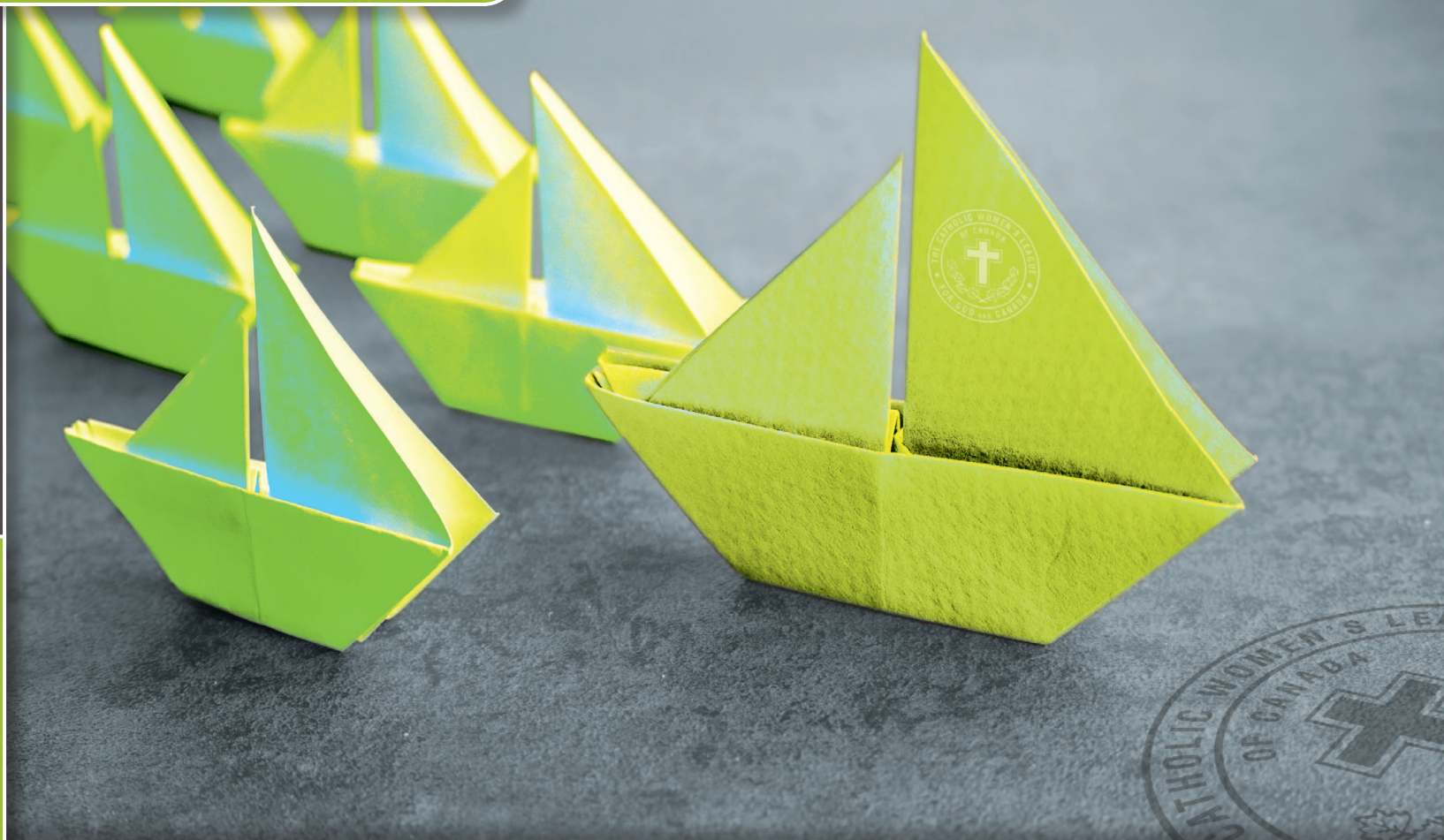


The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Catholic Social Teaching Working Group



GOAL: The Catholic Women's League of Canada addresses and supports Catholic social teaching through advocacy.



STRATEGY: Empower members by providing educational opportunities to learn more about Catholic social teaching.



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Introduction

“Work should be the setting for this rich personal growth, where many aspects of life enter into play: creativity, planning for the future, developing our talents, living out our values, relating to others, giving glory to God”
(Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*).



“Whatever your task, put yourselves into it, as done for the Lord and not for your masters”
(Colossians 3:23).

Catholic social teaching and tradition teach that human dignity must be protected, and a healthy community can only be achieved if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met.

In the papal encyclical *Rerum Novarum*, Pope Leo XIII speaks on *Capital and Labor*. “It is surely undeniable that, when a man engages in remunerative labor, the impelling reason and motive of his work is to obtain property, and thereafter to hold it as his very own. If one man hires out to another his strength or skill, he does so for the purpose of receiving in return what is necessary for the satisfaction of his needs; he therefore expressly intends to acquire a right full and real, not only to the remuneration, but also to the disposal of such remuneration, just as he pleases.”

According to the
*Universal Declaration
of Human Rights*
Article 23 (1)

“Everyone has the right to work, to free choice of employment, to just and favourable conditions of work and to protection against unemployment” and (2) “Everyone, without any discrimination, has the right to equal pay for equal work.” Therefore, “the economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God’s creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages... and to economic initiative” (The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “The Dignity



of Work and the Rights of Workers”). Pope Francis explained in *Laudato Si’* that “Benedict XVI likewise proposed ‘eliminating the structural causes of the dysfunctions of the world economy and correcting models of growth which have proved incapable of ensuring respect for the environment.’[10] He observed that the world cannot be analyzed by isolating only one of its aspects, since ‘the book of nature is one and indivisible,’ and includes the environment, life, sexuality, the family, social relations, and so forth.”

Apart from gaining self-worth, people want to be treated with respect in all walks of life, including the workplace. In the following pages, members will find resources to help them understand the plight of workers in some countries and here at home. The popes’ encyclicals speak of the importance of the right to work for the good of people and for God. The books listed tell of the mistreatment of workers and their fight for equal wages and benefits for their work. Please look at the information found in this document and learn of ways that members can help educate their council or keep up with what is happening in the world. Becoming well informed will help members act in a way that is consistent with what the church has taught and will help to further God’s reign on Earth as it is in heaven.

Some Questions for Discussion and Self-Reflection:

- Do I think all work is equal?
- Do I give athletes and movie stars more importance than a waitress, sanitary worker or personal care worker?
- What can I do to promote the dignity of work?
- Do I treat all people as equals?
- Do I wait my turn, or am I impatient when in line at stores?
- Do I avoid taking advantage of vulnerable employees?
- Do I blame the employee for the store policy?
- Do I acknowledge the employee, who is there to serve the customer, so she knows she is first and foremost a human being with dignity and the autonomy to decide how she will perform her job?

Some Actions Members Might Take:

- buy Fair Trade products
- shop local to support small businesses
- show appreciation with a smile and a short note on the bill (e.g., “Great service!”)
- pay tips in cash so employees can receive the tip immediately
- encourage a living wage for all people
- advocate for just working conditions for all people, whether local, national or international
- advocate/add their voice for workers’ rights, be it locally or internationally
- advocate for legislation that supports the rights of workers, collective bargaining, unions and affordable healthcare options for everyone
- rethink the approach to economics and global structures to tackle poverty and build a more just and equitable world

Resources

Organization Name	Brief Description	Website	E-mail Address
Australian Conference of Catholic Bishops	A concise summary of the basic teachings around the dignity of work, explaining that “Catholic Social Teaching on work begins with the dignity of the human person and an understanding that work is for the common good and part of building up and glorifying Creation. It does not, like most secular frameworks, begin with economic ideologies or an ‘economy first’ worldview.”	justiceandpeace.org.au/catholic-social-teaching-on-work/	
Caritas Aotearoa New Zealand	Caritas delivers aid, supports development and advocates for justice around the world.	caritas.org.nz/ caritas.org.nz/catholic-social-teaching	
Catholic Charities of St. Paul and Minneapolis	A wonderful list of quotes connected to the rights of workers and the dignity of work from Pope Leo’s encyclical <i>Rerum Novarum</i> .	cctwincities.org/education-advocacy/catholic-social-teaching/notable-quotations/work-and-workers-rights/	
Good Jobs for All	This organization strives to build a just economy with good jobs for every person. Rights and dignity at work campaign resources can be found here.	goodjobsforall.ca/	communications@goodjobsforall.ca
Kairos Canada	KAIROS unites Canadian churches and religious organizations in an ecumenical response to “do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God” (Mic 6:8). A multitude of resources from a Christian perspective is available.	kairoscanada.org/	info@kairoscanada.org
MacKillop Centre for Social Justice	This organization promotes the right to decent work, quality public services, human rights and equality.	psac-sjf.org/mackillop-centre-social-justice	

Organization Name	Brief Description	Website	E-mail Address
Public Service Alliance of Canada	<p>The Public Service Alliance of Canada supports the principles of human rights as proclaimed in the <i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i>, the <i>Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms</i> and the <i>Canadian Human Rights Act</i>.</p> <p>This alliance works toward achieving equality, eliminating discrimination and increasing the participation of disadvantaged groups in the workforce.</p>	psacunion.ca/human-rights	
Respect Group	Respect Group offers tools to prevent abuse, bullying and harassment and resources that highlight respect in the workplace.	respectgroupinc.com	info@respectgroupinc.com
Social Justice Connection	An organization “providing education and advocacy about human rights, global poverty and inequity.”	sjc-cjs.org	info@sjc-cjs.org
<i>The Central Minnesota Catholic Magazine</i>	Part five in a series of articles examining the seven themes of Catholic social teaching. This article focuses on the dignity of work and the rights of workers.	thecentralminnesotacatholic.org/catholic-social-teaching-dignity-of-work-and-the-rights-of-workers/	
<i>The Dialog</i>	An excellent article for information on “Catholic social teaching: Cultivating the dignity of work and the rights of workers.”	thedialog.org/catechetical-corner/catholic-social-teaching-cultivating-the-dignity-of-work-and-the-rights-of-workers/	

Organization Name	Brief Description	Website	E-mail Address
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	The bishops write, “If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.” It is a brief yet powerful statement on this key principle of Catholic social teaching.	usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/the-dignity-of-work-and-the-rights-of-workers	
Welfare to Work	Employment Support Services (Nova Scotia), a Welfare to Work program, is responsible for developing employment-related initiatives for individuals receiving income assistance.	publish.uwo.ca/~pomfret/wtw/html/provsum/ns2.html	spencesk@gov.ns.ca

Books

Author, Title, Year	Publisher	Description	Availability Information
Brady, J.A. <i>A Place at the Table: Justice for the Poor in a Land of Plenty</i> . (2008).	Twenty-Third Publications	“After extensive research, the author is convinced that a huge gap exists between talking about justice and doing justice for the poor.”	ISBN: 1585956090 Amazon en.novalis.ca/
Grassi, J.A. <i>Informing the Future: Social Justice in the New Testament</i> . (2002).	Paulist Press	“... Takes readers back to the New Testament to explore the place of social justice—the just distribution of economic, social and cultural resources to all people...”	ISBN: 9780809140923 en.novalis.ca Amazon
Heagle, J. <i>Justice Rising: The Emerging Biblical Vision</i> . (2014).	Orbis Books	This book connects biblical themes on social justice to people’s personal lives, relationships, religious institutions and communities.	ISBN: 1570758840 Amazon, goodreads.com books.google.com/

Author, Title, Year	Publisher	Description	Availability Information
Kennedy, R. <i>Dignity of Work: John Paul II Speaks to Managers and Workers</i> . (1995)	University Press of America	“This book examines the speeches of John Paul II to managers and workers. Contents: List of Talks with Themes; Foreword; Preface; Introduction; Chapter 1: Addresses to Managers, Entrepreneurs and Professionals; Chapter 2: Addresses to Managers and Workers; Chapter 3: Addresses to Workers; Chapter 4: Addresses to General Audiences.”	ISBN: 0819196207 Amazon
Massaro, T. <i>Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action</i> (3 rd Ed). (2015).	Rowan & Littlefield Publishers	“ <i>Living Justice</i> leads readers step-by-step through the building blocks of Catholic social thought, including its central themes, sources, and methods.”	ISBN: 1442230924 Amazon. Kindle eBook
McLaughlin, J. <i>Justice in the Balance: Learning from the Prophets</i> . (2008).	Novalis Publishing	This book presents “selected writings from Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea, Amos, Micha, Zechariah and Malachi” and their approach to the question of justice.	ISBN: 2896460314 Amazon
Rakoczy, S. <i>Great Mystics and Social Justice: Walking on the Two Feet of Love</i> . (2006).	Paulist Press	Christianity is called to activism as Christians are to walk on the two feet of love of God and neighbour.	ISBN: 9780809143078 Library, Amazon
Scott, M. <i>The Eucharist and Social Justice</i> . (2009).	Paulist Press	This book “explores some of the many different aspects of the inseparable relationship between Eucharist and social justice.”	ISBN: 0809145669 Kindle eBook

Movies/Podcasts

Movies	Director	Description	Website
<i>Babette's Feast.</i> (1987).	Gabriel Axel	A story about two sisters whose lives are changed when they take in Babette, a refugee from Paris.	catholicculture.org/commentary/babettes-feast-1987/?repos=6&subrepos=0&searchid=2159621
<i>Bicycle Thieves.</i> (1948).	Vittorio di Sica	A story about a father and his son who suffer unemployment in postwar Italy.	en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bicycle_Thieves
<i>Dorothy Day: Don't Call Me a Saint.</i> (2006).	Claudia Larson	A New York writer and Catholic anarchist who unwittingly created a worldwide peace and social justice movement—The Catholic Worker.	dorothydaydoc.com/buy.html
<i>The Assisi Underground.</i> (1984).	Alexander Ramati	A film dealing with the Holocaust and a priest who shelters and transports Italian Jews to safety.	en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Assisi_Underground_(film)

YouTube

Title, Year	Producer	Description	Website
<i>Bishop Barron on Pope Francis and Catholic Social Teaching.</i> (2015).	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	This film explains how the pope's encyclical letter <i>Laudato Si'</i> and his speeches in Latin America are best understood in the framework of Catholic social teaching.	youtube.com/watch?v=iGCcDH9Mp4w
<i>Catholic Social Teaching: Called to Charity and Justice.</i> (2016).	Breaking in the Habit	This film discusses the relationship, the differences and the importance of both charity and justice.	youtube.com/watch?v=MGW7zxlbVlw

Title, Year	Producer	Description	Website
<i>CST 101: The Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers.</i>	Catholic Relief Services and United States Conference of Catholic Bishops	<i>CST 101</i> is seven-part video series on Catholic social teaching. This film addresses the key principle of <i>The Dignity of Work and Rights of Workers</i> .	youtube.com/watch?v=txH7G1RkD8I
<i>Food Chains.</i> (2017).	Illumine Films, Two Moons Productions	People's interest in food is heightened these days; however, there is little interest or awareness around the hands that pick the food. Farm labour has always been one of the most challenging and poorly paid jobs, often relying on the poor and vulnerable to harvest crops. This documentary takes viewers into the lives of labourers and raises awareness about society's role in their situation.	youtube.com/watch?v=6vw-qTCW8fo
<i>Peace Depends on Dignity.</i> (2014).	Catholic News Service	In a speech to diplomats from around the world, Pope Francis speaks about the importance of respecting human dignity.	youtube.com/watch?v=lhuD-2kN_yE
<i>The True Cost.</i> (2015)	Director/Writer: Andrew Morgan	A full-length documentary film exploring the impact of fashion on people and the planet—the connections between people's choices in what they wear and its effects on workers. <i>The True Cost</i> reveals the untold story on the growing human and environmental costs of making clothes and asks viewers to reflect on who really pays the price for their clothing.	youtube.com/watch?v=nxhCpLzreCw

Songs

Song Title	Artist	Description	Website
"Here I am Lord"	John Michael Talbot		youtube.com/watch?v=-KnsSNbos4I
"One Bread One Body"	John Michael Talbot		youtube.com/watch?v=EYlJC26-Cho
"Starts With Me"	TobyMac	How does Jesus define "greatness?" What kind of community do people want for themselves and the world?	spirit4teens.wordpress.com/2018/10/19/music-and-the-gospel-starts-with-me-tobymac/
"Truth To Power"	OneRepublic	A song about the people in a wealthy nation not having the same access to education, healthcare and justice.	spirit4teens.wordpress.com/2020/10/15/music-and-the-gospel-truth-to-power-onerepublic/

Scriptures

Society tends to favour impartiality when deciding justice. The bible gives Christians evidence of God favouring the weak and poor. While society often considers merit when discussing justice, God looks more at need. In the scriptures, justice is more of an end state. It is the establishment of a community of peace where right relationships are restored.

All passages are from the *Holy Bible: New Revised Standard Version*.

Scripture Source	Scripture Quote
Genesis 2:1-3	“Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all their multitude. And on the seventh day God finished the work that he had done, and the rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done. So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it, because on it God rested from all the work that he had done in creation.”
Genesis 2:15	“The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.”
Exodus 22:21-22	“You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt. You shall not abuse any widow or orphan.”
Deuteronomy 5:13-15	“For six days you shall labour and do all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall not do any work—you, or your son or your daughter, or your male or female slave, or your ox or your donkey, or any of your livestock, or the resident alien in your towns, so that your male and female slave may rest as well as you. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt, and the Lord your God brought you out from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore the Lord your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day.”
Deuteronomy 14:28-29	“Every third year you shall bring out the full tithe of your produce for that year, and store it within your towns; the Levites, because they have no allotment or inheritance with you, as well as the resident aliens, the orphans, and the widows in your towns, may come and eat their fill so that the Lord your God may bless you in all the work that you undertake.”
Deuteronomy 24:14-15	“You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy labourers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns. You shall pay them their wages daily before sunset, because they are poor and their livelihood depends on them; otherwise they might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt.”
Psalms 82:3	“Give justice to the weak and the orphan; maintain the right of the lowly and the destitute.”

Scripture Source	Scripture Quote
Psalms 103:6	"The Lord works vindication and justice for all who are oppressed."
Proverbs 21:3	"To do righteousness and justice is more acceptable to the Lord than sacrifice."
Proverbs 31:8-9	"Speak out for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Speak out, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy."
Sirach 34:26-27	"To take away a neighbour's living is to commit murder; to deprive an employee of wages is to shed blood."
Isaiah 1:17	"Learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow."
Isaiah 58:3-7	"Why do we fast, but you do not see? Why humble ourselves, but you do not notice?" Look, you serve your own interest on your fast day, and oppress all your workers. Look, you fast only to quarrel and to fight and to strike with a wicked fist. Such fasting as you do today will not make your voice heard on high. Is such the fast that I choose, a day to humble oneself? Is it to bow down the head like a bulrush, and to lie in sackcloth and ashes? Will you call this a fast, a day acceptable to the Lord? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry, and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover them, and not to hide yourself from your own kin?"
Jeremiah 22:3	"Thus says the Lord: Act with justice and righteousness, and deliver from the hand of the oppressor anyone who has been robbed. And do no wrong or violence to the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood in this place."
Jeremiah 22:13	"Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice; who makes his neighbours work for nothing, and does not give them their wages."
Micah 6:8	"He has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?"
Zechariah 7:9-10	"Thus says the Lord of hosts; Render true judgements, show kindness and mercy to one another; do not oppress the widow, the orphan, the alien, or the poor; and do not devise evil in your hearts against one another."
Matthew 7:12	"In everything do to others as you would have them do to you; for this is the law and the prophets."

Scripture Source	Scripture Quote
Matthew 20:1-16	“For the kingdom of heaven is like a landowner who went out early in the morning to hire labourers for his vineyard. After agreeing with the labourers for the usual daily wage, he sent them into his vineyard. When he went out about nine o’clock, he saw others standing idle in the market-place; and he said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard, and I will pay you whatever is right.’ So they went. When he went out again about noon and about three o’clock, he did the same. And about five o’clock he went out and found others standing around; and he said to them, ‘Why are you standing here idle all day?’ They said to him, ‘Because no one has hired us.’ He said to them, ‘You also go into the vineyard.’ When evening came, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, ‘Call the labourers and give them their pay, beginning with the last and then going to the first.’ When those hired about five o’clock came, each of them received the usual daily wage. Now when the first came, they thought they would receive more; but each of them also received the usual daily wage. And when they received it, they grumbled against the landowner, saying, ‘These last worked only one hour, and you have made them equal to us who have borne the burden of the day and the scorching heat.’ But he replied to one of them, ‘Friend, I am doing you no wrong; did you not agree with me for the usual daily wage? Take what belongs to you and go; I choose to give to this last the same as I give to you. Am I not allowed to do what I choose with what belongs to me? Or are you envious because I am generous?’ So the last will be first, and the first will be last.”
Mark 2:27	“Then he said to them, ‘The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath.’”
Luke 3:10-14	“And the crowds asked him, ‘What then should we do?’ In reply he said to them, ‘Whoever has two coats must share with anyone who has none; and whoever has food must do likewise.’ Even tax-collectors came to be baptized, and they asked him, ‘Teacher, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Collect no more than the amount prescribed for you.’ Soldiers also asked him, ‘And we, what should we do?’ He said to them, ‘Do not extort money from anyone by threats or false accusation, and be satisfied with your wages.’”
Luke 12:13-21	“Someone in the crowd said to him, ‘Teacher, tell my brother to divide the family inheritance with me.’ But he said to him, ‘Friend, who set me to be judge and arbitrator over you?’ And he said to them, ‘Take care! Be on your guard against all kinds of greed; for one’s life does not consist in the abundance of possessions.’ Then he told them a parable: ‘The land of a rich man produced abundantly. And he thought to himself, ‘What should I do, for I have no place to store my crops?’ Then he said, ‘I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build larger ones, and there I will store all my grain and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, you have ample goods laid up for many years; relax, eat, drink, be merry.’ But God said to him, ‘You fool! This very night your life is being demanded of you. And the things you have prepared, whose will they be?’” So it is with those who store up treasures for themselves but are not rich toward God.”
Acts 4:32-35	“Now the whole group of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one claimed private ownership of any possessions, but everything they owned was held in common. With great power the apostles gave their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all. There was not a needy person among them, for as many as owned lands or houses sold them and brought the proceeds of what was sold. They laid it at the apostles’ feet, and it was distributed to each as any had need.”

Scripture Source	Scripture Quote
James 5:1-6	<p>“Come now, you rich people, weep and wail for the miseries that are coming to you. Your riches have rotted, and your clothes are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you, and it will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. Listen! The wages of the labourers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts on a day of slaughter. You have condemned and murdered the righteous one, who does not resist you.”</p>

Prophets Among Us



Sharan Burrow (1954-)

Sharan Burrow has had a long career of visionary leadership at the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). She was instrumental in the passage of the groundbreaking International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention on a variety of topics, including the advancement of a social contract for all workers and the elimination of gender-based violence.

As the first woman to hold the position of general secretary of the ITUC, Sharan Burrow has represented workers and civil society groups in global policy discussions at numerous United Nations' bodies, the ILO, the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund. Given the magnitude and size of these organizations, it is easy to see why she has been dedicated her life to the right of workers and their dignity in their work.

Other:

"Work Choices"

"World Justice Project"

Equal Times

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Your_rights_at_work

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_Justice_Project

equaltimes.org/sharan-burrow

Joseph Cardijn (1982-1967) – Cardinal-Deacon of San Michele Arcangelo

Joseph Leo Cardijn was a Belgian Roman Catholic cardinal and founder of the Young Christian Workers. His commitment to improving the conditions of the working class was rooted in his efforts to evangelize and bring the good news of the gospels to the working class that too often felt abandoned. Pope Pius XI supported his work and efforts to oppose increasing inequalities between economic classes. He served as a critical contributor to the Second Vatican Council, working closely with Pope John XXIII and Pope Paul VI. He was named a Cardinal in 1965 by Pope Paul VI.

Books:

Laypeople Into Action

amazon.ca/Laypeople-Into-Action-Joseph-Cardijn/dp/1925643247

Books:

"Young Christian Workers"

"Student Catholic Action"

Young Christian Workers of Ireland

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeunesse_Ouvri%C3%A8re_Ch%C3%A9tienne

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Student_Catholic_Action

ycw.ie/





Dorothy Day (1897-1980) — Catholic Worker Movement

Dorothy Day's life and legacy is a radical movement, shaking the very roots of Catholics' understanding of being a faithful disciple of Jesus. She was devoted to the gospel and the church, totally immersed in the social issues of the day, and deeply in touch with the "signs of the times." To this day, her spirit fosters nonviolence, a personal commitment to the poor and fidelity to community and God.

Dorothy Day's vision lives on in the Catholic Worker Movement that she cofounded with Peter Maurin. Her "houses of hospitality" can be found in many countries worldwide, with new houses opening every year. The houses function under the same rule by which she lived. She promoted the way of the gospels, most notably those from the *Sermon on the Mount* and Matthew, chapter 25.

Another way her vision lives on is through *The Catholic Worker* newspaper, first published in 1933 and still published today. The newspaper focuses the light of the gospel on Catholics' consciences as they struggle with social justice issues. Dorothy Day wrote to comfort the afflicted and to afflict the comfortable.

Her vision of God's kingdom here on Earth continues to challenge Catholics to build community, grow in faith and serve the poor in their midst.

Books:

From Union Square to Rome

catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/2.pdf

Loaves and Fishes: The Inspiring Story of the Catholic Worker Movement

amazon.ca/Loaves-Fishes-Inspiring-Catholic-Movement/dp/1570751560

The Eleventh Virgin

catholicworker.org/dorothyday/articles/1.html

The Long Loneliness: The Autobiography of the Legendary Catholic Social Activist

amazon.ca/Long-Loneliness-Autobiography-Legendary-Catholic/dp/0060617519

Other:

"An Introduction to Dorothy Day"

americamagazine.org/faith/2001/08/27/introduction-dorothy-day

"Dorothy Day"

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dorothy_Day#The_Catholic_Worker_Movement

"Meet the Pioneers who Made Way for Catholic Activists Today"

uscatholic.org/articles/201901/meet-the-pioneers-who-cleared-the-path-for-todays-catholic-activists/

Pacem in Terris Award

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacem_in_Terris_Award

Saints in 60: Dorothy Day

youtube.com/watch?v=w1UWjNcl-Mw

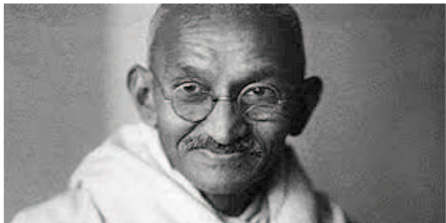


Photo: Zee News, India

Mahatma Gandhi (Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, 1869-1948)

Mahatma Gandhi was trained as a lawyer and lived as a politician, but was best known for his role as a social activist leading his country against the British rule over India. His principles of nonviolent protest worked to achieve social progress and undo unjust structures. These principles inspired people worldwide to bring about a more just global society. His influence continues to be felt today.

Mahatma Gandhi's travels in apartheid South Africa were the experiences that converted him—it was his moment of truth. His life is a rich story of how one person can make a difference for workers and their rights, not only during their lifetime but throughout the ensuing years.

Other:

“Salt March: Indian History”

[britannica.com/event/Salt-March](https://www.britannica.com/event/Salt-March)

“Indian National Congress: Political Party, India”

[britannica.com/topic/Indian-National-Congress](https://www.britannica.com/topic/Indian-National-Congress)

Dr. Lorretta Johnson

Dr. Lorretta Johnson has dedicated her life to advancing the rights of educators and children both within the United States and globally. She began her career rallying for better pay for paraprofessionals in Baltimore, Maryland. She rose through the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) ranks in Maryland, where she served as its local president for 17 years and later became the secretary-treasurer of the AFT. The power of the Black Lives Matter movements and the labour activism in 2020 are ongoing issues of concern and passion for her. Dr. Johnson expressed, “In this exciting hopeful moment, let us be sure to look inwards at ourselves, into our unions, and our own organizations, because there is a basic fundamental value of labor, and it is the source of our strength.”



Other:

American Federation of Teachers

aft.org/about/leadership/lorretta-johnson

“Support staff are the infrastructure of the world”

worldsofeducation.org/en/woe_homepage/woe_detail/16888/support-staff-are-the-infrastructure-of-the-world-by-lorretta-johnson



Mother Jones (1837-1930)

Mother Jones, a fearless fighter for workers' rights, was once deemed "the most dangerous woman in America." She rose to prominence as a fiery orator and fearless organizer for the Mine Workers during the first two decades of the 20th century. Due to her commitment and reputation, her voice was valued and sought after on behalf of workers' rights. "I have been in jail more than once and I expect to go again. If you are too cowardly to fight, I will fight," she said. Words like this inspired—or embarrassed others to join her cause.

She welcomed African American workers and involved women and children in strikes. She organized miners' wives into teams armed with mops and brooms to guard the mines' replacement workers. She even went so far as to stage parades with children carrying signs that read, "We Want to Go to School and Not to the Mines." Clearly, she was a woman before her time and deeply committed to improving workers' rights.

Other:

- "Industrial Workers of the World" en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Industrial_Workers_of_the_World
- "Child Labor Laws in the United States" en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Child_labor_laws_in_the_United_States
- "Anti-Catholicism" en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Anti-Catholic_sentiment
- "Susan Campbell Bartoletti" en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kids_on_Strike

Louise Leonard McLaren (1885-1968)—Founder of the Southern Summer School for Women Workers

As the YWCA industrial secretary, Louise Leonard McLaren travelled through the American south to organize women working in industry. With her A.M. in economics, in 1927, she organized the Southern Summer School for Women Workers. She believed that education was a direct way to bring about social change. As a result, more than 300 working-class women came to summer residence to train as leaders in their fields through this program.

In 1938, men were included in the residence program, and by 1940, one-half of the students were men. She had the support of the labour unions and a commitment to the tenets of workers' education. In 1944, Louise McLaren moved to New York City, where she served as an organizer for the Congress of Industrial Organizations Political Action Committee. She held many positions until her retirement without losing her passion for workers' education and its merits.

Other:

- Biographical Dictionary of Modern American Educators* books.google.com/books?id=PBj5-zHEMvoC&q=Louise+Leonard+McLaren&pg=PA222
- "Columbia University" encyclopedia.com/social-sciences-and-law/education/colleges-us/columbia-university
- "Bryn Mawr Summer School for Women Workers in Industry" en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bryn_Mawr_Summer_School_for_Women_Workers_in_Industry



Irene Levine Paull (1908-1981)

Irene Levine Paull, a writer and labour activist from Minnesota, responded to discrimination by fighting for the rights of oppressed people. She was a voice in labour organizing and communist politics, insisting women could travel and write professionally, just as men could. One of her significant accomplishments was founding the newspaper that became the *Minneapolis Labor Review*. In addition, she penned columns, wrote poetry, plays and fiction that addressed themes of injustice.

Other:

“Racism in the United States” en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Racism_in_the_United_States



Irene Levine Paull (1908-1981)

In 1899, Helen Marot published *A Handbook of Labor Literature* which exposed working conditions in the custom tailoring trades in Philadelphia. She investigated child labour in New York City and was instrumental in the formation of the New York Child Labor Committee. In 1903, Helen, Florence Kelley and Josephine Clara Goldmark wrote a report on child labour that influenced the passage of the *1903 Compulsory Education Act* by the state legislature. In 1909, along with five other women, Helen Marot marched to city hall in New York demanding an end to abuse by police. Her commitment to labour rights saw her become the executive secretary of the New York branch of the national Women's Trade Union League in 1906. She likewise created the Bookkeepers, Stenographers, and Accountants' Union of New York. This varied and ongoing work on many levels secured her place as a strong advocate for workers and their rights.

Other:

“Women's Trade Union League” en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women%27s_Trade_Union_League

“Association of Neighborhood Workers” en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Association_of_Neighborhood_Workers&action=edit&redlink=1



Photo: Peoples Dispatch

Chico Mendes (1944–1988)—Martyr and Rubber Worker

Chico Mendes lived in northwestern Brazil, where he organized rubber tappers and people who earned a living extracting natural resources from the rain forest. He was the son of a rubber tapper. Like so many other poor workers, he was negatively impacted by giant landowners and ranchers who destroyed the forests on which their livelihood depended.

Chico began to organize rubber workers in 1977, hoping to protect their livelihood but soon realized that a more comprehensive vision of protecting ecological systems was needed. The “cry of the earth and the cry of the poor” are the same cry! The nonviolent actions of the workers gradually attracted international attention resulting in Chico Mendes receiving the United Nations’ Environment Programme’s Global 500 Award for environmental protection. Unfortunately, this international recognition was not enough to protect him, and he was shot and killed on December 22, 1988.–

“Living our vocation to be protectors of God’s handiwork is essential to a life of virtue; it is not an optional or a secondary aspect of our Christian experience.” (Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*)

Films:

Chico Mendes: Voice of the Amazon

Children of the Amazon: Chico Mendes

Books:

Fight for the Forest: Chico Mendes in His Own Words

amazon.com/Fight-Forest-Chico-Mendes-Words/dp/0906156513

Walking the Forest with Chico Mendes: Struggle for Justice in the Amazon

books.google.com/books?id=vf6JglqhNpgC

Other:

“Chico Mendes Extractive Reserve”

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chico_Mendes_Extractive_Reserve

“Chico Mendes Institute for Biodiversity Conservation”

gov.br/icmbio/pt-br

“National Wildlife Federation”

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Wildlife_Federation

“United Nations Environment Programme”

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_Nations_Environmental_Program



Lucy Randolph Mason (1882-1959)

Lucy Randolph Mason devoted her life to bringing about more humane conditions for the working class, ending racial injustice and ensuring that union organizers throughout the South were guaranteed the constitutional rights to free speech, assembly and due process so needed in the United States in the early 20th century.

Books:

To Win These Rights: A Personal Story of the CIO in the South

Other:

“Lucy Randolph Mason” edu.lva.virginia.gov/changemakers/items/show/354

“Lucy Randolph Mason” aflcio.org/about/history/labor-history-people/lucy-randolph-mason



Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez (1982-)

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez is an American labour organizer and writer. The family business, a fair trade Mexican jewellery business, required that the family live and travel to Mexico. In high school, she began organizing and working with newly-arrived Mexican immigrants in Ohio.

Cristina Tzintzún Ramirez helped establish the Workers Defense Project and held the position of executive director from 2006 until 2016. There, she and co-founder Emily Timm led the organization to focus its efforts on the construction industry in Texas. She was responsible for developing the organization's Better Builder Program, which won construction workers living wages, higher safety standards, training and on-site enforcement by Better Builder monitors against some of the largest corporations in the world.

Other:

“Interfaith Worker Justice”

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Interfaith_Worker_Justice

“Key People in Labor History”

aflcio.org/about/history/labor-history-people

“Occupational Safety and Health Administration”

en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Occupational_Safety_and_Health_Administration

“Protecting Immigrant Workers”

shelterforce.org/2015/09/01/protecting_immigrant_workers/

Books:

“Colonize This!” from *Colonize This!: Young Women of Color on Today's Feminism*, Edited by Daisy Hernández and Bushra Rehman. New York. Seal Press, 2002.

“Killing Misogyny: A Personal Story of Love, Violence and Strategies for Survival” from *Yes Means Yes! Visions of Female Sexual Power and A World Without Rape*. Jaclyn Friedman and Jessica Valenti. Seal Press, 2008.





The Catholic Women's League of Canada

C-702 Scotland Avenue
Winnipeg, MB R3M 1X5

Tel: (204) 927-2310
Website: cwl.ca
E-mail: info@cwl.ca

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