

THEOLOGICAL NOTES FOR YEAR 8 UNIT 6

Big Question: How do we know what's fair?

Specific focus: How do we meet the challenge to live justly?

The learning in this unit is focussed on social justice, the key principles of Catholic Social Teaching and actions to address injustices in society.

JUSTICE

- **Justice** is the moral virtue that is concerned with **equity** and longs to see people get that to which they are entitled.
- 'Just' does not necessarily mean 'equal' but justice disposes us to respect the rights of each person, made in the **image of God**, so that they may fulfil their unique potential and live life to the full.
- In deciding what is just, Catholics are guided particularly by the example of Jesus in scripture. They are also guided by principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST)
- Catholic Social Teaching is a body of work consisting of teaching that reflects on the signs of the times in the light of scripture. It includes Church documents, particularly **encyclicals**, and Church tradition.
- Key Principles of CST are: **Dignity, Common Good, Option for the Poor, Participation, Solidarity, Subsidiarity, Stewardship, Rights & responsibilities.**
- The people of God live out the mission to live justly in the world through serving society.

THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

- Each person is unique, created in God's image and likeness, from the moment of conception.
- This confers dignity on every human person, which is the foundation of **human rights**.
- The search for social justice is rooted in respect for the dignity of every human person at all stages of life.
- This respect requires us to work for justice in society and peace between people and nations.

THE HUMAN COMMUNITY/COMMON GOOD

- By God's gifts of reason and free will, we are capable of knowing and choosing good, for ourselves and others
- Common Good is the good that is shared by all in common. It includes 'the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily.' (Gaudium et Spes, para 26)
- The climate is a common good as it belongs to all and is meant for all. (Laudato Si' 23)
- We find fulfilment in society, not in isolation; concern for the Common Good, the wellbeing of all, is essential.
- Love of neighbour means concern for truth and justice in this service of the Common Good.
- Every action for the Common Good is also an expression of our worship of God.

LOVE OF NEIGHBOUR

- Jesus said that there is no commandment greater than the commandments to love God and to love our neighbour.
- The foundations of love of neighbour are laid in family life and go on to nurture all our relationships.
- Implicit within love of neighbour lies an understanding of what it means to love oneself
- Love of neighbour embraces the whole of creation.
- It includes love for the poor, particularly the most vulnerable, which results in active support of our neighbour, local-ly, nationally and globally.
- Love of neighbour includes respecting the beliefs of other faiths and religions.
- Love of neighbour extends even to our enemies who wish us harm.

Year 8 Unit 6

Big Question

| How do we know what's fair?

CONTENT

1. What is justice?

- Explore how we make choices about what is fair and just. Look at examples of injustice and how they are addressed. Identify the aspects of our nature and of society that make it hard to live justly - locally, nationally and globally.
- Revisit the two greatest commandments and explore pupils' experience of love of neighbour in their own lives.
- Explore how acting justly is an essential part of loving our neighbour.

2. What is Catholic Social Teaching?

- Introduce the concept of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) as the Church's reflection - in the light of scripture - on the 'signs of the times' and how we put love of neighbour into action by helping to create a contemporary society that is just.
- Remind pupils that CST is based not only on scripture, but also tradition and lived experience, and is found in documents such as encyclicals (letters written by popes), writings by theologians and documents from Church councils.

3. What are some key principles of CST?

- Explore key principles of CST: Dignity, Common Good, Option for the Poor, Participation, Solidarity, Subsidiarity, Stewardship, Rights and responsibilities. Include brief real life examples of how they are lived out as well as definitions.
- Consider what the world would be like if everyone lived out these principles in full, and consider the challenges of doing this.

4. How do some Catholics meet the challenge to live justly?

- Explore the links between CST and the challenge to live justly.
- Investigate the different ways in which Catholics work for justice locally, nationally and globally and ways in which pupils can get involved.
- Explore some of the ways that Catholics live out Catholic Social Teaching which are different from some aspects of contemporary culture, eg. Catholic Worker Movement, the LiveSimply initiative, or Mother Teresa's community living out Option for the Poor.

5. How can I live justly?

- Invite pupils to reflect on how they will respond to the call to love their neighbour by living justly.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

- To know and understand what justice is.
- To know and understand Church teaching about social justice.
- To know and understand that Christians are called to love their neighbour by putting faith into action in a just way.
- To reflect on how I can live justly.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At **level 4**, pupils will be able to:

- * Show understanding of how Catholic Social Teaching underpins the way Catholics treat others.
- * Show how own and others' decisions are informed by Catholic Social Teaching.

At **level 5**, pupils will be able to:

- * Identify similarities and differences between peoples' responses to Catholic Social Teaching.
- * Explain how they and others are inspired and influenced by Catholic Social Teaching.

At **level 6**, pupils will be able to:

- * Explain how Church teaching influences moral values and behaviour.
- * Express insights into the reasons for their own and others' beliefs and values and the challenges of putting Catholic Social Teaching into action.

At **level 7**, pupils will be able to:

- * Critically evaluate how Catholics live out Catholic Social Teaching in contrast with contemporary culture and show coherent understanding of the differences.
- * Give a personal response to some principles of Catholic Social Teaching and critically judge their own opinions.

SOURCES: *Suggested Scripture passages*

You are free to select from the following passages while teaching this unit. They are not prescriptive or exhaustive.

1. What is justice?

Exodus 20:1-17 (Commandments)
 Isaiah 58:6-9 (Is not this the fast that I want?)
 Isaiah 61:1-2 cf. Luke 4:17-21 (Jesus proclaims his mission)
 Amos 5:14-15 (seek good not evil)
 Micah 6:8 (act justly...)

3. What are some key principles of CST?

Genesis 1:27 (in God's image)
 Deuteronomy 15:7-11 (generosity to poor)
 Deuteronomy 27:19; 24:17-18 (widows & orphans)
 Leviticus 19:9-10 (care for poor by leaving gleanings)
 Leviticus 19:33-34 (care of aliens)
 Leviticus 19:35-6 (honesty in trade)
 Leviticus 25:8-17 (Jubilee year)
 Matthew 22:36-40 (greatest commandment)

4. How do some Catholics meet the challenge to live justly?

Matthew 25:31-40 (you did it to me)
 How can I live justly?
 John 10:10 (life to the full)

SOURCES: *Church teaching*

You are free to select from the following passages while teaching this unit. They are not prescriptive or exhaustive.

1. What is justice?

"Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good." ([CCC 1807](#))

2. What is Catholic Social Teaching?

"Popes... have frequent recourse to [Rerum Novarum], either to draw inspiration from it and clarify its application, or to find in it a stimulus to Catholic action... It also suggests new and vital criteria by which [people] can judge the magnitude of the social question as it presents itself today, and decide on the course of action they must take."

([Mater et Magistra - para 9](#))

"The Church has always had the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the Gospel. Thus, in language intelligible to each generation, she can respond to the perennial questions which men ask about this present life and the life to come, and about the relationship of the one to the other." ([Gaudium et Spes, para 4](#))

3. What are some of the key principles of CST?

"This teaching rests on one basic principle: individual human beings are the foundation, the cause and the end of every social institution... On this basic principle, which guarantees the sacred dignity of the individual, the Church constructs her social teaching."

([Mater et Magistra - para 219-220](#))

"Every person from the first moment of his life in the womb has an inviolable dignity because from all eternity God willed, loved, created and redeemed that person and destined him for eternal happiness." (YouCat 280)

4. How do some Catholics meet the challenge to live justly?

"No-one can demand that religion should be relegated to the inner sanctum of personal life, without influence on societal and national life, without concern for the soundness of civil institutions, without a right to offer an opinion on events affecting society... An authentic faith – which is never comfortable or completely personal – always involves a deep desire to change the world, to transmit values, to leave this earth somehow better than we found it."

([Evangelii Gaudium – para 183](#))

RE CURRICULUM DIRECTORY**Revelation**

- 1.2.3. Sacred scripture in the life of the Church;
- 1.2.4 Understanding scripture.

Life in Christ

- 4.1.1 Dignity of the human person made in the image of God;
- 4.2.1 Freedom and responsibility;
- 4.2.3 Morality of human action;
- 4.3.3 The Magisterium;
- 4.4.1 Human vocation and society;
- 4.4.2 Different types of justice;
- 4.4.3 Human solidarity;
- 4.6.2 Call to family, community and participation;
- 4.6.3 Respect for human life;
- 4.6.5 Social doctrine of the Church;
- 4.6.6 Major themes of Catholic Social Teaching;
- 4.6.7 Love of the poor.

CORE RELIGIOUS VOCABULARY:

Justice, Vatican II, encyclical, Dignity, Common Good, Option for the Poor, Participation, Solidarity, Subsidiarity, Stewardship, Rights and responsibilities

OTHER RELIGIOUS SOURCES:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P3x3SNiUySc> The London East End dockers and the Living Wage - East End priest Mgr John Armitage visits London's Victoria Dock to give the Catholic history behind the Great Dock Strike of 1889 that led to what was then called a 'Just Wage'.
- www.catholicsocialteaching.org.uk
- www.cafod.org.uk