwing



himself off the temple to be saved by angels), and the satisfaction of power (having the world at his feet if he worshipped the devil). Your challenge this week is to take a serious look at the power you hold over other people—your children or parents, your colleagues at work or school, your friends. Do you use your power in a holy way? Do you ever abuse your power? Pray this week that you always remember that only God really has the power. Remind yourself that you are called to use the power entrusted to you to serve others in the same way Jesus did.

2nd Week of Lent Justice Challenge

March 16th is the anniversary of the day in 1998 when Saint John Paul expressed to the Jewish people his regret that Christians didn't do enough to help prevent the Holocaust. Six million Jews ended up being murdered by the Nazi regime. John Paul's apology was a powerful and healing moment in Jewish-Catholic relationships. Your challenge this week is to look for an opportunity to stand up for a person or a group of people being persecuted in some way. It might be Syrian refugees, or undocumented people in your community, or the kid in school who is bullied a lot. Speak up on behalf of that group or person. Challenge those who are being hurtful to stop. Do something special to show the person that you care. And say a prayer that the persecution stops.

3rd Week of Lent

Justice Challenge: Sunday's Gospel has Jesus telling the Samaritan woman about the living water he offers. It's interesting that World Water Day is celebrated this week—on March 22. Water is essential to life. Lack of clean water has led to draught, dehydration, illness, death, conflict, and even war. While we might not experience lack of water, we are aware of the thousands of our brothers and sisters across the globe who live without clean drinking water. Your challenge this week is to stand in solidarity with those who don't have the water they need by monitoring and limiting your use of water. When you shower, once you get wet turn off the water, soap up, and only turn the water back on when you are ready to rinse off. When you brush your teeth, don't run the water until you are ready to rinse. Avoid using bottled water if possible. Think of other ways you can conserve water as an individual and a household. And pray for those who do not have access to the water they need to live in health and dignity.

Living in Solidarity Home Activity: Know & Love Our Neighbor

*(This home activity is taken from **Fashioning Faith**, the Center for Ministry Development's subscription website for lifelong faith formation. See www.fashioningfaith.org or contact Joan Weber at joanweber@cmdnet.org for more information.)*

Solidarity is recognizing our relationship with all of humankind, based on our belief that all are created in God's own image and likeness. More than ever, we are connected to the global village and are responsible for each and every person on this earth. We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological backgrounds. We truly are our brother's and sister's keepers.

1. The practice of solidarity begins in or homes. Create a list of ways that your family wants to practice solidarity. Consider these suggestions: ...



- By not letting differences among people scare us away from others.
- By seeing differences as gifts.
- By helping each other, listening, and enjoying each other's differences.

Post your list in a common family area to remind you.

2. Loving our neighbor is knowing our neighbor—knowing the people, the places, the gifts, the needs, and the hopes of others. Practicing solidarity means learning that 'loving our neighbor' has global dimensions in an interdependent world. Watch the news together. See the faces and hear the stories of those who are suffering in our neighborhoods and around the world. Who are they? Where are they? What are their needs? What are their hopes? How can you help out or make a difference? Stretch your family's definition of neighbor. Are you in contact with people from different ethnic backgrounds from yours? From different socio-economic groups? From different parts of town? Whom can you choose as a new neighbor?

Concluding Prayer

Wondrous God, help us recognize you in every person we meet. Help us recognize you in the faces of those whose images we see on the evening news—who may be suffering next door and across the world. May we learn how to best respond to their needs, and to always treat others as our equals. Amen.

Tips for Faith-Based Advocacy

(Ideas from Kim Macyzk and Chris West of Catholic Relief Services)

1. Ask yourselves: who are the people whose voices are not being heard—by our government, by our businesses, by all of us?
2. What is the one key issue which you want to address with your senators and representative on behalf of these people? Be as specific as possible.
3. Which of the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching is an underlying foundation for seeking justice for your clients?
4. Start developing the talking points you want to cover with your Congresspersons.
5. Rehearse what you will say. Decide who will start, and who will say what.
6. Prepare questions about your representatives to make a personal connection. Where did they go to high school? Do they have children? What age?
7. Remember that you are being witnesses of your faith, so it is OK to lead with your hearts. Practice telling the people you will meet on the Hill about your experience and the people in need whom you met. Tell them how important justice is to you, how important service is. Let them know that you are advocating on behalf of people your age who don't have the resources you do, young people who are fighting to survive day to day. Share that you came to Capitol Hill on behalf of these peers, and that you are relying on your representatives to stand for them, too.
8. Share what you want your representatives to do. It might be supporting one of the two issues listed at the end of this file. Or it might be more general (e.g., always considering the poor and vulnerable when voting on bills). Make a connection between the needs of people at your worksites, the same needs in people back home, and what Congress can/should do to help.
9. Express gratitude for the time they give to you at the end of your meeting.

Please contact me at 402-558-6113 or joanweber@cmdnet.org if you have any suggestions, comments, or questions. God bless! Joan