

## **Catholic Social Teaching Discussion Questions**

### **Life and Dignity of the Human Person**

Why is human dignity such a central principle upon which all the other social principles depend?

Catholic social teaching tells us that our dignity does not come from the work we do, from our social positions, or from what we have, but from the fact that we are all children of God, beloved by our Creator. What structures or values present in the culture prevent us from recognizing the dignity and worth of others in our society?

Think about the news stories you have read and/or heard about over the last week or two. Based on these news stories, what threats can you identify that pose serious harm to the dignity of human persons. Were the events on the local, national or global level?

What actions, attitudes or practices can you commit yourself to that will promote respect and reverence for the dignity of those you deal with on a daily basis?

### **Rights and Responsibilities**

What rights are the most important to you? What rights do you think are most important to people who are in poverty around the world?

What does it mean for us as individuals to be responsible for protecting and upholding the rights of others?

What are recent signs of hope that indicate that the global community is moving toward a more just world where all peoples' rights are respected?

### **Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers**

What about the Church's teaching on the rights of workers surprises you most? Why?

Can you think of any companies that do a good job of upholding this principle? Can you think of companies that do not uphold this principle?

What actions, attitudes or practices can you commit yourself to that will promote the dignity of work and the rights of workers on a daily basis?

### **Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**

Is it fair to give a preferential option to one group over another?

What values in American culture oppose the option for the poor and vulnerable?

How are human dignity and human rights related to option for the poor and vulnerable?

What are ways to confirm our option for the poor and vulnerable as individuals, families, churches and/or school communities, and as citizens? Brainstorm, create a list, and discuss the options.

### **Care for God's Creation**

Are there concrete ways in which I display a reverence for the earth in my daily life?

How are we to fulfill the call to be stewards of creation in an age when we may have the capacity to alter that creation significantly and perhaps irrevocably?

What actions, attitudes or practices can you commit yourself to that will promote the care of creation on a daily basis?

### **Solidarity**

What does it mean to you to be in solidarity with another person or another group?

Can you think of a recent news story where solidarity was present? Or where solidarity was needed?

What is the biggest barrier to you being in solidarity with others?

### **Call to Family, Community, and Participation**

What does it mean to you to follow this (rather broad) principle?

How is this principle distinct from other principles of CST, especially Human Dignity and Option for the Poor?

What inhibits people from participating in all levels of society equally? What safeguards can be put in place so that all people would have equal access to participation in society at all levels?