

# Community and Common Good

## 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.



## Catholic Social Teaching Key Principle: Community and the Common Good

The essential principle of Catholic social teaching is the concept of community and the common good. In *Gaudium et Spes*, Pope Paul VI defines the common good as “the sum of those conditions of social life which allow social groups and their individual members relatively thorough and ready access to their own fulfillment...” (26).

Catholics are often told that the ultimate goal of the marriage vocation is to help their spouse to get into heaven. The common good takes this goal to the next level where people strive to get not only those they are closest to into heaven, but all of humanity and creation as well.

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* indicates that the common good consists of three essential elements: respect for the individual, the social well-being and development of the group and peace.

Living in an affluent society, Canadians have been accustomed to giving of their time, talent and treasure to others with great charity, without realizing many social structures continue to create situations that lead to poverty, disparity of income, cultural alienation and abuse to others and the environment. In the quest for the common good, League members must remember their obligation to include justice in their works of charity so that they may create a world that is not centred on individual gain to the detriment of others, but rather on equitable relationship with others. Where each person in the community receives and contributes what he/she is able for the betterment of the whole, God’s reign is furthered. Where disagreements are solved through discussion and negotiation rather than through violence, God’s kingdom on earth is created.

The church teaches that it is the vocation and mission of the lay faithful to ensure they are working towards the universal common good. In his apostolic exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, Pope John Paul II uses the parable of the labourers in the vineyard from Matthew 20 to remind



Catholics that Jesus calls them to be labourers in the vineyard. “And going out about the third hour he saw others standing idle in the marketplace; and to them he said, ‘You go into the vineyard too’” (Mt 20: 3-4). In this parable, the householder continues to go back searching for workers, urging them to go into the vineyard, for there is much labour to be done, just as there is much to be done in the current world. “A new state of affairs today both in the Church and in social, economic, political and cultural life, calls with a particular urgency for the action of the lay faithful. If lack of commitment is always unacceptable, the present time renders it even more so. It is not permissible for anyone to remain idle” (CL 3).

Therefore, members are encouraged to use these resources to point them in the direction that God is calling them into the vineyard. What can members do to labour for their Lord? For the work is plenty, but the labourers are few.

## Organizations

Name	Website	Mission
Amnesty International	<a href="https://www.amnesty.org/en/">amnesty.org/en/</a>	Amnesty International is an organization that works to uphold human rights. It encourages the public to pressure governments to comply with international laws and standards.
Catholic Civil Rights League (CCRL)	<a href="https://www.ccrl.ca/">ccrl.ca/</a>	This lay apostolate organization works towards a more just society through the evangelization of culture. The prayer-focused participation of the laity based on moral truth seeks to build a civilization based on love and a culture of life. The bishops' vocation is to teach and the laity's vocation is to take that teaching into the world and sanctify it through social and political participation.
Catholic Conscience	<a href="https://www.catholicconscience.org/who/">catholicconscience.org/who/</a>	An organization that encourages civic evangelization based on Catholic social teaching. Its goal is to promote leadership that uses theological reflection based on charity and good stewardship in all areas of public life, focusing on politics and public service.
Catholic Eco-Investment Accelerator Toolkit	<a href="https://faithcommongood.org/eco_investment_accelerator_toolkit">faithcommongood.org/eco_investment_accelerator_toolkit</a>	This website gives Catholics a toolkit to see, judge and act on their investments through the lens of faith and climate science.
Catholics for the Common Good	<a href="https://www.ccgaction.org/">ccgaction.org/</a>	This lay apostolate group for people of diverse backgrounds prepares people to work towards a more just society—one that honours the culture of life using secular language and arguments based on Catholic social teaching principles.
Chalice	<a href="https://www.chalice.ca/">chalice.ca/</a>	A Catholic international aid charity in 14 developing countries, all under local direction. Nearly all funds collected (90.5%) support programming in such areas as nutrition, health, water safety and agricultural support.
CNIB Foundation	<a href="https://www.cnib.ca/">cnib.ca/</a>	A Canadian organization that advocates for and empowers people with vision impairment to fulfill their chosen vocations.

Name	Website	Mission
Council of Canadians with Disabilities	<a href="http://ccdonline.ca/">ccdonline.ca/</a>	A Canadian organization that advocates for people with disabilities so they may fulfill their full potential and realize the same human rights as those without disabilities. A list of its member organizations can be found at <a href="http://ccdonline.ca/en/about/members">ccdonline.ca/en/about/members</a> .
Development and Peace – Caritas Canada	<a href="http://devp.org/en/">devp.org/en/</a>	Development and Peace–Caritas Canada encourages international solidarity and advocates for alternatives to socially, politically and economically unjust structures that occur worldwide. As the official development organization of the Canadian Catholic church, it is inspired by gospel values with an emphasis on the preferential option for the poor.
Faith and the Common Good	<a href="http://faithcommongood.org/">faithcommongood.org/</a>	An interfaith network in Canada focused on improving resiliency and sustainability in communities by repurposing buildings, encouraging the use of clean energy, advocating for clean water and increasing support for citizens living in challenging climates.
International Forum of Catholic Action Associations and Federations of Movements	<a href="http://catholicactionforum.org/segretariato/?lang=en#loaded">catholicactionforum.org/segretariato/?lang=en#loaded</a>	A forum for lay apostolate groups worldwide where concern for and solidarity with Catholic action groups may be expressed. The forum analyzes ways to evangelize the world while recognizing that different concerns exist in different regions.
Jesuit Forum for Social Faith and Justice	<a href="http://jesuitforum.ca/">jesuitforum.ca/</a>	Through listening and exploring individual stories and shared experiences, the Jesuit Forum encourages people to look deeper at what is occurring in the globalized world. This experience helps participants engage in current social and ecological issues and seek ways to create a more just and sustainable world.
KM Productions	<a href="http://kmproductions.ca/id.html">kmproductions.ca/id.html</a>	KM Productions is a Halifax-based company that offers many films on topics such as the Irish Famine, the history of Medicare, the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and climate change that can be used in educational settings.

Name	Website	Mission
MakeWay	<a href="http://makeway.org/">makeway.org/</a>	Founded by a few people interested in creating a healthy planet and just Canadian society, MakeWay's roots started in British Columbia's Great Bear Forest. The organization has grown through its five principles of partnership, listening, action, courage and equity to include nationwide programs that focus on creating a world where nature and communities flourish together.
Social Justice Resource Center	<a href="http://socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/">socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/</a>	The Social Justice Resource Center is an American website that consolidates resources on Catholic social justice. Its resources help one learn and share information about pressing issues, and includes facts and figures, biographies of key people and links to relevant publications, films and websites.
UNICEF	<a href="http://unicef.org/">unicef.org/</a>	UNICEF is a United Nations' directed organization that advocates for children by saving lives, defending children's rights and helping them reach their full potential. It works in areas including health, education, social policy and emergencies.

## Educational Opportunities

Courses and Articles	Website	Information
Catholic Conscience	<a href="http://catholicconscience.org/catholic-action/">catholicconscience.org/catholic-action/</a>	Catholic Conscience offers programs, toolkits, workshops and other opportunities for Catholics to learn about voter engagement and how to be a school trustee, politician and contributing member of society. This website also provides examples of how Catholic social teaching is being lived out and modelled in Canada today.
Catholic Women's Leadership Foundation's Leadership Program Saint Paul University, Ottawa, Ontario	<a href="http://cwlfcanada.ca/">cwlfcanada.ca/</a>	A powerful program that empowers Catholic women with leadership skills so that they may create change in Canada based on Catholic values. Interested individuals can find the application process on the website. The program is subsidized; however, there is a cost of \$1,000 per participant.
Faith & the Common Good resources	<a href="http://faithcommongood.org/resources">faithcommongood.org/resources</a>	This webpage offers downloadable resources to help individuals and parishes reduce their environmental footprint and increase community service with a focus on Indigenous allyship.
Indigenous Canada Coursera in partnership with the University of Alberta	<a href="https://coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada?utm_source=gg&amp;utm_medium=sem&amp;campaignid=13440968592&amp;utm_campaign=12-Indigenous-Canada-Alberta-CA&amp;utm_content=12-Indigenous-Canada-Alberta-CA&amp;adgroupid=130160700384&amp;device=c&amp;keyword=indigenous%20studies&amp;matchtype=b&amp;network=g&amp;deviceid=&amp;adpostion=&amp;creativeid=526533617725&amp;hide_mobile_promo&amp;gclid=EAlalQobChMIz8iXn5KU9AlVhBB9Ch2ryArOEAAAYASAAEgIOLvD_BwE">coursera.org/learn/indigenous-canada?utm_source=gg&amp;utm_medium=sem&amp;campaignid=13440968592&amp;utm_campaign=12-Indigenous-Canada-Alberta-CA&amp;utm_content=12-Indigenous-Canada-Alberta-CA&amp;adgroupid=130160700384&amp;device=c&amp;keyword=indigenous%20studies&amp;matchtype=b&amp;network=g&amp;deviceid=&amp;adpostion=&amp;creativeid=526533617725&amp;hide_mobile_promo&amp;gclid=EAlalQobChMIz8iXn5KU9AlVhBB9Ch2ryArOEAAAYASAAEgIOLvD_BwE</a>	Indigenous Canada is a free Canadian history course from an Indigenous perspective offered through Coursera. It connects many of the key issues that Indigenous peoples of Canada deal with today to situations from the past, such as the fur trade, land claims and legal systems and rights.

Courses and Articles	Website	Information
<p>Prairie Symposium for the Common Good: Ecology and the Common Good</p> <p>An initiative of St. Paul's College, University of Manitoba; Campion College, University of Regina and St. Thomas More College, University of Saskatchewan.</p>	<p><a href="http://umanitoba.ca/st-pauls-college/pscg">umanitoba.ca/st-pauls-college/pscg</a></p>	<p>This symposium is a new initiative devoted to the Catholic social teaching of the common good and coordinated among three colleges. Themes will vary by year.</p>

## Books and Articles

Author, Title, Year	Publisher or Link	Synopsis
Harman, C. <i>For the Common Good: Discovering and Using Your Spiritual Gifts</i> . 2021.	Discipleship Resources	The author uses St. Paul's scripture writings to lead readers to discover their personal gifts and learn to use them to serve others.
Himes, K., ed. <i>Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretations</i> (2 <sup>nd</sup> edition). 2018.	Georgetown University Press	This book explores the situation in the church leading up to the first social teaching publication, Pope Leo XIII's <i>Rerum Novarum</i> in 1891, and comments on the ensuing teachings looking at successes and shortcomings and questions that must be addressed for future generations. The collection includes contributions by 22 leading moral theologians, including commentary on Pope Benedict XVI's <i>Caritas in Veritate</i> and Pope Francis' <i>Laudato Si'</i> .
Hollenbach, D. <i>The Common Good and Christian Ethics</i> . 2012.	Cambridge University Press	The author addresses contemporary social divisions considering the Catholic tradition of the common good, social analysis, moral philosophy and theological ethics. He challenges both believers and secular people to live together in solidarity to address the challenges of globalization and consumerism prevalent in society today.
Kammer, F. <i>Doing Faith Justice: An Introduction to Catholic Social Thought</i> (revised edition). 2004.	Paulist Press	Fred Kammer is a lawyer, activist and Jesuit priest. Looking at the current consumerist world, he uses biblical stories to illustrate the historical development of Catholic social teaching and provides a framework for how to live faithfully and justly. This book was revised in 2004 to include more current data and analysis.
Still, C., Rompré, G., eds. <i>Turning to the World: Social Justice and the Common Good since Vatican II</i> (3 <sup>rd</sup> edition). 2018.	McGill-Queen's University Press	This collection of ten essays focuses on the reception, influences, developments and applications in the Canadian and Latin American Catholic churches' understanding of freedom, conscience and the common good since Vatican II.

Author, Title, Year	Publisher or Link	Synopsis
United Nations Commission on Human Rights. <i>Universal Declaration of Human Rights</i> . 1948.	<a href="http://un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights">un.org/en/about-us/universal-declaration-of-human-rights</a>	Proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly in Paris on December 20, 1948, this declaration contains the fundamental human rights that must be protected.
Van Loenen, G. <i>Nuremburg Code</i> . 1947	<a href="http://media.tghn.org/medialibrary/2011/04/BMJ_No_7070_Volume_313_The_Nuremberg_Code.pdf">media.tghn.org/medialibrary/2011/04/BMJ_No_7070_Volume_313_The_Nuremberg_Code.pdf</a>	This document includes the ten standards laid out during the Nuremberg Tribunal that physicians must conform to when conducting experiments on human subjects.

## Films

Title, Year, Length	Producer, Director, Link	Summary
<i>Amazing Grace</i> , 2006 01:58:00 minutes	Director: Michael Apted Produced by: Bristol Bay Productions, Ingenious Film Partners, Sunflower Productions <a href="http://imdb.com/title/tt0454776/">imdb.com/title/tt0454776/</a>	The biographical drama film is about William Wilberforce's fight to abolish the slave trade industry in the British Empire.
<i>Aquinas on the Common Good</i> , 2018 00:06:04 minutes	Dr. Gloria Frost University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, Minnesota <a href="https://youtube.com/watch?v=6ao27NrhFH8">youtube.com/watch?v=6ao27NrhFH8</a>	The common good is explained as a good that can be shared without being diminished. The narrator, Dr. Gloria Frost, uses Aquinas' idea of the shared life of virtue.
<i>Catholic Social Teaching: Called to Charity and Justice</i> , 2016 00:10:19 minutes	Father Casey, OFM Produced by: Breaking in the Habit. <a href="https://youtube.com/watch?v=MGW7zxlVlw">youtube.com/watch?v=MGW7zxlVlw</a>	"If you want to be a Christian, you have to be concerned about justice." This short film encourages Christians, through charity, to challenge the areas in society that systemically diminish and discriminate towards others so that they are not allowed to reach their full potential.
<i>What exactly is the Common Good?</i> , 2018 00:03:51 minutes	Produced by: Duquesne University <a href="https://youtube.com/watch?v=x6oSjg6wuBg">youtube.com/watch?v=x6oSjg6wuBg</a>	This short film explains Catholic teachings on the common good.
<i>Wonder</i> 01:53:00 minutes	Director: Stephen Chbosky Produced by: Lionsgate, Participant, Walden Media <a href="http://imdb.com/title/tt2543472/">imdb.com/title/tt2543472/</a>	Based on the book by R.J. Palacio, <i>Wonder</i> tells the story of a boy with a physical deformity who enters school for the first time and must cope with prejudice as he learns to find his place in life.

## Prayers and Prayer Services

Resource	Link	Information
<p>“A Guide to Praying for Canada” Crossroads</p>	<p><a href="https://crossroads.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Prayer-Guide-for-Canada-v1.pdf">crossroads.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Prayer-Guide-for-Canada-v1.pdf</a></p>	<p>A two-page guide to praying for Canada and its peoples, vocations, families, churches and future generations with scripture quotations to help guide the prayers.</p>
<p>“A Prayer for the Common Good” Carrie Meyer McGrath, MDiv, MAS, Director with The Catholic Health Association of the United States</p>	<p><a href="https://chausa.org/docs/default-source/health-progress/prayer-service-marchapril_2018.pdf?sfvrsn=5bffe7f2_4">chausa.org/docs/default-source/health-progress/prayer-service-marchapril_2018.pdf?sfvrsn=5bffe7f2_4</a></p>	<p>A short prayer service that focuses on the common good.</p>
<p>Social Justice Resource Center</p>	<p><a href="https://socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/prayers/justice/">socialjusticeresourcecenter.org/prayers/justice/</a></p>	<p>This web page offers many prayers that seek justice for all.</p>
<p>“The Common Good” Fr. Thomas Nairn, OFM, PhD, Senior Director with The Catholic Health Association of the United States</p>	<p><a href="https://chausa.org/docs/default-source/health-progress/prayer-service-the-common-good.pdf?sfvrsn=a40711f2_2">chausa.org/docs/default-source/health-progress/prayer-service-the-common-good.pdf?sfvrsn=a40711f2_2</a></p>	<p>A short prayer service that reflects on five obstacles that make striving towards the common good difficult.</p>

## Papal Documents

Title and Link	Author, Year Published	Description
<p><i>Caritas in Veritate</i> (Integral Human Development in Charity And Truth)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html">vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20090629_caritas-in-veritate.html</a></p>	<p>Pope Benedict XVI, 2009</p>	<p>In this encyclical letter, Pope Benedict XVI deepens the church's social doctrine by focusing on its principles: love in truth with a focus on justice for the common good.</p>
<p><i>Christifideles Laici</i> (The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church And in the World)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici.html">vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_30121988_christifideles-laici.html</a></p>	<p>Pope John Paul II, 1988</p>	<p>The apostolic exhortation summarizes the teachings of the 1987 synod of bishops on the vocation and mission of the laity.</p> <p>Pope John Paul II declares that the faithful are called to holiness through their baptism and encouraged to proclaim the gospel to the world. It is exactly the secular character of one's vocation that is its blessing. Christians must strive to not only live the gospel values but work towards a world that promotes the dignity of the human person and the common good.</p>
<p><i>Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church</i>  <a href="http://vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html">vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/justpeace/documents/rc_pc_justpeace_doc_20060526_compendio-dott-soc_en.html</a></p>	<p>Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, at the request of Pope John Paul II, 2004</p>	<p>“The document is presented as an instrument for the moral and pastoral discernment of the complex events that mark our time; as a guide to inspire, at the individual and collective levels, attitudes and choices that will permit all people to look to the future with greater trust and hope; as an aid for the faithful concerning the Church's teaching in the area of social morality.”</p> <p>The document is organized well and has an extensive table of contents for easy reference.</p>

Title and Link	Author, Year Published	Description
<p><i>Evangelii Gaudium</i> (The Proclamation of The Gospel in Today's World)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html">vatican.va/content/francesco/en/apost_exhortations/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium.html</a></p>	Pope Francis, 2013	<p>In his timely apostolic exhortation, Pope Francis writes about the Christian duty to advocate and act for the common good. He reminds readers that the dignity of the human person and the common good rank higher than one's personal comfort and privileges. This is also true on a global scale, where one country has more than another. Christians are obligated to strive for the best for all people.</p> <p>Chapter four, topic three, is particularly helpful.</p>
<p><i>Justitia in Mundo</i> (Justice in the World)  <a href="http://cctwincities.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Justicia-in-Mundo.pdf">cctwincities.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/Justicia-in-Mundo.pdf</a></p>	Synod of Bishops, 1971	The document calls attention to the structural roots of injustice in the world which affects human relationships. The church's mission is to act in the pursuit of justice and participate in the transformation of the world.
<p><i>Laudato Si'</i> (Care for Our Common Home)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html">vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html</a></p>	Pope Francis, 2015	This encyclical calls for the conversion of both individual and communal acts. Pope Francis urges national and international leaders to make policies and educate citizens to reshape their habits and behaviours to enhance justice and peace on earth.
<p><i>Mater et Magistra</i> (Christianity and Social Progress)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater.html">vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_15051961_mater.html</a></p>	Pope John XXIII, 1961	Pope John XXIII calls for greater awareness of the need for all peoples to live as one community with a common good.
<p><i>Pacem in Terris</i> (Establishing Universal Peace in Truth, Justice, Charity, and Liberty)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html">vatican.va/content/john-xxiii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_j-xxiii_enc_11041963_pacem.html</a></p>	Pope John XXIII, 1963	<i>Pacem in Terris</i> focuses on the relationships between individuals, individuals and the community and nations, affirming the inviolability of human rights that arise from a genuine respect for and adherence to the law of God.

Title and Link	Author, Year Published	Description
<p><i>Populorum Progressio</i> (The Development of Peoples)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum.html">vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_26031967_populorum.html</a></p>	<p>Pope Paul VI, 1967</p>	<p>Calling attention to the worsening marginalization of the poor and on liberation from injustice and genuine human values.</p>
<p><i>Sollicitudo Rei Socialis</i> (20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of <i>Populorum Progressio</i>)  <a href="http://vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html">vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_30121987_sollicitudo-rei-socialis.html</a></p>	<p>Pope John Paul II, 1987</p>	<p>A follow-up encyclical to the notion of development in <i>Populorum Progressio</i> that emphasizes the moral nature of development leading humanity to the “fullness of being.”</p>

## Church Documents and Teaching

Catechism	Quote
1901	<p>If authority belongs to the order established by God, “the choice of the political regime and the appointment of rulers are left to the free decision of the citizens.”</p> <p>The diversity of political regimes is morally acceptable, provided they serve the legitimate good of the communities that adopt them. Regimes whose nature is contrary to the natural law, to the public order and to the fundamental rights of persons cannot achieve the common good of the nations on which they have been imposed.</p>
1902	<p>Authority does not derive its moral legitimacy from itself. It must not behave in a despotic manner, but must act for the common good as a “moral force based on freedom and a sense of responsibility”:</p> <p>A human law has the character of law to the extent that it accords with right reason, and thus derives from the eternal law. Insofar as it falls short of right reason it is said to be an unjust law, and thus has not so much the nature of law as of a kind of violence.</p>
1903	<p>Authority is exercised legitimately only when it seeks the common good of the group concerned and if it employs morally licit means to attain it. If rulers were to enact unjust laws or take measures contrary to the moral order, such arrangements would not be binding in conscience. In such a case, “authority breaks down completely and results in shameful abuse.”</p>
1905	<p>In keeping with the social nature of man, the good of each individual is necessarily related to the common good, which in turn can be defined only in reference to the human person:</p> <p>Do not live entirely isolated, having retreated into yourselves, as if you were already justified, but gather instead to seek the common good together.</p>
1906	<p>By common good is to be understood “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.” The common good concerns the life of all. It calls for prudence from each, and even more from those who exercise the office of authority. It consists of <i>three essential elements</i>:</p>
1907	<p>First, the common good presupposes <i>respect for the person</i> as such. In the name of the common good, public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person. Society should permit each of its members to fulfill his vocation. In particular, the common good resides in the conditions for the exercise of the natural freedoms indispensable for the development of the human vocation, such as “the right to act according to a sound norm of conscience and to safeguard... privacy, and rightful freedom also in matters of religion.”</p>
1908	<p>Second, the common good requires the <i>social well-being and development</i> of the group itself. Development is the epitome of all social duties. Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.</p>

Catechism	Quote
1909	Finally, the common good requires <i>peace</i> , that is, the stability and security of a just order. It presupposes that authority should ensure by morally acceptable means the <i>security</i> of society and its members. It is the basis of the right to legitimate personal and collective defense.
1910	Each human community possesses a common good which permits it to be recognized as such; it is in the <i>political community</i> that its most complete realization is found. It is the role of the state to defend and promote the common good of civil society, its citizens and intermediate bodies.
1911	Human interdependence is increasing and gradually spreading throughout the world. The unity of the human family, embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity, implies a <i>universal common good</i> . This good calls for an organization of the community of nations able to “provide for the different needs of men; this will involve the sphere of social life to which belong questions of food, hygiene, education,... and certain situations arising here and there, as for example... alleviating the miseries of refugees dispersed throughout the world, and assisting migrants and their families.”
1912	The common good is always oriented towards the progress of persons: “The order of things must be subordinate to the order of persons, and not the other way around.” This order is founded on truth, built up in justice and animated by love.
1913	“Participation” is the voluntary and generous engagement of a person in social interchange. It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person.
1914	Participation is achieved first of all by taking charge of the areas for which one assumes <i>personal responsibility</i> : by the care taken for the education of his family, by conscientious work, and so forth, man participates in the good of others and of society.
1915	As far as possible citizens should take an active part in <i>public life</i> . The manner of this participation may vary from one country or culture to another. “One must pay tribute to those nations whose systems permit the largest possible number of the citizens to take part in public life in a climate of genuine freedom.”
1916	As with any ethical obligation, the participation of all in realizing the common good calls for a continually renewed <i>conversion</i> of the social partners. Fraud and other subterfuges, by which some people evade the constraints of the law and the prescriptions of societal obligation, must be firmly condemned because they are incompatible with the requirements of justice. Much care should be taken to promote institutions that improve the conditions of human life.
1917	It is incumbent on those who exercise authority to strengthen the values that inspire the confidence of the members of the group and encourage them to put themselves at the service of others. Participation begins with education and culture. “One is entitled to think that the future of humanity is in the hands of those who are capable of providing the generations to come with reasons for life and optimism.”

Catechism	Quote
1928	Society ensures social justice when it provides the conditions that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due, according to their nature and their vocation. Social justice is linked to the common good and the exercise of authority.
1929	<p>Social justice can be obtained only in respecting the transcendent dignity of man. The person represents the ultimate end of society, which is ordered to him:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">What is at stake is the dignity of the human person, whose defense and promotion have been entrusted to us by the Creator, and to whom the men and women at every moment of history are strictly and responsibly in debt.</p>
1930	Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it. They are the basis of the moral legitimacy of every authority: by flouting them, or refusing to recognize them in its positive legislation, a society undermines its own moral legitimacy. If it does not respect them, authority can rely only on force or violence to obtain obedience from its subjects. It is the Church's role to remind men of good will of these rights and to distinguish them from unwarranted or false claims.
1931	Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that "everyone should look upon his neighbour (without any exception) as 'another self,' above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity." No legislation could by itself do away with the fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness which obstruct the establishment of truly fraternal societies. Such behavior will cease only through the charity that finds in every man a "neighbour," a brother.
1932	The duty of making oneself a neighbour to others and actively serving them becomes even more urgent when it involves the disadvantaged, in whatever area this may be. "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."
1933	This same duty extends to those who think or act differently from us. The teaching of Christ goes so far as to require the forgiveness of offenses. He extends the commandment of love, which is that of the New Law, to all enemies. Liberation in the spirit of the Gospel is incompatible with hatred of one's enemy as a person, but not with hatred of the evil that he does as an enemy.
1934	Created in the image of the one God and equally endowed with rational souls, all men have the same nature and the same origin. Redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ, all are called to participate in the same divine beatitude: all therefore enjoy an equal dignity.
1935	<p>The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from it:</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, colour, social conditions, language or religion, must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design.</p>
1936	On coming into the world, man is not equipped with everything he needs for developing his bodily and spiritual life. He needs others. Differences appear tied to age, physical abilities, intellectual or moral aptitudes, the benefits derived from social commerce, and the distribution of wealth. The "talents" are not distributed equally.

Catechism	Quote
1937	<p>These differences belong to God’s plan, who wills that each receive what he needs from others, and that those endowed with particular “talents” share the benefits with those who need them. These differences encourage and often oblige persons to practise generosity, kindness and sharing of goods; they foster the mutual enrichment of cultures:</p> <p>I distribute the virtues quite diversely; I do not give all of them to each person, but some to one, some to others. ... I shall give principally charity to one; justice to another; humility to this one, a living faith to that one. ... And so I have given many gifts and graces, both spiritual and temporal, with such diversity that I have not given everything to one single person, so that you may be constrained to practise charity towards one another. ... I have willed that one should need another and that all should be my ministers in distributing the graces and gifts they have received from me.</p>
1938	<p>There exist also <i>sinful inequalities</i> that affect millions of men and women. These are in open contradiction of the Gospel:</p> <p>Their equal dignity as persons demands that we strive for fairer and more humane conditions. Excessive economic and social disparity between individuals and peoples of the one human race is a source of scandal and militates against social justice, equity, human dignity, as well as social and international peace.</p>
1939	<p>The principle of solidarity, also articulated in terms of “friendship” or “social charity,” is a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood.</p> <p>An error, “today abundantly widespread, is disregard for the law of human solidarity and charity, dictated and imposed both by our common origin and by the equality in rational nature of all men, whatever nation they belong to. This law is sealed by the sacrifice of redemption offered by Jesus Christ on the altar of the Cross to his heavenly Father, on behalf of sinful humanity.”</p>
1940	<p>Solidarity is manifested in the first place by the distribution of goods and remuneration for work. It also presupposes the effort for a more just social order where tensions are better able to be reduced and conflicts more readily settled by negotiation.</p>
1941	<p>Socio-economic problems can be resolved only with the help of all the forms of solidarity: solidarity of the poor among themselves, between rich and poor, of workers among themselves, between employers and employees in a business, solidarity among nations and peoples. International solidarity is a requirement of the moral order; world peace depends in part upon this.</p>
1942	<p>The virtue of solidarity goes beyond material goods. In spreading the spiritual goods of the faith, the Church has promoted, and often opened new paths for, the development of temporal goods as well. And so throughout the centuries has the Lord’s saying been verified: “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well”:</p> <p>For two thousand years this sentiment has lived and endured in the soul of the Church, impelling souls then and now to the heroic charity of monastic farmers, liberators of slaves, healers of the sick, and messengers of faith, civilization, and science to all generations and all peoples for the sake of creating the social conditions capable of offering to everyone possible a life worthy of man and of a Christian.</p>

## Documents from Conferences of Catholic Bishops

Title, Date	Link	Description
<p>“A Church Seeking Justice: The Challenge of Pope Francis to the Church in Canada”. 2015.</p> <p>The Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops</p>	<p><a href="http://cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/184-902.pdf">cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/184-902.pdf</a></p>	<p>This letter calls on Christians to form relationships with the poor and marginalized to encourage acts of charity and the desire to seek justice for all. The world has many structures that seek to harm others, such as euthanasia, work conditions and war and Christians must stand against them and work for an ethical society and the common good.</p>
<p>“Living the Gospel Life: A Challenge to American Catholics”. United States Conference of Catholic Bishops</p>	<p><a href="http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/abortion/living-the-gospel-of-life">usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/abortion/living-the-gospel-of-life</a></p>	<p>Although this article uses the sanctity of life as an underlying theme, it speaks about living the Catholic faith authentically in one’s chosen vocation, which would lead to a society focused on the common good.</p>
<p>“Message to Young Catholics on Social Justice”. 2011. Commission for Justice and Peace, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops</p>	<p><a href="http://cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Message_Social_Justice_ENG.pdf">cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Message_Social_Justice_ENG.pdf</a></p>	<p>This message, in the wake of the United Nations general assembly proclamation of the International Year of Youth and the Madrid World Youth Day 2011, encourages young people to take a joyful stand for a just world.</p>
<p>“Pastoral Letter on Freedom of Conscience and Religion”. 2012. Permanent Council of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops</p>	<p><a href="http://cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Freedom_of_Conscience_and_Religion.pdf">cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/Freedom_of_Conscience_and_Religion.pdf</a></p>	<p>The Canadian bishops wrote this letter to support the freedom of conscience and religion for all peoples of Canada when many professions began to ask people to do things that were against their conscience to secure employment. The article gives an excellent explanation of what religious freedom entails and lists some concerns that oppose this freedom in both Canada and globally.</p>

Title, Date	Link	Description
<p>“The Common Good or Exclusion: A Choice for Canadians”. 2001. Social Affairs Commission, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops</p>	<p><a href="http://cccb.ca/document/the-common-good-or-exclusion-a-choice-for-canadians/">cccb.ca/document/the-common-good-or-exclusion-a-choice-for-canadians/</a></p>	<p>Written after the November 27, 2000 election, the bishops reflect on citizens’ responsibility to vote in elections, the growing economy in Canada (that profits those who are already prosperous and excludes others) and the need to reject economic agendas that promote exclusion and threaten the welfare of God’s creation.</p>
<p>“The Word of God and Social Action: Insights from <i>Verbum Domini</i>”. 2014. Episcopal Commission for Justice and Peace, Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops</p>	<p><a href="http://cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/The_Word_of_God_and_Social_Action.pdf">cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/The_Word_of_God_and_Social_Action.pdf</a></p>	<p>The commission reflects on Pope Benedict XVI’s apostolic exhortation <i>Verbum Domini</i> and its social teaching in light of the New Evangelization and Year of Faith. Some discussion questions follow the paper.</p>

## Scripture Quotes

Scripture Source	Scripture Quote
Isaiah 56:1-2	Thus says the Lord: Maintain justice, and do what is right, for soon my salvation will come, and my deliverance be revealed. Happy is the mortal who does this, the one who holds it fast, who keeps the sabbath, not profaning it, and refrains from doing any evil.
Jeremiah 29:7	But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the Lord on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare.
Amos 5:14-15	Seek good and not evil, that you may live; and so the Lord, the God of hosts, will be with you, just as you have said. Hate evil and love good, and establish justice in the gate; it may be that the Lord, the God of hosts, will be gracious to the remnant of Joseph.
Luke 15:4	‘Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?’
Acts 2:43-47	Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.
Romans 12:5	...So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.
1 Corinthians 12:7	To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.
1 Corinthians 12:26	If one member suffers, all suffer together with it; if one member is honoured, all rejoice together with it.
Philippians 2:3-4	Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.

## Prophets Among Us



**Jimmy Carter (1924-)** —39<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America and humanitarian

Although Jimmy Carter left the president’s office with a low approval rating, he has become an influential humanitarian advocate since vacating the position.

In 1982, Jimmy Carter and his wife Rosalynn established The Carter Center in Atlanta, Georgia. The center is devoted to the “fundamental commitment to human rights and the alleviation of human suffering, [it] seeks to prevent and resolve conflicts, enhance freedom and democracy, and improve health.” In 2002, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his work.

*Photograph of Jimmy Carter.  
Credit USA Today Sports/via Reuters.*

In July 2017, the Carters visited Edmonton, Alberta, to kick off Habitat for Humanity’s 34<sup>th</sup> Carter Work Project to build more than 150 homes in Canada, with one-half of those in southeast Edmonton and Fort Saskatchewan, Alberta.

To learn more about Jimmy Carter and his work with The Carter Center, visit [cartercenter.org/](http://cartercenter.org/) or [habitat.org/volunteer/build-events/carter-work-project](http://habitat.org/volunteer/build-events/carter-work-project).

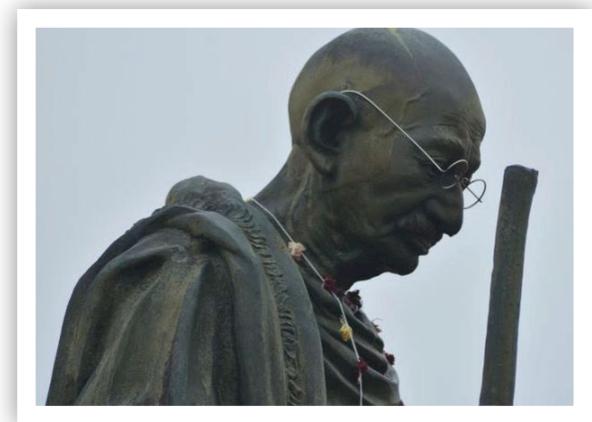
**Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi (1869-1948)** – Civil rights activist, lawyer, pacifist and political ethicist

Mohandas Gandhi, born and raised in India, was called to the bar at age 22 after studying law in London, England. He began his practice in South Africa, where he raised his family and began to employ his historic nonviolent resistance for civil rights.

Having returned to India in 1915, Mohandas Gandhi became the leader of the Indian National Congress in 1921. He developed and encouraged others to follow a nonviolent non-cooperation

movement (*satyagraha*) against the British government, which led to the arrest of thousands of *satyagrahis* (people holding onto truth). He was arrested in 1922 and released in 1924 following an operation. He continued to reunite the people and encouraged them to follow the path of non-violence once again. Several scholars credit his fasting and protests for stopping riots and violence.

Mohandas Gandhi was influential in Indian politics through significant campaigns in 1920-22, 1930-34 and 1940-42. It was through his influence that India gained independence from the British.



*Photograph of Mohandas Gandhi from PXXhere*



**Chief Joseph (1840-1904)** – Humanitarian and peacemaker

Chief Joseph became chief of the Wallowa (*Wal-lam-wat-kain*) band of the Nez Percé (*Nimīpuu*) people in 1871, a time of European westward expansion in the United States.

He led his people peacefully, teaching them not to retaliate against the violence thrust upon them by settlers. He negotiated a deal with the government that allowed his people to stay on their land in

Oregon. However, the government later reversed the agreement in favour of moving the Wallowa band to a reservation. Those who resisted the removal were attacked.

Chief Joseph spent his life advocating for peace and equality for First Nations people.

*Photograph of Chief Joseph from PXHere*

**Austin Mardon, CM Ph.D (1962-)** – Author, community leader, mental health advocate and professor

**Catherine Mardon, DCSS, JD, MTS** – Activist, author and lawyer

In 2017, Austin and Catherine Mardon were inducted into the Pontifical Order of Pope Saint Sylvester, a papal Order of Knighthood, for their work on behalf of people with disabilities.

Catherine has post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of an attack she suffered following her testimony against a white supremacist, and Austin has schizophrenia. They are both

assistant adjunct professors at the University of Alberta and together advocate for people with mental illness. They have also fostered children with fetal alcohol syndrome.

They have published an extensive collection of books, including children's stories that explain difficult topics in a child-friendly manner.

For more information on the work the couple does, visit [grandinmedia.ca/pope-meets-with-edmonton-mental-health-advocates/](http://grandinmedia.ca/pope-meets-with-edmonton-mental-health-advocates/) and [catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-couple-brings-the-love-of-family-to-young-people-with-mental-illness-61780](http://catholicnewsagency.com/news/catholic-couple-brings-the-love-of-family-to-young-people-with-mental-illness-61780).



*Photograph of Austin and Catherine Mardon, courtesy of Austin and Catherine Mardon.*



Photograph of Sr. Dianna Ortiz.  
Credit: Ursuline Sisters of Mount St. Joseph.

**Sr. Dianna Ortiz (1958-2021)** – Advocate, Ursuline sister and witness

Sr. Dianna Ortiz was a teacher in Kentucky before joining the Ursuline sisters in Guatemala. She taught Guatemalan children from 1987 until 1989 when her world turned upside down.

On November 2, 1989, while attending a retreat, she was abducted by government forces, tortured, burned and raped by her abductors. She learned later that this experience resulted in a pregnancy and she had an abortion which compounded her anguish.

This horrific event tormented Sr. Ortiz for much of her life, yet she used it to create awareness of the use of torture and its widespread acceptance worldwide. She was instrumental in organizing the Guatemalan Human Rights Commission in Washington, D.C.

For more information, read Sr. Ortiz’s book, *The Blindfold’s Eye: My Journey from Torture to Truth* or visit [ursulinesmsj.org/sister-dianna-ortiz-osu-sept-2-1958-feb-19-2021/](https://ursulinesmsj.org/sister-dianna-ortiz-osu-sept-2-1958-feb-19-2021/).

*“In spite of the memories of humiliation, I stand with the people of Guatemala. I demand the right to heal and to know the truth. I demand the right to a resurrection.”*

(Sr. Dianna Ortiz)

**Our Lady of Guadalupe** – Patroness of all the Americas, apparitions occurred in December 1531

Feast Day: December 12

Our Lady of Guadalupe is a role model and guide for Catholics for the common good.

In his post-synodal apostolic exhortation, *Ecclesia in America* (The Encounter with the Living Jesus Christ: The Way To Conversion, Communion And Solidarity in America), Pope John Paul II acknowledged that America is a melting pot of peoples. He recognized that in the Blessed Mary of Guadalupe is an impressive example of a perfectly

enculturated evangelization. It is “through her powerful intercession, the Gospel will penetrate the hearts of the men and women of America and permeate their cultures, transforming them from within.”

Therefore, let members call upon the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe to guide them in their quest for community and the common good.





**Rosa Parks (1913-2005)** – American activist, deaconess and member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP)

Rosa Parks is best known for refusing to vacate her seat in December 1955 on a bus in Montgomery, Alabama, which was in a racial minority section to a Caucasian passenger because the Caucasian-only section was full.

Her arrest for civil disobedience inspired a boycott of the Montgomery buses by the Black community for more than a year. This action led to the decision that bus segregation was unconstitutional under the 14<sup>th</sup> amendment to the *U.S. Constitution*, which granted equal civil and legal rights to Black Americans in the United States. Rosa Parks' action on the bus that day became an iconic symbol of the civil rights movement.

For more information, visit [rosaparks.org/](http://rosaparks.org/).

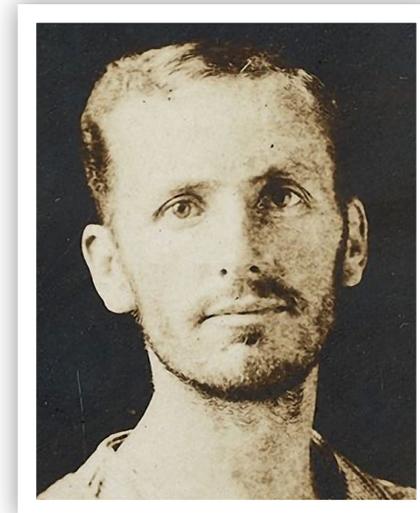
*Image of Rosa Parks Credit: Library of Congress.  
Courtesy of Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self Development.*

**Ben Salmon (1888-1932)** – Conscientious objector

When World War I broke out, Ben Salmon applied for conscientious objector status, citing his faith as the reason. Unfortunately, unlike other churches known for their objection to violence, there was no historical precedence for a Roman Catholic objector.

Ben Salmon did not receive support from his bishop. He was tried in military court and sentenced to death. His sentence was downgraded to 25 years, but after a hunger strike where he was force-fed, he was moved to an insane asylum. While there, he wrote a 200-page document critiquing the church's just war theory.

To learn more about the movement inspired by Ben Salmon, visit [bensalmon.org/](http://bensalmon.org/).



*Image of Ben Salmon.  
Credit National Archives and Records Administration.*



*Getty Images*

**Oskar Schindler (1908-1974)** – German Catholic humanitarian, industrialist and Nazi Party member

Despite being a ruthless industrialist, Oskar Schindler is credited with saving more than 1,000 Jewish people from deportation to the Auschwitz camp during World War II. He used almost all of his assets to bribe the Schutzstaffel (SS) officials to prevent the execution of his Jewish workers. He also used his finances to buy his workers goods on the black market, such as food.

Oskar Schindler is the only Nazi Party member to be buried on Mount Zion in Jerusalem, an honour financed by the people he saved and their descendants.

Along with his wife Emilie, Oskar Schindler was honoured by the State of Israel with the honorific title of “Righteous Among the Nations,” a title given to non-Jews who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews from the Nazi regime.







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