

Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret

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Opening Prayer

God of Justice,

You call us to be

bread for the hungry,

presence for the lonely,

challenge for the complacent,

voice for the unborn,

and hope for a broken world.

Fill us with your strength and compassion

that we may create with you

a world of justice and peace.

This we pray in Jesus' name. Amen.

Catholic Social Teaching: A Key to Catholic Identity

Just as the social teaching of the Church is integral to Catholic faith, the social justice dimensions of its teaching are integral to Catholic education and catechesis. *They are an essential part of Catholic identity and formation.*

If Catholic education and formation fail to communicate our social tradition, *they are not fully Catholic.*

Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions

U.S. Bishops, 1998



U. S Bishops

The central message is simple: our faith is profoundly social. We cannot be called truly “Catholic” unless we hear and heed the Church's call to serve those in need and work for justice and peace.

Communities of Salt and Light, U.S. Bishops, 1993

The Problem

“Far too many Catholics are unfamiliar with the basic content of Catholic social teaching. More fundamentally, many Catholics do not adequately understand that the social mission of the Church is an essential part of Catholic faith.

“This poses a serious challenge for all Catholics, since it weakens our capacity to be a Church that is true to the demands of the Gospel. We need to do more to share the social mission and message of our Church.”

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Quiz

- Name two documents of Catholic Social Teaching
- Name the seven “themes” of Catholic Social Teaching

–How about three?

–How about ONE?



Essential Elements of Church

- ❖ **Scripture --** hearing the Good News
- ❖ **Sacraments --** celebrating the Good News
- ❖ **Social Mission –** living the Good News



Justice in the World, 1971 Synod

“Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.”



Catholic Social Teaching

- ❖ Rooted in the Bible
- ❖ Continually developed in Catholic social action and human progress



Biblical themes of justice

- ❖ God is active in human history

- ❖ Creation

- ❖ Community

- ❖ Challenge of the prophets

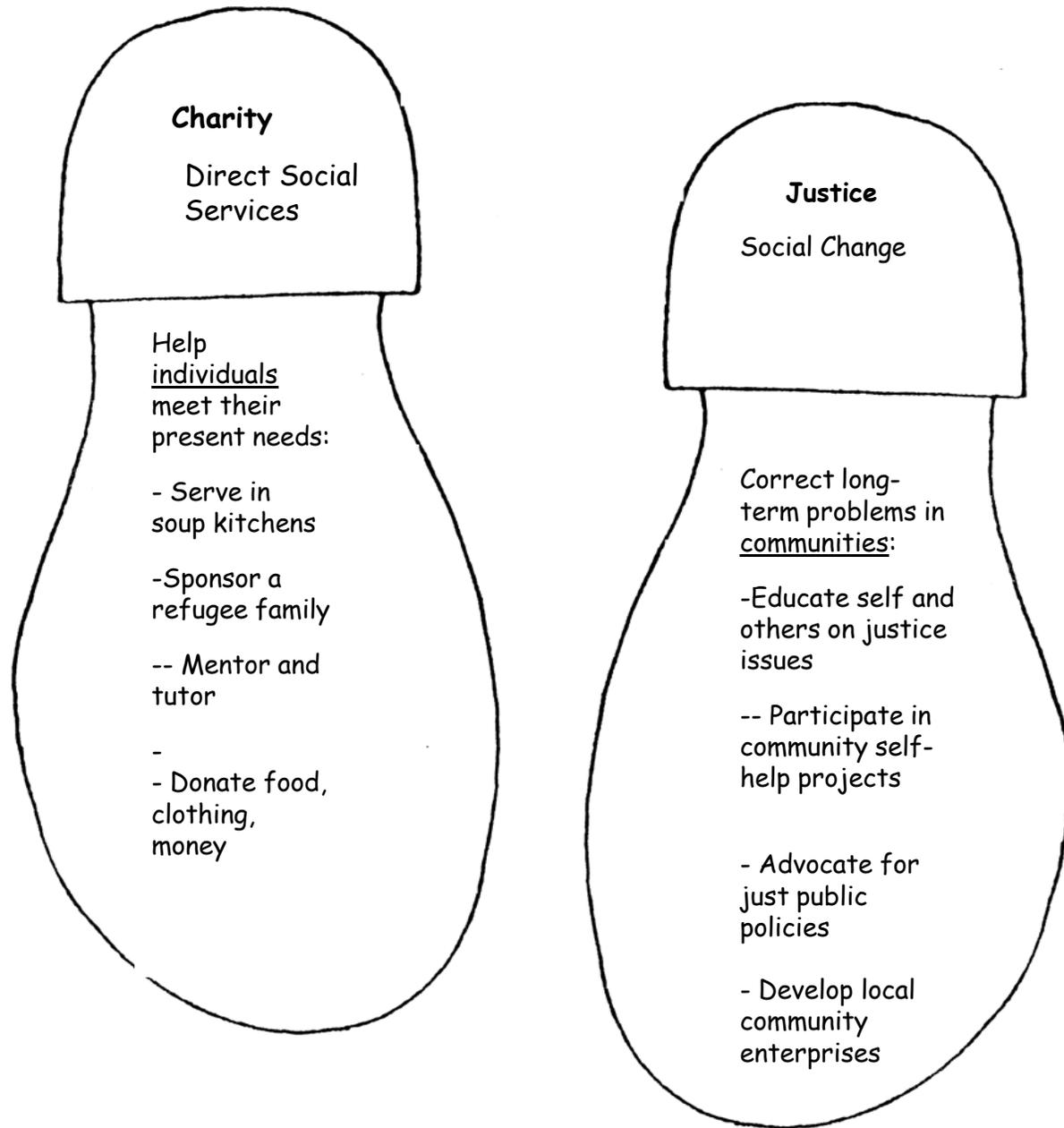
- ❖ *Anawim* – “the poor”

“the widows, orphans and aliens”

- ❖ The teaching of Jesus – Reign of God



Two Feet of Social Justice



Major Themes of Catholic Social Teaching

- Right to Life and Dignity of the Human Person
- Call to Family, Community and Participation
- Rights and Responsibilities
- Preferential Option for the Poor
- The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
- Solidarity
- Care for Creation



Beliefs That Lead To Action

- As disciples of Jesus we believe....
- Yet in our nation and our world we see.....
- Things have to change....
 - People have to be made more aware by...
 - People need to reach out to others by...
 - People need to advocate for change by...



Living Catholic Social Teaching

- Community Organizing
- Fair Trade
- Civil Disobedience
- Legislative Advocacy
- Volunteer and Service Investing
- Micro-finance
- Political involvement
- Public Witness
- Simple Living
- Socially Responsible Investing

Final Thought

“And what does the LORD require of you but
to do justice,
and to love kindness,
and to walk humbly with your God?”

– Micah 6:8