

# Justice and Peace

LEARNING STRAND: SOCIAL JUSTICE



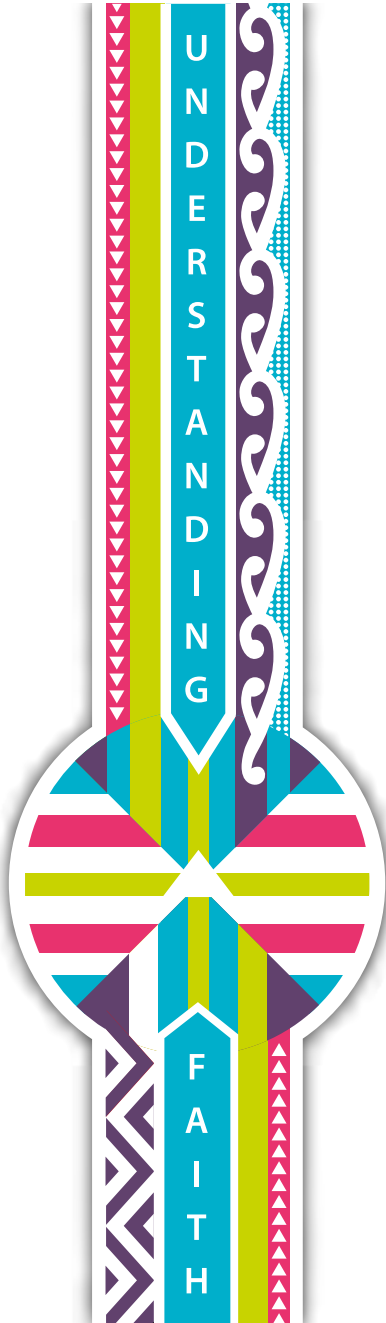
RELIGIOUS  
EDUCATION  
PROGRAMME

FOR CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN  
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND

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## THE LOGO

The logo is an attempt to express Faith as an inward and outward journey.

This faith journey takes us into our own hearts, into the heart of the world and into the heart of Christ who is God's love revealed.

In Christ, God transforms our lives. We can respond to his love for us by reaching out and loving one another.

The circle represents our world. White, the colour of light, represents God. Red is for the suffering of Christ. Red also represents the Holy Spirit. Yellow represents the risen Christ.

The direction of the lines is inwards except for the cross, which stretches outwards.

Our lives are embedded in and dependent upon our environment (green and blue) and our cultures (patterns and textures).

Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ, is represented by the blue and white pattern.

The blue also represents the Pacific...

Annette Hanrahan RSCJ

# Justice and Peace

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**Imprimatur**

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May 2005

Authorised by the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference.

**Design & Layout:**

Devine Graphics  
P O Box 5954  
Dunedin  
New Zealand

**Published By:**

National Centre for Religious Studies  
Catholic Centre  
P O Box 1937  
Wellington  
New Zealand

**Printed By:**

Printlink  
33–43 Jackson Street  
Petone  
Private Bag 39996  
Wellington Mail Centre  
Lower Hutt 5045

**Māori terms are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it. A Māori glossary at the back of the book gives a more detailed explanation of these terms and provides a guide for their pronunciation.**

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# Part One:

## What is Justice?

### Focus:

- **Tika (justice) is a moral principle and a Christian virtue that applies to all areas of human life.**
- **Justice exists when people live in right relationship – it demands that we give to Te Atua (God) and to others what is their due.**
- **We grow in justice by following Hehu Karaiti (Jesus Christ), the perfect model of tika.**
- **Aroha (love) transforms tika into mercy.**

## Justice – a Moral Principle and a Christian Virtue

Justice (say **justiss**) *noun*

**1** the quality of being just or fair.

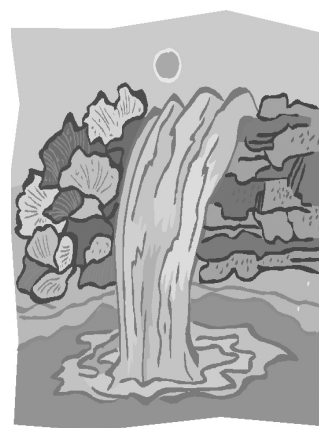
**2** the principle of fair treatment or conduct.

*Usage:* 'you can object with *justice* to such unfair treatment' (= good cause).

**3** the administration of the law.

**4** a judge or magistrate.

(*The Reed Dictionary of New Zealand English – 2001*)



Justice is an important moral principle that applies to all areas of human life. On the personal level, *tika* directs each of us to give to *Te Atua*, self, and others what is due to them. It requires us to take responsibility for the world in which we live and care for the environment that surrounds us.

Justice also has a public dimension. It determines our laws and shapes the operation of our social, political, economic and religious institutions.

The Old and New Testaments place great value on justice and present it as highly desirable:

*... let justice roll down like waters, and  
righteousness like an everflowing stream.*  
(Amos 5:24)

In the Christian tradition, justice has long been considered one of the four cardinal or “hinge” virtues – along with prudence (wise judgement), temperance (wholeness) and fortitude (courage) – upon which other qualities needed to live a morally good life depend.

*Tika* requires that rights be respected and duties fulfilled. Injustice is the denial of justice in that it disregards rights and neglects duties.

### Task One

**Write your own definition of justice**



### Something to Discuss

- **What are some of the rights that *tika* requires us to respect?**
- **What are some of the responsibilities or duties it requires us to carry out?**

# Wise Words On Justice

Over the centuries many wise words have been written about justice. Here are some of them:

Justice gives to every one their due.  
(Marcus Tullius Cicero)

Liberty, Humanity, Justice, Equality. (Susan B. Anthony)

Justice is not based on our statute but is a part of divine law and the bond of human society. (Saint Martin of Braga)

Justice is conscience, not a personal conscience but the conscience of the whole of humanity. Those who clearly recognise the voice of their own conscience usually recognise also the voice of justice.  
(Alexander Solzhenitsyn)

Conscience is the chamber of justice. (Origen)

Justice is truth in action.  
(Benjamin Disraeli)

True peace is not merely the absence of tension: it is the presence of justice. (Martin Luther King Jr)

If we do not maintain justice, justice will not maintain us. (Francis Bacon)

The law isn't justice. It's a very imperfect mechanism. If you press exactly the right buttons and are also lucky, justice may show up in the answer. A mechanism is all the law was ever intended to be.  
(Raymond Chandler)

All persons are commanded to do to others what they want done to themselves and prohibited from inflicting on others what they do not want done to themselves. So Christ said in the Gospel: "Whatever you want people to do to you, do to them (Matthew 7:12)." (Gratian)

There may be times when we are powerless to prevent injustice, but there must never be a time when we fail to protest. (Elie Wiesel)

If you want peace, you must work for justice. (Pope Paul VI)

Justice cannot be for one side alone, but must be for both. (Eleanor Roosevelt)

Justice denied anywhere diminishes justice everywhere. (Martin Luther King Jr)

Never pray for justice, because you might get some.  
(Margaret Atwood)

It is essential that justice be done, and it is equally vital that justice not be confused with revenge, for the two are wholly different. (Oscar Aizaola)



## Task Two

**Study the above quotes about justice. Choose three that you like and explain why they appeal to you.**

## Something to Research

**Use a dictionary of quotes or the internet to find other notable statements about justice.**

## Something to Think About

**Justice is often represented by the Roman figure of Justitia – a blind woman holding a set of scales in one hand and a sword in the other. Why do you think justice is symbolised in this way?**

## Something to Do

**Create your own symbol that represents some aspect of justice.**



Another symbol of justice is the gavel, a small hammer used to signal for silence in court.

# Right Relationship – The Christian Understanding of Justice

*Te Atua* creates all things and gives unity, order, and purpose to everything that exists.

*The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, the world, and those who live in it. (Psalm 24:1)*

All people are created in God's image (Genesis 1:27) and are made for life in community – with God, with each other, and with the whole of creation. Justice exists when people live in right relationships with *Te Atua*, the source of *tika*.

Justice requires people to give to God what is due to God – thanks and praise for everything that God is and for everything that God has done for us. By developing God-like attitudes and living in God-like ways people are able to live just lives.

Justice also requires that we live in right relationship with each other and with the world in which we live. Out of the web of relationships that form human society arise various responsibilities and demands. These include:

- Respecting the rights of each person
- Carrying out the duties entrusted to us
- Establishing harmonious and peaceful human relationships
- Promoting equality among *he tangata* (people)
- Building up the common good
- Respecting and caring for the natural world



The just person remains faithful to these commitments.

Justice is of particular concern in today's world, where the identity, value, dignity and rights of the person are seriously threatened.

## Social Justice

The Church has always called for people to be just in their personal lives. Today it emphasises much more strongly the need for justice in the social, political and economic areas of life. It asks that changes be made to unjust social, political and economic structures and systems which create and support major evils, such as poverty and the destruction of the environment.

### Something to Discuss

**Justice and its denial – injustice – can be found in all areas of human life. Work in a pair or small group. Give examples of justice and injustice in the following contexts or situations.**

- **Our relationships with God**
- **At home**
- **At school**
- **Among friends or peers**
- **In the neighbourhood or local community**
- **At the national level**
- **Internationally**





## Jesus the Model and Fulfilment of Justice

Justice is central to the life of Christians who see it fulfilled and modelled in the person of *Hehu Karaiti*.

“...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power” and “he went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him”. (Acts 10:38)

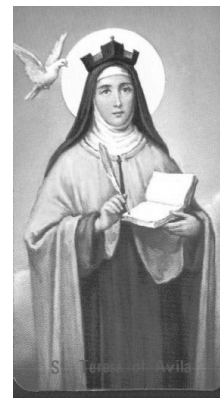
By always remaining in right relationship with his heavenly Father, the people around him, and the wider creation, Jesus shows us what true *tika* is like.

*Hehu* is our pathway to justice. By following Jesus we come to experience the justice of God – a justice that brings deep peace. In turn, we are called to be agents of God’s *tika* in the world.



### Saint Teresa’s Prayer

Christ has no body now but yours,  
No hands, no feet on earth but yours.  
Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world.  
Yours are the feet with which he walks to do good.  
Yours are the hands with which he blesses all the world.  
Yours are the hands, yours are the feet,  
Yours are the eyes, you are his body.  
Christ has no body now on earth, but yours.



### A Story

On the street I saw a naked child, hungry and shivering in the cold. I became angry and said to God, “Why do you permit this? Why don’t you do something?”

For a while God said nothing. That night he replied, quite suddenly, “I certainly did something. I made you.”

(From *The Song of the Bird* by Anthony de Mello, SJ)

### Task Three

**What do the prayer by Saint Teresa of Avila (1515-82) and the story by Anthony de Mello (1931-1987) tell us about our responsibility regarding justice in the world?**

## Mercy – the Transformation of Justice



*Tika* involves giving *Te Atua* and others what is their due – that which they are rightfully entitled to. Justice is closely linked to mercy, a special form of *aroha* which moves people to go beyond the requirements of justice. Mercy transforms justice from within.

The parable of the prodigal or lost son (Luke 15:11-32) throws light on the relationship between justice, love and mercy.

In the parable, the younger son returns home in a sorry state, having wasted the property he received from his father. He hopes to earn his living by working in his father's house as a hired servant and possibly, little by little, to restore to his father the material goods that he has squandered. A sense of justice motivates him to do all he can to make up for the suffering and offence that he has caused his father.

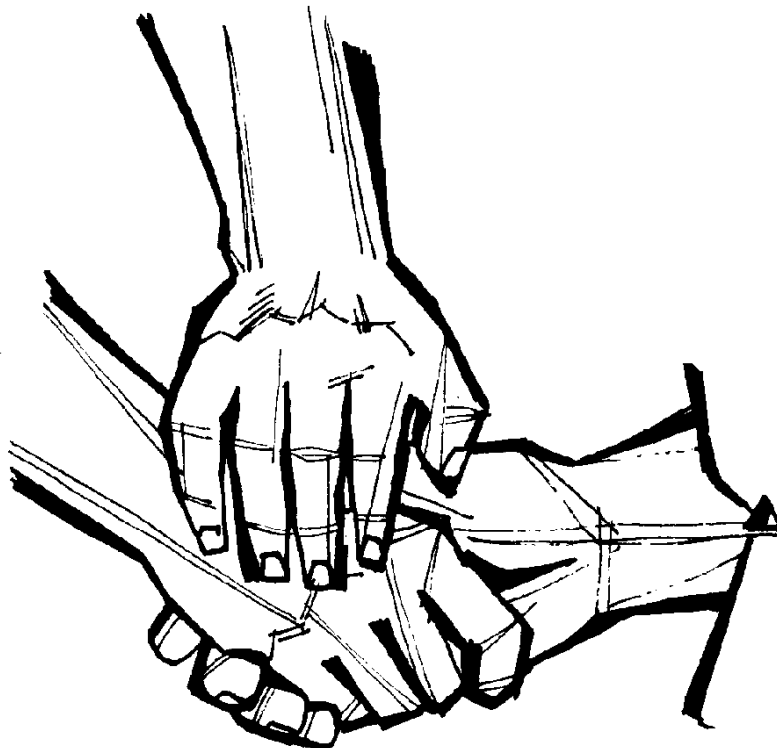
The parable of the lost son enables us to see that justice is the minimum of love and that mercy is its fullness. In the parable, the father's attitude towards his son reflects God's abundant grace and generosity towards those who turn to him. It indeed shows that "God is love" (1 John 4:16).

### Something to Think About

**Read the parable of the prodigal or lost son in Luke 15:11-32. In what ways does the father in the story show merciful love as well as justice towards his son?**

### Something to Think About

**What situations are you familiar with where people have gone beyond what is required by justice to show merciful love?**



## Part Two:

### Justice in the Old Testament

#### Focus:

- **God's *tika* is revealed through the events of the Old Testament, especially in the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt and in the Covenant with Moses.**
- **Justice is closely linked to the practice of *shalom*.**
- **Faithfulness to *Te Atua* demands justice for the most vulnerable members of society.**
- **The prophets challenged the people to see that whenever God was forgotten injustices flourished and oppression increased.**

### The Exodus and the Covenant

The Old Testament emphasises God's love of justice and makes it clear that *tika* is at the heart of all right relationships. From Moses to David to Isaiah, the major figures of the Old Testament reflect this.

God's justice is at work in God's liberation of the Israelites from slavery in Egypt.

*'I will take you as my people, and I will be your God. You shall know that I am the Lord your God, who has freed you from the burdens of the Egyptians. I will bring you into the land that I swore to give to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; I will give it to you for a possession. I am the Lord.'* (Exodus 6:7-8)

The Exodus event is the defining experience for the Hebrew people. It not only shaped their laws and worship but also set the agenda of the prophets.

In God's dealings with the Jewish people, God's justice is most clearly seen in the Covenant formalised with Moses on Mount Sinai. In response to God's promise of on-going love and protection, the people of Israel are asked to remain faithful to *Te Atua*.

For the Jews, the Covenant is a constant reminder that it is through *Mana Atua* (God's power) that they were freed from oppression and injustice. To live justly is to know and obey God. To live unjustly is to turn away from *Te Atua*.

The Israelites understood that in order to remain faithful to God and the Covenant they also must free the oppressed and be just in their own dealings with others. They recognised that justice flourished when they maintained right relationships with each other and those around them. By being fair and honest in their social relationships they protected and built up the life of the community.



An anonymous Dutch print from 1723 of Moses receiving the Covenant from God on Mount Sinai.

### The Poor

The Old Testament reveals a God who is deeply moved by the poor, the helpless and the downtrodden.

*The Lord is near to the brokenhearted, and saves the crushed in spirit.* (Psalms 34:18)

Justice is expressed by the Ten Commandments and all the other laws that formed the basis of community life. Again and again the Israelites are instructed to remember the immigrant, the orphan and the widow – those most vulnerable to hunger and poverty – a message that is linked to their own liberation from Egypt.

*When you reap your harvest in your field and forget a sheaf in the field, you shall not go back to get it; it shall be left for the alien, the orphan, and the widow, so that the Lord your God may bless you in all your undertakings. When you beat your olive trees, do not strip what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. When you gather the grapes of your vineyard, do not glean what is left; it shall be for the alien, the orphan, and the widow. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt; therefore I am commanding you to do this.* (Deuteronomy 24:19-22)

Because *Te Atua* is especially close to the poor and the oppressed, *tika* demands that people take up the cause of those who are suffering and on the edge of society. Various laws provided for sharing one-tenth of the harvest with immigrants, orphans and widows (Deuteronomy 14:28-29), for lending at no interest to those in need (Exodus 22:25), and for the cancellation of debts every seventh year (Deuteronomy 15:1-2, 7-11). Every fiftieth year was to be a Year of Jubilee during which property was to be returned to the family of the original owner. The intent of this law, which may never have been carried out, was to prevent the concentration of wealth and make sure that each family had the means to feed itself.



## Shalom

The Old Testament understanding of justice is closely linked to the concept of *shalom* – a Hebrew word that has many layers of meaning – peace, freedom and well-being, as well as justice. *Shalom* is concerned with the welfare of each person and that of society as a whole. It is the ideal state in which humans were created to live. While *shalom* is God's gift, it calls for dedication and commitment from people if it is to become a reality.

The Jewish people saw that crime broke *shalom* by destroying right relationships within a community and creating harmful ones. They came to see restitution – making right what is wrong – as an essential aspect of justice, one that helps restore the relationship between victim and offender, and re-establishes community peace.



## The Prophets



Throughout Israel's history, the prophets reminded the Chosen People to keep faithful to the Covenant and, when they strayed, to return to the path of righteousness and justice. The prophets were sent not only to speak God's word, but also to speak on behalf of those who had no voice.

God complained through the prophets that the people of Israel had forgotten who it was that gave them their land and provisions. They, who once were hungry and oppressed themselves, refused to feed the hungry. They became the oppressors.

Amos, who lived during the reign of Jeroboam II (793-753 BC), called the people back to the way of justice at a time when Israel was at the height of its economic and political power. God sent Amos, a poor shepherd, to call the people to repentance for disregarding the Covenant by oppressing the poor and robbing them of their grain. The injustices brought about by the rich made their worship worthless:

*'I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies. Even though you offer me your burnt offerings and grain offerings, I will not accept them; and the offerings of well-being of your fatted animals I will not look upon. Take away from me the noise of your songs; I will not listen to the melody of your harps. But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream.'* (Amos 5:21-24)

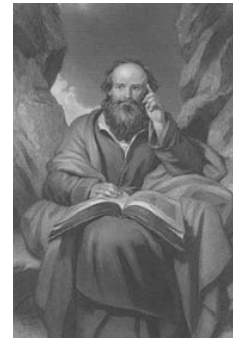
Later in the eighth century BC, the prophet Isaiah challenged the people to see that faith in God is best expressed not by tithing, sacrifices, keeping the Sabbath or fasting but by seeking justice for the oppressed:

*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? (Isaiah 58:6-7)*

*The spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour... (Isaiah 61:1-2)*

On many occasions, Amos, Isaiah and other prophets, including Hosea and Micah, challenged the people and their leaders to seek justice. Sometimes they had to insist that Israel abandon the worship of idols – false gods – and renew their faith in the one true God. At other times, they had to remind the kings to protect and care for the poor and needy or to demand that judges not take bribes and uphold the rights of society's more vulnerable members.

The prophets were clear in their message that whenever injustices flourished and oppression increased in society God was forgotten.



The Prophet Isaiah

#### Task Four

**List four important ideas about the practice of justice in the Old Testament and write a brief paragraph explaining each of them.**

#### Task Five

**Read the following Scripture passages – they are typical examples of what the prophets had to say about justice and injustice:**

- **Isaiah 1:16-17**
- **Isaiah 10:1**
- **Amos 8:4-6**
- **Micah 6:8**

- a) **What do you think the prophet Micah means by the expression “to act justly” or “to do justice”?**
- b) **What do the prophets suggest is God's attitude towards those who are unjust?**
- c) **List five types of injustice that seem to have been common in Old Testament times.**

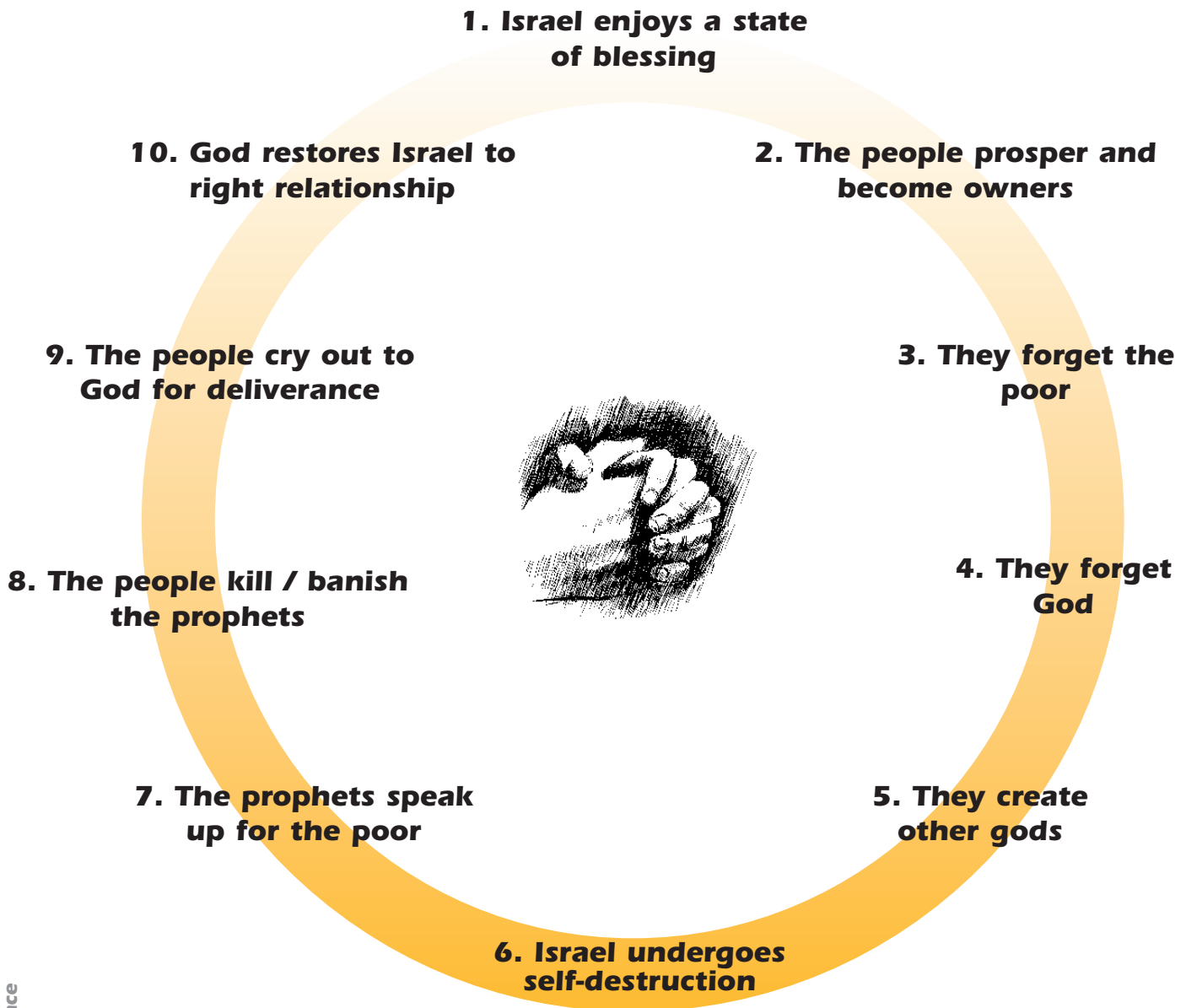
#### Additional Activity

**Complete the crossword on justice in the Old Testament which your teacher will give you.**

## The Cycle of Baal

The Cycle of Baal is a useful tool in understanding the ups and downs in Israel's relationship with God. It shows how the spread of injustice is always linked to the neglect of God and the decline in Israel's fortunes.

The Baals were the fertility gods of Canaan whom the people of Israel turned to at certain times in their history after abandoning their worship of the one true God.



## Stages of the Cycle of Baal

1. The Cycle of Baal begins when the people of Israel are in a right relationship with God. They are a healthy community, sharing goods and caring for the widows, the orphans, and the strangers.
2. The people prosper and become owners. They begin to place more emphasis on things than on people.
3. This growing emphasis on “having” produces a dangerous self-centredness. As a result, the people forget the poor.
4. Forgetting the poor is a sign of a deeper loss – forgetting God and what God expects from them. God repeatedly warns the people about the dangerous state they are in.
5. The people create their own gods – such as the Baals – who are more convenient and more like themselves. They are free to ignore the poor and forget the web of relationships that define their community.
6. The result is self-destruction. The Israelites are overcome by their enemies who destroy and exile them.
7. God sends prophets to tell the Israelites that they have forgotten the poor – the widows, the orphans, and the strangers – and have neglected justice.
8. The people refuse to listen to the prophets, sometimes banishing or killing them.
9. The people cry out to God for mercy and deliverance. They beg to be brought back to the Promised Land, to be restored to right relationship with God and one another.
10. God hears the cry of the people and restores them to the land and makes right their relationships. All rejoice.

And then the cycle begins again. From healthy community to forgetfulness, faithlessness, and self-destruction. And eventually to forgiveness and restoration.

### Task Six

**In your own words explain what insight the Cycle of Baal gives us about the reasons for and the consequences of the neglect of justice in Old Testament times.**

### Something to Discuss

**Could it be that this Cycle of Baal is not just about the Israelites and their relationship with God several thousand years ago? How does the Cycle of Baal relate to our own time and place, our own history?**



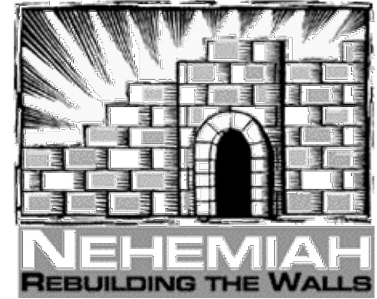
At times the Israelites abandoned worship of the one true God and turned to Baal, a fertility god of the neighbouring Canaanites.

## A Case Study – Nehemiah

The story of Nehemiah has much to say about justice and acting justly. It makes a worthwhile study.

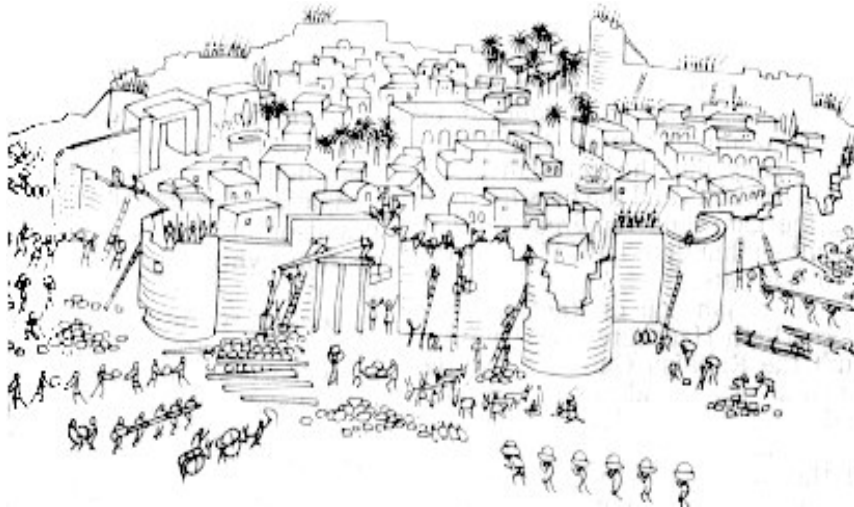
Nehemiah was a governor of the Province of Judah from 445 to 433 BC. He was sent to Jerusalem by the king of the Persians almost one hundred years after the return of a large group of Hebrew people from Babylon where they had been exiled.

Jerusalem faced an economic crisis. At the same time as they were required to pay heavy taxes to the Persian king and to the local Judean authorities, Jewish workers were forced to redirect their energies from the production of crops in order to rebuild the walls of Jerusalem and improve its defences. As a result there was a famine.



Many people experienced a downward spiral into poverty:

- They lose their land and homes
- They become tenants and day-labourers, but still have to borrow to survive
- When they cannot pay their debts, their sons and daughters are forced to become slaves
- They lose their self-reliance because they have lost their means of production: “We are powerless...” (Nehemiah 5:5)



Meanwhile, others Jews were making immense profits from the distress of the poor.





## Nehemiah's Account (Nehemiah 5:1-13)

Now there was a great outcry of the people and of their wives against their Jewish kin. For there were those who said, "With our sons and our daughters, we are many; we must get grain, so that we may eat and stay alive."

There were also those who said, "We are having to pledge our fields, our vineyards, and our houses in order to get grain during the famine." And there were those who said, "We are having to borrow money on our fields and vineyards to pay the king's tax."

Now our flesh is the same as that of our kindred; our children are the same as their children; and yet we are forcing our sons and daughters to be slaves, and some of our daughters have been ravished; we are powerless, and our fields and vineyards now belong to others."

I was very angry when I heard their outcry and these complaints. After thinking it over, I brought charges against the nobles and the officials; I said to them, "You are all taking interest from your own people."

And I called a great assembly to deal with them, and said to them, "As far as we were able, we have bought back our Jewish kindred who had been sold to other nations; but now you are selling your own kin, who must then be bought back by us!"

They were silent, and could not find a word to say. So I said, "The thing that you are doing is not good. Should you not walk in the fear of our God, to prevent the taunts of the nations our enemies? Moreover I and my brothers and my servants are lending them money and grain. Let us stop this taking of interest. Restore to them, this very day, their fields, their vineyards, their olive orchards, and their houses, and the interest on money, grain, wine, and oil that you have been exacting from them."

Then they said, "We will restore everything and demand nothing more from them. We will do as you say."

And I called the priests, and made them take an oath to do as they had promised. I also shook out the fold of my garment and said, "So may God shake out everyone from house and from property who does not perform this promise. Thus may they be shaken out and emptied."

And all the assembly said, "Amen," and praised the Lord. And the people did as they had promised. (NRSV)



### Task Seven

After reading Nehemiah 5:1-13 answer the questions that follow:

- a) **How did those people who were experiencing economic oppression make their feelings known?**
- b) **Nehemiah is a member of the ruling class but is able to acknowledge that he himself is part of a system that exploits the poor. Which words from the scripture passage indicate that Nehemiah is aware that he and others of his social group are benefiting from an unjust situation?**
- c) **Nehemiah's response to the situation develops in a number of steps. Arrange the following in the order in which they occur:**
  - **Nehemiah looks at the facts and makes an analysis**
  - **Nehemiah plans his response and decides to act on behalf of the poor against his own class interests**
  - **Nehemiah calls an assembly of the people against the rulers when his appeal to the profiteers and the politicians fails**
  - **Nehemiah listens to the complaints of the poor**
  - **Nehemiah first addresses the exploiters (the profiteers, the politicians)**
  - **Nehemiah's initial reaction is emotional – he becomes angry**

### Something to Think About

**How typical is the process that Nehemiah goes through – from emotion, to thought, to action – as he comes to terms with the injustice the people are experiencing? Can you think of other examples of this process?**

## A Return to Principles

The measures taken by Nehemiah are inspired by the Torah, especially by the laws of the Sabbath Year and the Year of Jubilee.

These laws, based on the Book of Leviticus 25:8-17, 29-31, acknowledged that God was the true owner of all the land of Israel and that the people were God's tenants. They upheld the ideal that the land did not 'belong' to individuals or groups of people but that all were entitled to share it. Monopolies of land ownership were generally regarded as being against God's will and many prophets denounced them as social evils.

Under the laws of the Sabbath Year and the Year of Jubilee:

- Debts were cancelled
- Slaves were liberated
- Land was given back to the poor.

These measures were a way of indicating that the hopes of the poor needed to be fulfilled in the present moment not at some time in the distant future.

### Something to Research

**The socio-economic situation described in Nehemiah 5:1-13 is much like that of many Third World countries today and of poor communities within developed countries. What are some of the features mentioned in Nehemiah 5:1-13 that are also aspects of life in many countries and poor communities today?**



# Part Three: Justice in the Gospels

## Focus:

- **Ngā Rongopai (the gospels) show Jesus to be the fulfilment of the Old Testament promises about tika.**
- **Jesus establishes God's reign of justice, peace and love, and restores people's right relationships with Te Atua, with each other, and with the world in which they live.**
- **Hehu brings justice to all, but especially to the poor and vulnerable.**
- **Through whakapono (faith) in Jesus Christ we can share in his work of justice.**

## Jesus and Justice



The New Testament vision of justice builds on that of the Old Testament.

In the gospels, Jesus shows himself to be the fulfilment of the great prophetic tradition of Isaiah, Jeremiah, Hosea and Amos. He is recognised as the model of justice, the Servant of the Lord, who announces and establishes *Te Rangatiranga*

(God's reign) in the world. In Jesus' words and actions, we see what *Te Rangatiranga* is all about. By his death and resurrection, he makes it possible for all people to enter God's reign.

At the beginning of his public ministry, Jesus stands up in the synagogue at Nazareth and reads Isaiah 61:1-2 – the most radical social justice statement found in the Old Testament:

*The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.'* (Luke 4:18-19)

After a pause Jesus makes the astonishing announcement: 'Today this scripture has been fulfilled in your hearing' (Luke 4:21). He is making clear that he is the promised Messiah who has a special sense of mission to poor and oppressed people.



Throughout his ministry, Jesus will continue to fulfil Isaiah's words by serving the cause of justice.

In the Beatitudes, which he presented while delivering the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus twice refers to justice. He tells those listening that God's blessings are given to those who are on the side of right. Honour comes, not from social status, but is given to those who refuse to take advantage of others or who are unable to defend their own positions:

*"Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled."*  
(Matthew 5:6)

*"Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."* (Matthew 5:10)

In the prayer that Jesus taught his disciples – "The Lord's Prayer" or "Our Father" – Jesus told them to ask that God's kingdom on earth be the same as God's kingdom in heaven (Matthew 6:10). In heaven, there is no injustice. In the new earth, which Jesus often spoke about, there will also be no injustice.

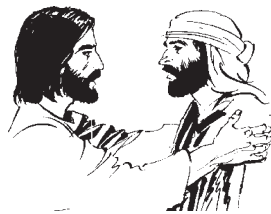


Jesus attacked those social and religious structures which were based on exclusion and religious legalism. He made a point of associating with the unclean, unloved and rejected people of society. He consistently challenged the moral police – the Pharisees – for their hypocrisy and false sense of holiness. In doing so he was reaffirming the Old Testament vision of shalom – right relationships. The gospels show Jesus repeatedly reaching out to restore right relationships with those at the bottom of the social pyramid – poor people, women, Samaritans, lepers, children, prostitutes and tax collectors.

The parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37) shows up the failure of those in positions of status to provide care for a victim of crime. When a traveller on his way to Jericho is beaten, robbed and left for dead on the side of the road, two office-holders at the Temple – a priest and Levite – walk past him because they fear they will be “contaminated” if they come into contact with blood or touch a dead body. It is a despised Samaritan who treats the injured man with compassion. He stops, binds the man’s wounds, carries him to an inn and pays the bill. Jesus uses the story to lead his audience to the conclusion that we must regard all people as neighbours.

Jesus’ desire to restore right relationships is evident in his meeting with the corrupt tax collector named Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) who had defrauded others for years. In the course of their public conversation, Zacchaeus confesses to Jesus what he has done and promises to pay restitution four times over – the rate established by Old Testament tradition. Jesus’ response is to welcome Zacchaeus back into the community and to act on his behalf in the face of a hostile crowd who cannot understand why Jesus would have anything to do with this criminal:

*‘Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham.’*  
(Luke 19:9)



Jesus is reminding them that Zacchaeus is their brother who, through the workings of justice, has been restored to them. He signals this reconciliation by staying with Zacchaeus as a guest in his house

In Jesus’ world sharing a meal with someone was not a casual act, as it can be in our own society, but an action that indicated acceptance at a deeper level. One of Jesus’ most characteristic activities was open and inclusive table fellowship. By frequently dining with outcasts and those considered insignificant in society, Jesus was not only challenging the social structures of his time but also signalling that there is a place for all people in the reign of God. A number of Jesus’ parables focus on banquets or feasts (Luke 14:15-24 and Matthew 22:1-14). These emphasise that it is often the poor and most vulnerable who readily respond to the invitation to attend the Lord’s feast – the wealthy are usually too preoccupied with their own business to come.

While Jesus was also eager to accept into his company people who were well-off, he made it clear that all who wished to follow him, regardless of social position, needed to repent and change their lives. For this reason he invited the rich young man to sell all of his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor (Matthew 19:16-22). Jesus makes it clear that God reaches out in *aroha* to all of us – rich, poor and in

between – but that each person must make a choice either to accept or turn down the invitation to be part of *Te Rangatiratanga*.

The parable of the day of judgement (Matthew 25:31-46) contrasts the reward coming to those who practise justice with the punishment dealt out to those who refuse to give to others what is their due. In this parable Jesus pictures the end of time when people from all nations are gathered before him as he sits on the throne of his glory. It makes clear that all those who do the work of justice – feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming strangers, clothing the naked, and visiting the sick and those in prison – are in fact doing all these things to the Lord. For their reward, they will be welcomed into the reign of God. On the other hand, those who ignore the demands of *tika* and fail to attend to people’s basic needs are refusing to acknowledge the Lord. They will not experience eternal life.



### Task Eight

**Which of the following statements are accurate descriptions of Jesus’ attitude towards justice and injustice? Which are not?**

- 1. Jesus made it possible for all people to enter God’s reign.**
- 2. Jesus’ continued the work of justice that was proclaimed by the Old Testament prophets.**
- 3. Wealth and status in society are a sign of God’s blessing.**
- 4. God’s kingdom in heaven reflects the values of this world.**
- 5. Jesus criticised social structures that excluded those at the bottom levels of society.**
- 6. Jesus taught that compassion was more important than following the letter of the law.**
- 7. Restoring right relationships was an important aspect of Jesus’ ministry.**
- 8. Jesus refused to eat with Pharisees and those of status in society.**
- 9. Jesus recognised that the poor and vulnerable are less likely to accept the invitation to be part of God’s reign.**
- 10. Jesus saw the impossibility of rich people gaining eternal life.**
- 11. Whenever people care for those in need they care for Christ himself.**
- 12. People who fail to work for justice will experience eternal life as long as they pray to God.**

### Something to Discuss

The following actions or teachings of Jesus show his concern for justice. Choose **three** and explain the message about justice that they communicate.

- Proclaiming the text of Isaiah 61:1-2 in the synagogue
- Presenting the Beatitudes
- Teaching his disciples how to pray
- Challenging social and religious structures based on exclusion and legalism
- Directing people to see all others as their neighbours
- Reaching out to restore right relationships
- Eating with outcasts and insignificant people
- Teaching in parables that feature feasts and banquets
- Questioning the importance of wealth and possessions
- Describing the day of judgement at the end of time

### Task Nine

Jesus expressed special concern for the poor and oppressed in his actions, in his teachings, and in his association with people who were on the edges of society, including sinners.

- a) Link the Scripture references in the left hand column of the table below with the summaries of the incidents that the passages describe in the right.

Scripture References	Situations where Jesus expresses concern for the poor and oppressed
Mark 1:40-45	A. Jesus tells the scribes and Pharisees that they are hypocrites who have neglected justice, mercy and faith.
Matthew 19:16-22	B. Jesus urges those who are well-off to invite the poor, the crippled, the lame, and the blind to their banquets.
Matthew 23:23	C. Jesus cures a leper – a social outcast – and is no longer able to go into a town openly.
Luke 5:29-32	D. Jesus accuses his opponents of injustice after the leader of a synagogue becomes angry because Jesus cures a woman on the Sabbath.
Luke 7:36-50	E. Jesus tells a rich young man that eternal life will be his if he sells his possessions and gives the money to the poor.
Luke 8:1-3	F. Jesus eats with tax collectors and sinners, causing the scribes and Pharisees to complain.
Luke 13:10-17	G. Jesus goes through cities and villages in the company of various women who provide for him and the Twelve out of their own resources.
Luke 14:12-13	H. Jesus breaks a social taboo when he allows a woman regarded as a sinner to bathe his feet with her tears and dry them with her hair.

- b) For each of the above passages list words or phrases which indicate how Jesus acted against injustice.
- c) Choose one of the above situations where Jesus expresses concern for the poor and oppressed that makes a strong impression on you. Explain why the incident has an impact on you.



### Extension Activity

Find and read other passages from the gospels where Jesus expresses concern for the poor and oppressed. Use the list of Scripture references that your teacher gives you as a help.

You may wish to work in a pair or group to role-play one of the passages.

## Part Four:

### The Church's Tradition of Social Justice

#### Focus:

- **From the beginning, the Church has been committed to the welfare of its members and people in society.**
- **The Church's tradition of teachings on social justice issues developed in response to the Industrial Revolution.**
- **Since the publication of *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things* in 1891 the Church has developed a great body of teachings on many aspects of social justice.**
- **The *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* (2004) gives a clear summary of the Church's social teachings.**

### Welfare in the Early Church

Christians have always recognised that the Gospel requires them to work for the welfare of people in society.

Following the example of Jesus, the Church, from the beginning, promoted *tika*. Saint Paul in his letters reminded Christians to treat each other as brothers and sisters in Christ, regardless of social status:

*"There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus."* (Galatians 3:28)

*"Bear one another's burdens, and in this way you will fulfil the law of Christ."* (Galatians 6:2)

*"Each of us must please our neighbour for the good purpose of building up the neighbour."* (Romans 15:2)



The early Christian communities became well-known for their social services to people in need – especially the sick, the hungry, widows and orphans. When, at times, groups of Christians did fail to meet the needs of the poor their behaviour was condemned by their leaders (see James 2:1-9).

#### Task Ten

**Read the following passages from the New Testament which describe how the early Church cared for the poor and vulnerable:**

**Acts 6:1-6**

**Acts 11:27-30**

**Romans 15:25-27**

**List all the ways in which the first Christians provided for those among them who were in need.**

### An Emerging Tradition of Justice

In the fourth century, after Christianity became the official religion of the Roman Empire, the Church had new opportunities to work for social reform. It played a significant role in passing laws that protected widows and orphans, limited slavery, reduced abortions, defended children, and secured more humane treatment for prisoners of war and criminals. Early Church documents provide evidence of Christians' commitment to peace: Christians were forbidden to carry arms, and soldiers who desired baptism were required to resign from the Roman army.

Later, during the medieval period, the monasteries, as well as providing education, established essential social services including hospitals for the sick, shelter for orphans and widows, food for the poor, ministry to prisoners, and hospitality to travellers. The Church continues to provide many of these services today.

#### Age Old Wisdom

**The bread which you do not use is the bread of the hungry; the garment hanging in your wardrobe is the garment of the person who is naked; the shoes that you do not wear are the shoes of the one who is barefoot; the money that you keep locked away is the money of the poor; the acts of charity that you do not perform are so many injustices you commit.**

**(Saint Basil the Great – around 300AD)**

### Something To Think About

**From your study of Church history topics can you recall any people from the past who contributed to the Church's tradition of justice? What did they do?**

## The Church Responds to the Industrial Revolution

Throughout its history, the Church has continued to deepen its understanding of what is required if true justice is to be established in our world. However, it was in response to the Industrial Revolution of the eighteenth century that the Church first began to develop an organised body of teachings on social justice issues.

The factories established by the new industries required large workforces. Workers were often poorly paid, badly treated, and forced to live and work in environments that were unsafe and unhealthy. The Church gradually turned its attention to issues such as the provision of fair wages and decent working conditions. In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued an encyclical letter, *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things*, which addressed the problems facing industrial workers. In it he rejected socialism as a solution to workers' problems and stated that co-operation rather than class struggle would change society for the better. *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things* also emphasised the rights of the weak, the dignity of the poor, and the obligations of the rich towards them. It affirmed the right of workers to form unions or associations to protect their own interests.



## The Modern Catholic Tradition of Social Justice Teachings



Since the publication of *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things*, there has been a steady stream of statements from popes and bishops of the world that have expanded and deepened the Church's teachings on the social responsibilities of being Christian. Justice is now seen as being much more than charity or welfare. Christians must move beyond treating symptoms to addressing the underlying causes of social distress.

Using the tools provided by the social sciences, the Church has been better able to understand the connections between politics and the conditions of everyday life. It sees more clearly that poverty and injustice do not just happen but are the result of various social and cultural structures. The Church strongly urges all people to take the Gospel seriously and work together to get rid of the conditions that cause hunger, homelessness, oppression or victimisation.

Over the last century, developments in theology have supported this deepening social consciousness and have led to a greater commitment by many Christians to the causes of justice and peace. These include:

- A greater appreciation that people are made in God's image and must reflect God's *aroha*.
- An increased awareness that *Te Rongopai* requires people to build *Te Rangatiratanga* on earth as well as to seek the fullness of God's life and love in heaven.

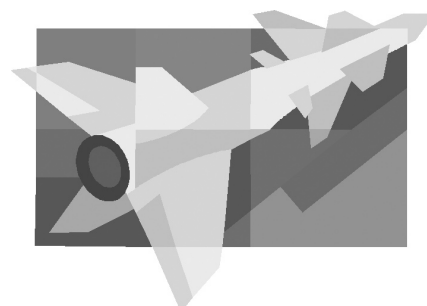
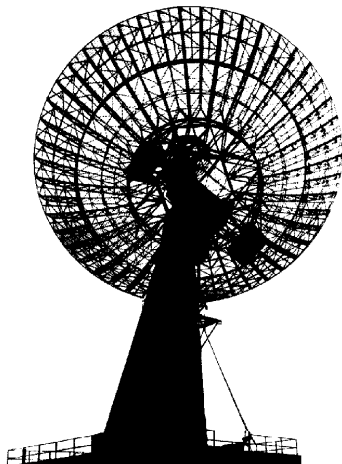
### Something to Discuss

- **Why is *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things* such an important milestone in the history of the Church?**
- **What are some ways in which the Church's understanding of justice has developed in the time since *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things* was first published?**



## Timeline of the Development of the Church's Social Teachings (1891-1991)

Year	Events / Issues in the World	Social Justice Teachings
<b>19th C</b>	As a result of the Industrial Revolution there is much poverty. Workers are being exploited by profit-hungry employers and public authorities are not protecting the rights of the poor.	
<b>1891</b>		Pope Leo XIII issues <b>Rerum Novarum</b> , the first papal encyclical focusing on a social justice issue.
	In 1929 a financial crisis hits the world economy and the Great Depression begins. In Europe, democracies weaken and dictators emerge to take power.	
<b>1931</b>		On the fortieth anniversary of <b>Rerum Novarum</b> , Pope Pius XI publishes <b>Quadragesimo Anno</b> .
	Advancements such as nuclear energy, automation, space exploration, and improved communication technologies pose complex, new problems for industrialised nations. Meanwhile, millions live in poverty in Asia, Africa, and Latin America.	
<b>1961</b>		Seventy years after <b>Rerum Novarum</b> , Pope John XXIII issues <b>Mater et Magistra</b> in which, for the first time, the Church addresses the problems faced by Third World countries.
	Following the building of the Berlin Wall (August 1961) and the Cuban Missile Crisis (October 1962) – there is much concern that the “Cold War” will turn into a full-scale international conflict involving nuclear weapons.	
<b>1963</b>		The optimistic tone and development of a philosophy of rights in John XXIII's <b>Pacem in Terris</b> makes a significant impression on Catholics and non-Catholics alike.
	The Cold War and arms race are on the minds of the world's bishops meeting for the Second Vatican Council. They challenge people to read the “signs of the times” in the light of the Gospel.	
<b>1965</b>		The pastoral constitution, <b>Gaudium et Spes</b> , expresses the desire of the world's bishops to address the issue of the Church's place in the modern world.
	The Vietnam War is raging and African nations are fighting wars of independence. More and more people are alert to the connection between poverty and violence.	
<b>1967</b>		Pope Paul VI issues <b>Populorum Progressio</b> , the first encyclical devoted specifically to the issues of international development. It introduces the phrase: “development is a new word for peace.”



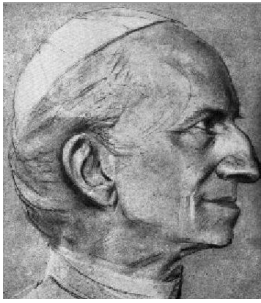


## Timeline of the Development of the Church's Social Teachings (1891-1991) – continued

Year	Events / Issues in the World	Social Justice Teachings
1971	The world is verging on a recession and the “new poor” are especially vulnerable. In the USA, action on behalf of civil rights continues, the women’s movement emerges as a powerful force, and there are continuing student protests against the Vietnam War. Within the Church “liberation” becomes a strong theme following the 1968 Medellin conference of Latin American bishops.	Pope Paul VI issues <b>Octogesima Adveniens</b> to commemorate the eightieth anniversary of <b>Rerum Novarum</b> . The World Synod of Bishops publishes <b>Justice in the World</b> , a document strongly influenced by the insights of Church leaders from Africa, Asia, and Latin America.
1975	Disbelief in God, apathy towards religion, consumerism, a focus on pleasure, racial discrimination, and the desire to dominate others are identified as worrying trends amongst the world’s cultures.	Pope Paul VI issues <b>Evangelii Nuntiandi</b> to mark ten years since the closing of the Second Vatican Council. In it all Christians are urged to take responsibility for spreading the Gospel.
1979	Communism, with its atheistic philosophy and emphasis on the collective, and capitalism, with its excessive consumerism that widens the gap between the rich and the poor, in their different ways continue to create great injustice in the world.	In <b>Redemptor Hominis</b> , John Paul II, the first pope from a communist country, reaffirms the dignity and value of every human person in the face of forces that destroy or limit human rights.
1981	At the beginning of the 1980s huge numbers of people throughout the world are unemployed or underemployed. Many workers, including migrants, are exploited for the sake of profit.	Ninety years after Leo XIII addressed the problems facing workers in <b>Rerum Novarum</b> , Pope John Paul II once more deals with the issue of work in <b>Laborem Exercens</b> .
1988	By the late 1980s the world economy is in a state of flux – debt, unemployment, and recession hit rich and poor nations alike.	To mark twenty years since the publication of <b>Populorum Progressio</b> , Pope John Paul II issues his own encyclical, <b>Sollicitudo Rei Socialis</b> , on moral aspects of international development.
1991	The collapse of communism in Eastern Europe leads people to wonder how well democracy and capitalism will serve the needs of the people in the Eastern Bloc. Liberalism and materialism are already producing undesirable consequences there.	Using Leo XIII’s <b>Rerum Novarum</b> as his frame of reference, Pope John Paul II issues <b>Centesimus Annus</b> to commemorate the one-hundredth anniversary of Catholic social teaching. In it he looks to the ‘new things’ (rerum novarum) shaping the post-communist world.

### Something to Research

**Study the above timeline, which shows the relationship between events in the world and the development of the Church’s social teaching in the century after *Rerum Novarum* – Concerning New Things appeared. Choose one event / issue mentioned on the timeline that attracted the Church’s concern and find out more about it. Use the standard tools of research, including the Internet, in your investigation.**



In 1891, Pope Leo XIII issued *Rerum Novarum* – the first papal encyclical to deal with modern social issues.

### ***Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things***

(Pope Leo XIII, 1891)

- Workers have the right to a fair wage and decent working conditions.
- They must be allowed to form unions for collective bargaining with management.

### ***Quadragesimo Anno – After Forty Years***

(Pope Pius XI, 1931)

- Wealth and power are increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few rich people whom government policies tend to favour.
- Governments must decentralise their power and allow associations of citizens to be involved in decision-making

### ***Mater et Magistra – Mother and Teacher***

(Pope John XXIII, 1961)

- Governments and private enterprise should work together to ensure justice for all citizens.
- Catholics must challenge global inequality and unjust economic structures which cause great poverty in developing countries.

### ***Pacem in Terris – Peace on Earth***

(Pope John XXIII, 1963)

- The existence of nuclear weapons seriously endangers the whole world.
- Steps towards disarmament must be taken and a body established to help nations work towards peace.
- Peace is possible only if basic human rights and the freedom of religion and conscience are respected.
- Nations must not advance their own economic interests at the expense of other countries' well-being.

### ***Gaudium et Spes – The Joys and Hopes***

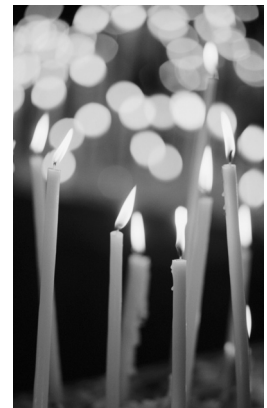
(Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Second Vatican Council, 1965)

- The Church is concerned with people's physical as well as spiritual well-being, and Christians are responsible for what happens in the world.
- The world's resources must be used for the benefit of all not just a few.
- Society and its institutions must serve people and build up their dignity.
- Economic injustice is a cause of war.
- Economic inequalities must be eliminated with advanced nations helping developing ones.

### ***Populorum Progressio – On the Progress of Peoples***

(Pope Paul VI, 1967)

- The world is a global village – all people are interdependent.
- The right to private property is not absolute.
- Bold and courageous moves are needed to bring about urgent reforms.
- Peace, which is more than the absence of war, is built up daily through efforts to increase justice in the world.



### **Octogesima Adveniens – The Eightieth Year**

(Pope Paul VI, 1971)

- The social teachings of the Church have a political as well as an economic dimension.
- New social issues stemming from urbanisation – the changing role of women, racial discrimination, care of the environment – need to be addressed.

### **Iustitia et Pax – Justice in the World**

(World Synod of Bishops, 1971)

- Action on behalf of justice and transformation of the world is central to the Gospel.
- Catholics must confront those structures in society that encourage and support sin.
- All nations have a right to self-development and self-determination in economic matters.
- Economic injustices among nations need to be resolved at an international level.

### **Evangelii Nuntiandi – Evangelisation in the Modern World**

(Pope Paul VI, 1975)

- The Church must proclaim the Good News in ways that people of the twentieth century can understand.
- Spreading the Gospel involves proclaiming the message of liberation and justice for all people, including those in the Third World.
- All Christians must play a part in spreading the Gospel.

### **Redemptor Hominis – The Redeemer of Humankind**

(Pope John Paul II, 1979)

- Justice is built up when the dignity and worth of every person is respected.
- The exploitation of the earth, the destruction of the environment, and the spread of consumerism indicate a lack of justice.
- The arms race and the violation of human rights through terrorism, torture and violence must be condemned.

### **Laborem Exercens – On Doing Work**

(Pope John Paul II, 1981)

- The exploitation of workers damages the dignity of the human person.
- People are more important than profits.
- Workers have the right to participate in decisions at work.
- Work enables human beings to co-create with God. Creativity is a measure of an economic system's success.



### **Sollicitudo Rei Socialis – On Social Concern**

(Pope John Paul II, 1988)

- Rich, developed nations have a responsibility towards poor and undeveloped countries.
- The preferential option for the poor is an important moral guideline.
- The goods of the earth are intended for the benefit of all people.

### **Centesimus Annus – The Hundredth Year**

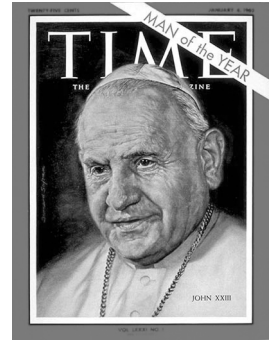
(Pope John Paul II, 1991)

- The dignity of every human person is at the heart of the Church's social message.
- The state must acknowledge the right to life, the right to work for just wages, and the right to establish a family in which children may grow and mature.
- The advancement of the poor provides a great opportunity for the moral, cultural and economic development of all people.

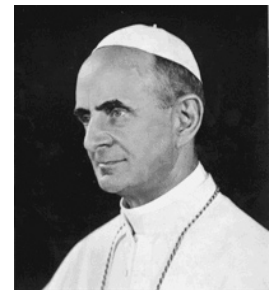
### Task Eleven

Identify the Church statements on justice that the following descriptions apply to. All the information you need can be found on the previous pages.

1. Published by Pope John XXIII, this was the first papal document to deal with the issue of nuclear weapons and call for their removal.
2. Pope Pius XI issued this statement at a time when the world was entering the Great Depression and democracies were under threat in Europe.
3. Ninety years after Pope Leo XIII addressed the issue of work, Pope John Paul II returned to the same theme in this statement.
4. In this statement the bishops of the Second Vatican Council addressed the need for the Church to re-examine its relationship with the modern world.
5. This statement, written at the time communism was collapsing in Eastern Europe, commemorated the centenary of *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things*.
6. At a time when many people were turning away from religion, this encyclical of Pope Paul VI urged all Christians to take responsibility for spreading the Gospel.
7. The World Synod of Bishops issued this statement which has a strong focus on “liberation”.
8. The fact that millions of people worldwide are living in poverty leads John XXIII to address the problems faced by Third World countries in this document.
9. In this, his first encyclical, Pope John Paul II states that justice develops when the dignity of the human person is respected.
10. This was the first teaching by a pope to deal directly with a social justice issue – the rights and conditions of workers.
11. This encyclical by Pope Paul VI focused on international development which he linked closely to peace.
12. This looked at new social issues arising from urbanisation and was issued eighty years after *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things*.



Pope John XXIII



Pope Paul VI

### Task Twelve

Choose one of the Church documents summarised above that deals with a social justice issue that you think is especially significant:

- a) Explain why the issue is an important one.
- b) Decide on one idea presented in the summary that you think is particularly significant and give the reasons why.
- c) List additional ideas that you would want the document to include and / or concerns you would want it to cover.

### Extension Activity

Search the Internet for further information about the Church document that you have just written about.

- a) List five things that you learnt about the document.
- b) Jot down a brief quote from the document and explain in your own words what it means.

Many of the documents can be found on the Vatican website: <http://www.vatican.va>



## A Well-Kept Secret

The world has changed more rapidly in the period since the publication of *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things* in 1891 than it did in the previous two-thousand years. In the face of many new and complex social challenges, the Church has tried to guide individuals and societies in how to live and act justly.

Despite the many statements on issues of justice and peace by various popes and bishops, many Catholics remain unaware of the Church's teaching on topics such as the environment, war, politics, business, the family, workers' rights, private property, genetic engineering, and globalisation. This has led some to claim that the Church's social teaching is its "best kept secret".

In 2004, in an effort to give wider publicity to what the Church teaches on social issues the Vatican published the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*. This volume, put together at the request of Pope John Paul II by the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, presents the teachings of the Church on public life.

The *Compendium* makes use of passages from Scripture, the teachings of various popes, bishops and theologians, and the documents of the Second Vatican Council. Organised into 583 numbered sections, it sets out to give "a concise but complete overview of the Church's social teaching".<sup>1</sup>

### Something to Discuss

- **Why is the Church's social teaching called its "best kept secret"?**
- **How does the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* seek to raise awareness of the Church's social teaching?**



<sup>1</sup> From the "Presentation" made by Cardinal Renato Martino, the President of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, at the time of the launch of the *Compendium* on 2 April, 2004.

## Part Five:

### Principles of Social Justice

#### Focus:

- **Catholic teachings about justice are based on a number of key principles or themes that come from Scripture and the natural law, and which are expressed in the Church's on-going tradition.**
- **The Church distinguishes between four categories of justice – commutative, distributive, legal and social.**

### Principles of Justice

Since *Rerum Novarum* – *Concerning New Things* was published in 1891 a huge body of Catholic social teaching has developed. Certain key themes drawn from Scripture and the natural law appear again and again in the Church's statements on justice. These themes can be regarded as important principles in the Church's on-going tradition of social teaching.

#### Principles of Justice

##### **Justice is an essential aspect of faith**

People are social beings capable of relating freely and responsibly with others. The "social" dimensions of human life – life in the world – are part of God's plan and intimately linked with the coming of the Reign of God. *Whakapono* (faith) and *tika* cannot be separated – where justice is lacking, religion is false.

##### **Justice affirms the dignity of the human person**

The living image of *Te Atua* can be seen in every person who is unique, unrepeatable and *tapu* (sacred). Our true identity as God's sons and daughters is revealed to us in *Hehu Karaiti*, the perfect image of God. All persons are equal in dignity regardless of gender, race, class, sexual orientation or other human categorisations. Our human dignity can be recognised and protected only in community with others.



##### **Justice requires a preferential option for the poor**

The Gospel demands a particular *aroha* and concern for the poor and vulnerable. Everyone – especially the poor and the suffering – is a brother or sister for whom Christ died and rose to new life. A preferential love should always be shown to poor people, the economically disadvantaged and other vulnerable people who, as a consequence of their status, suffer oppression and powerlessness. Their needs and rights are given special attention in God's eyes.

##### **Justice respects rights and responsibilities**

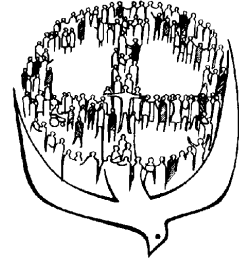
Society exists for the benefit of the person and must always respect human dignity and freedom. Individuals, peoples and nations have certain rights which must be affirmed and upheld. These rights – religious, political, economic, legal etc. – are realised in community and must be respected and protected by all the institutions of society. Along with rights, there are certain corresponding duties and responsibilities that must be fulfilled.

### **Justice is an expression of love**

Love of neighbour demands justice; charity must express itself in actions and structures which respect human dignity, protect human rights, and bring about human development. To promote *tika* is to transform structures which block love.

### **Justice promotes the common good**

A society must act for the common good – the well-being of all people and of the whole person. The common good is the sum total of all those conditions of social living – economic, political, and cultural – which make it possible for women and men to achieve their human potential. Individual rights are always experienced within the context of the promotion of the common good.



### **Justice recognises subsidiarity**

Subsidiarity – the initiative, freedom and responsibility of individuals and groups at the lower levels of society – must be respected and supported by the state and those in positions of power. The well-being of families, neighbourhoods, community groups, small businesses, and local governments should be promoted and protected. Larger government structures do have a role when greater social co-ordination and regulation are necessary for the common good.

### **Justice demands participation**

Individuals and groups must be able to participate fully in the cultural, social, economic and political life of the community to which they belong. Democratic participation in decision-making is the best way to respect the dignity and liberty of people. The government is the instrument by which people co-operate together in order to achieve the common good. The international common good requires participation in international organisations.

### **Justice calls for the fair distribution of resources**

The earth's goods and resources are intended for everyone and must be distributed fairly according to human need. The economy must serve the needs of people. Labour takes precedence over both capital and technology in the production process. Just wages and the rights of workers to organise themselves are to be respected.

### **Justice is linked with solidarity**

A bond of solidarity or interdependence exists between individuals and peoples – we are all really responsible for all. As members of one human family we have obligations to promote the rights and development of all people across the world, irrespective of national boundaries. In particular, the rich nations have responsibilities toward the poor nations. The structures of the international order must reflect justice.



### **Justice acknowledges the dignity of the natural world**

Creation is the image of God and is inherently sacred. People are part of the community of creation and must respect, use carefully, and share the earth's natural resources. Our work makes us co-creators in the continuing development of the universe. We must take responsibility for the ecology of our planet.

### **Justice promotes peace**

Peace is the fruit of justice and is dependent upon right relationships among people, nations and between humans and the earth community. Progressive disarmament of weapons must take place if the future is to be secure. In order to promote peace and the conditions of peace, an effective international authority is necessary.

## Something to Think About

Read through the list of key justice themes / principles and reflect on them.

- a) Which do you find easiest to understand or appreciate?
- b) Which do you find hardest to understand or accept?
- c) Which is most followed by people today?
- d) Which is most ignored by people today?
- e) Which do you think you best express through your own words and actions?
- f) Which do you think you need to pay more attention to?
- g) Which needs to be emphasised more in the following situations:
  - Among your friends?
  - Within your family?
  - At school?
  - In your neighbourhood, town or city?
  - In Aotearoa New Zealand?
  - Throughout the world?



## Extension Activity

Focus on one or more of the above principles of justice that you think is / are especially important. Over the course of a week find news items and current affairs programmes or articles that deal with situations where your chosen principle(s) is / are either respected or disregarded.

Either write a brief report or speech defending this principle of justice or present your ideas about it in a poster or other form that combines text and visuals.

## Four Types of Justice

In its teachings the Church sometimes distinguishes four different types of justice that operate within society. Although these distinctions can be helpful, Church documents tend to group all four under the general term of “social justice” because all justice relates to life in society.

1. **Commutative justice** requires individuals and private groups within society to be honest and fair in their relationships with each other. It condemns stealing, cheating, and lying. It requires employers to pay employees a just wage and to provide them with decent working conditions. It asks that employees work to the best of their abilities to provide goods or services. When commutative justice fails restitution is required – whatever was unfairly taken must be restored, wherever possible, to its rightful owner.
2. **Distributive justice** requires society to distribute its social resources, wealth and power fairly. All members of society must have the resources to meet their human needs, to enjoy their rights, and to fulfil their responsibilities. Distributive justice allocates burdens and responsibilities according to peoples’ needs and wants. Income tax is an aspect of distributive justice – taking in proportion to people’s ability to pay and distributing in proportion to people’s need to receive. Sometimes the term contributive justice is used to describe the obligation that individuals and groups within society have to contribute towards its common good. A just and fair system of taxation ensures that everyone contributes to the society according to their ability to pay. Through contributions collected by taxes resources can be used for the good of all.
3. **Legal Justice** requires individuals and social institutions to obey the various laws and regulations that those authorities that govern them on behalf of society put in place. Citizens fulfil the requirements of legal justice by obeying the various laws and regulations passed and enforced by local and central government. In a society that is fundamentally just the law will seek to protect the dignity and rights of individuals and advance the common good. Legal systems that disregard peoples’ rights or which fail in their responsibility to promote the welfare of society as a whole are essentially unjust.
4. **Social Justice** requires society to create and maintain structures that advance the dignity of all people and allow each of its members to participate appropriately in its public life. Social justice condemns every kind of discrimination – on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, class, religion, and sexual orientation. It rejects every structure that exploits or excludes any group’s full participation in society. More positively, social justice requires that society organise itself to welcome the participation of all according to their needs and talents.

## Task Thirteen

- a) Briefly explain in your own words the difference between commutative, distributive, legal and social justice.
- b) List as many examples as you can of the different types of justice.



## Part Six:

### Human Dignity, Freedom and Responsibility

#### Focus:

- **Human dignity, freedom and responsibility are central considerations in any discussion of social justice.**
- **What the Church teaches about human dignity, freedom and responsibility shapes its approach to other justice issues, such as work and race.**



## Human Dignity, Freedom and Responsibility

Human dignity, freedom and responsibility are central to any discussion of social justice. The Church's approach to other topics – such as work and race – is shaped by what it believes about these fundamental matters.

The sources of the Church's teaching on human dignity, freedom and responsibility are found in Scripture, including the following key passages:

*God said, 'Let us make human beings in our own image, in the likeness of ourselves, and let them be masters of the fish of the sea, the birds of heaven, the cattle, all the wild beasts and all the reptiles that crawl upon the earth'. God created human beings in the image of God, male and female God created them. (Genesis 1:26-27)*

*The word of the Lord was addressed to me, saying, 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you.' (Jeremiah 1:4-5)*

*'I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did this to one of the least of these brothers or sisters of mine, you did it to me...'*

*'I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me.' (Matthew 25:40-45)*

#### Something to Think About

- **Where is the source of human dignity? (see Genesis 1:26-27 and Jeremiah 1:4-5)**
- **What do the words of Jesus (Matthew 25:40-45) suggest about our use of human freedom?**



The following passages from the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* summarise important Catholic beliefs about dignity, freedom and responsibility.

## Church Teachings on Human Dignity, Freedom and Responsibility

A just society can become a reality only when it is based on the respect of the transcendent **dignity** of the human person. (CSDC 132)

It is necessary to consider every neighbour without exception as another self, taking into account first of all their life and the means necessary for living it with **dignity**. Every political, economic, social, scientific and cultural programme must be inspired by the awareness of the primacy [priority] of each human being over society. (CSDC 132)

It is ... necessary that public authorities keep careful watch so that restrictions placed on **freedom** or any onus placed on personal activity will never become harmful to personal **dignity** .... (CSDC 133)

Human **freedom** belongs to us as creatures; it is a **freedom** which is given as a gift, one to be received like a seed and to be cultivated **responsibly**. When the contrary is the case, **freedom** dies, destroying people and society. (CSDC 138)

Far from being achieved in total self-sufficiency and the absence of relationships, **freedom** only truly exists where reciprocal bonds, governed by truth and justice, link people to one another. The understanding of **freedom** becomes deeper and broader when it is defended, even at the social level, in all its various dimensions. (CSDC 199)

The value of **freedom**, as an expression of the singularity [uniqueness] of each human person, is respected when every member of society is permitted to fulfil their personal vocation; to seek the truth and profess their religious, cultural and political ideas; to choose their state of life and, as far as possible, their line of work; to pursue initiatives of an economic, social and political nature. (CSDC 200)

In no case, therefore, are human persons to be manipulated for ends that are foreign to their own development, which can find complete fulfilment only in God and God's plan of salvation: in fact, human beings ... transcend the universe and are the only creatures willed by God for themselves. For this reason neither a person's life nor the development of their thought, nor their good, nor those who are part of their personal and social activities can be subjected to unjust restrictions in the exercise of their rights and **freedom**. (CSDC 133)

Men and women can turn to good only in **freedom**, which God has given to them as one of the highest signs of God's image: "For God has willed that people remain under the control of their own decisions" (Sirach 15:14), so that they can seek their Creator spontaneously, and come **freely** to utter and blissful perfection through loyalty to him. (CSDC 135)

Men and women rightly appreciate **freedom** and strive for it passionately: rightly do they desire and must form and guide, by their own free initiative, their personal and social life, accepting personal **responsibility** for it. (CSDC 135)

Every human person, created in the image of God, has the natural right to be recognised as a **free** and **responsible** being. All owe to each other this duty of respect. The right to the exercise of **freedom**, especially in moral and religious matters, is an inalienable requirement of the **dignity** of the human person. (CSDC 199)

### Task Fourteen

**Draw a mind map showing the relationship between human dignity, freedom and responsibility.**

### Something to Think About

**Why is it so important to understand the Church's teaching about human dignity, freedom and responsibility in order to appreciate its position on other justice issues?**



## Work and Race

There are many pressing social issues facing the world today.

In this section of the topic we will look more closely at what the Church teaches about two of them – work and race – in the light of the Catholic understanding of human dignity, freedom and responsibility.

The following passages about work and race are taken from the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church* and from statements by the Catholic bishops of Aotearoa New Zealand.

### Church Teachings on Work

In his preaching, Jesus teaches that we should appreciate work. (CSDC 259)

By means of work, men and women govern the world with God; together with God they are its “lords” and accomplish good things for themselves and for others.... Christians are called to work not only to provide themselves with bread, but also in acceptance of their poorer neighbours, to whom the Lord has commanded them to give food, drink, clothing, welcome, care and companionship. (CSDC 265)

Work is a fundamental right and a good for humankind, a useful good, worthy of people because it is an appropriate way for them to give expression to and enhance their human dignity. (CSDC 287)

The recognition and defence of women’s rights in the context of work generally depend on the organisation of work, which must take into account the dignity and vocation of women .... An urgent need to recognise effectively the rights of women in the workplace is seen especially under the aspects of pay, insurance and social security. (CSDC 295)

The rights of workers, like all other rights, are based on the nature of human persons and on their transcendent dignity. (CSDC 301)

The Church’s social doctrine recognises the legitimacy of striking when it cannot be avoided, or at least when it is necessary to obtain a proportionate benefit, when every other method for the resolution of disputes has been ineffectual. (CSDC 304)

In his preaching, Jesus teaches people not to be enslaved by work. Before all else, they must be concerned about their souls; gaining the whole world is not the purpose of their lives. (CSDC 260)

Rest from work is a right. As God “rested on the seventh day from all the work which he had done” (Genesis 2:2), so too men and women, created in God’s image, are to enjoy sufficient rest and free time that will allow them to tend to their family, cultural, social and religious life. (CSDC 284)



Work is a good belonging to all people and must be made available to all who are capable of engaging in it. Full employment therefore remains a mandatory objective for every economic system orientated towards justice and the common good. (CSDC 288)

## Church Teachings on Work (continued)

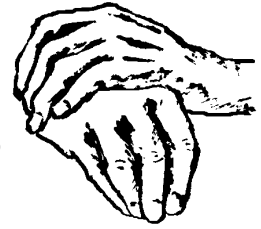
The magisterium recognises the fundamental role played by labour unions, whose existence is connected with the right to form associations or unions to defend the vital interests of workers employed in the various professions. (CSDC 305)

... the Church's social doctrine condemns the increase in the exploitation of children in the workplace in conditions of veritable slavery. This exploitation represents a serious violation of human dignity .... (CSDC 296)

It is also Catholic teaching that those who are unemployed must be supported financially and that society and the state must act together in assuming responsibility for protecting the worker from unemployment. These are not privileges to be given or taken back at the will of the state but a right in justice. While the state may set reasonable conditions for the granting of benefits, it should not do so in a way which threatens the dignity of the person or undermines the family unit. (NZ Bishops – *Some Concerns About Employment*)

Remuneration is the most important means for achieving justice in work relationships. The just wage is the legitimate fruit of work. They commit grave injustice who refuse to pay a just wage or who do not give it in due time and in proportion to the work done. (CSDC 302)

According to Catholic Social Teaching, wages are to be determined not only by the bargaining power of workers but also by their absolute right to a just participation in the fruits of their labour.

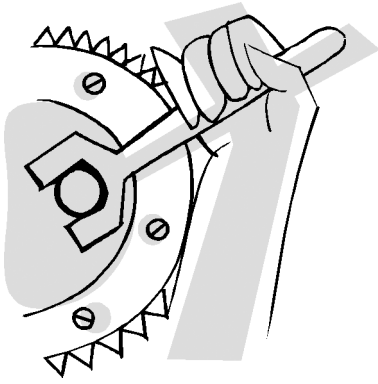


The Church's social doctrine teaches that relations within the world of work must be marked by co-operation: hatred and attempts to eliminate the other are completely unacceptable. (CSDC 306)

The traditional role of the state in New Zealand in ensuring a basic minimum wage is utterly consistent with the teaching of the Church on "the just wage". We would recommend that the government introduce a minimum wage which is adequate for the needs of workers and their dependents, which enables them to live in health and with dignity and recognises the right of workers to a just remuneration for their labour. (NZ Bishops – *Some Concerns About Employment*)

The new realities that are having such a powerful impact on the productive process, such as the globalisation of finance, economics, trade and labour, must never violate the dignity and centrality of the human person, nor the freedom and democracy of peoples. (CSDC 321)





### Task Fifteen

Read the following statements about employment and unemployment.

- a) Choose the two views you most agree with and explain why.
- b) Choose the two you least agree with and give reasons for your choice.
- c) Choose the three statements that best reflect Catholic teaching. Identify the aspect(s) of Catholic teaching contained in them.

- A. Most people on a benefit don't want to work. They are just lazy.
- B. There are still plenty of jobs in New Zealand for anyone who is prepared to get stuck in and really work.
- C. Unemployment is the fault of the unions and workers. Go-slows and strikes cause companies to go broke and then the workers are laid off.
- D. Keeping people in jobs is more important than bigger profits.
- E. The education system is a failure. People are not educated for their future life's work.
- F. Most unemployment is caused by advances in technology. Fewer people are needed in the workforce as machines and computers take over.
- G. People on the dole should have to do something to get their money. Handouts are soul-destroying. No one should get a handout for doing nothing.
- H. A buoyant economy leads to full employment. An economic down-turn means a loss of jobs.
- I. It is important that people have jobs that they enjoy and which are genuinely productive.
- J. Society must protect the rights of unemployed people and give them a fair benefit.



## Church Teachings on Race

“God shows no partiality” (Acts 10:34), since all people have the same dignity as creatures made in God’s image and likeness. The Incarnation of the Son of God shows the equality of all people with regard to dignity: “There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28). (CSDC 144)

Since something of the glory of God shines on the face of every person, the dignity of every person before God is the basis of the dignity of the human person before all other people. Moreover, this is the ultimate foundation of the radical equality and kinship among all people, regardless of their race, nation, sex, origin, culture, or class. (CSDC 144)



... for those who live a new life in Christ, racial and cultural differences are no longer causes of division. (CSDC 431)

... any theory or form whatsoever of racism and racial discrimination is morally unacceptable. (CSDC 433)

The review of our history clearly indicates that the promises and guarantees made in 1840 have not been consistently upheld and that the Māori partner has suffered grave injustices. The Māori have not always been given the protection of the State as promised under the Treaty. Worse still, the State has often deprived them by law of many of the promised guarantees. The State reflects the attitudes and behaviour of its people. In New Zealand racial prejudice still exists and is practised, particularly against the Māori. Racist thoughts, attitudes and behaviour are sinful because they are clearly against the specific message of Christ, for whom neighbour is not only a person from my tribe, my milieu, my religion or my nation: it is every person that I meet along the way.

Like a Jubilee Year, 1990 gives us an opportunity to recognise past and present injustices and to work to resolve them and effect reconciliation based on justice. With the tradition and teaching of the Church, we affirm: that the right of the first occupants to land, and a social and political organisation which would allow them to preserve their cultural identity, while remaining open to others, must be guaranteed. This is what the Treaty set out to do.

(NZ Bishops – *He Tau Whakamaharatanga Mo Aotearoa - Nui Tireni*  
*A Commemoration Year for Aotearoa - New Zealand*)

### Task Sixteen

- a) **What is the basis for the Church’s teaching that racism and racial discrimination are morally unacceptable?**
- b) **How did Jesus Christ oppose racism and heal its divisions?**
- c) **In 1990, the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, what rights did the bishops of Aotearoa affirm in the light of Church tradition and teaching?**



## Part Seven:

### More than the Absence of War

#### Focus:

- A culture of peace requires more than the absence of war.
- Peace signifies completeness, fulfilment, wholeness – the existence of right relationships among individuals, the community, and Te Atua.
- True peace is built on *tika* and forgiveness, *pono* (integrity) and *aroha*.
- The Eucharist is a source and sign of Christ's peace – it challenges us to spread Christ's peace in the world.



### Three Views of Peace

The Romans were famous for enforcing the Pax Romana, a long period of relative calm when hostilities between the various tribes and peoples who made up their Empire ceased. They had a saying: “Si vis pacem para bellum” – “If you want peace, prepare for war”. Although they usually did manage to limit disorder and violence throughout their extensive territories, Roman society was geared for war. For the Romans, war was an acceptable way of achieving peace. Theirs was a culture of war where individual battles and wars were only the visible tips of an iceberg.

The Old Testament reveals a very different understanding of peace, one which is represented in the rich concept of *shalom*. *Shalom* describes the ideal state in which humans lived when they were first created – the way we would still be, if we had remained faithful to God. *Shalom* is much more than the absence of conflict. It signifies completeness, fulfilment, wholeness – the existence of right relationships among individuals, the community, and God.

It is obvious that our present world is far from being in a state of *shalom*. Right relationships between individuals, societies and nations have broken down – destructive ways of relating have replaced them. For many, the world is neither a safe nor a just place in which to live. Yet *shalom* recognises that while hurt and injustice do exist, they can and must be healed and made right.

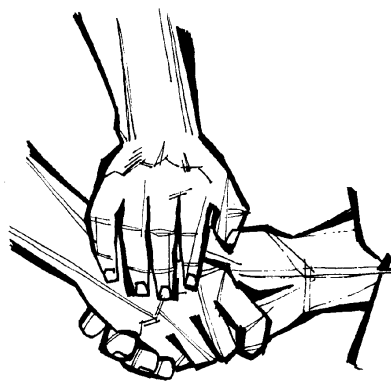
*Shalom* recognises that a culture of peace needs more than the absence of war. It requires a deep cultural transformation.

The Māori understanding of peace is expressed in a proverb:

*Ma wai ra e taurima te marae i waho nei?  
Ma te tika, ma te pono, me te aroha.*

*Who are the guardians of the marae out there?  
They are justice, integrity and love.*

The three qualities of justice, integrity and love are the basis for a sound and lasting peace. They create the conditions in which true peace can flourish.



#### Task Seventeen

- What do the Hebrew concept of Shalom and the understanding of peace expressed in the Māori proverb have in common?**
- How do they differ from the Roman understanding of peace?**

#### Something to Discuss

**Which understanding of peace is more commonly held by individuals and nations today? Give reasons for your point of view.**

## Some Statements on Peace

Peace be with you.  
(Genesis 43:23)

Peace is the calm, generous contribution of all to the good of all.  
(Archbishop Oscar Romero)

Peace is a journey of a thousand miles and it must be taken one step at a time. (Lyndon B. Johnson)

At the centre of non-violence stands the principle of love.  
(Martin Luther King Jr.)

I object to violence because when it appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.  
(Mohandas K. Gandhi)

Peace is a daily, a weekly, a monthly process, gradually changing opinions, slowly eroding old barriers, quietly building new structures.  
(John F. Kennedy)

Peace is not merely a distant goal that we seek, but a means by which we arrive at that goal.  
(Martin Luther King Jr.)

*Kia hora te marino, kia whakapapa pounamu te moana, kia tere te kārohirohi I mua I tō huarahi.*  
[May peace be widespread, may the sea glisten like greenstone, and may the shimmer of light guide you on your way.] (A popular Māori saying)

All we are saying is give peace a chance ...  
(John Lennon)

There is no way to peace. Peace is the way.  
(A.J. Muste)

The arms race can kill, though the weapons themselves may never be used ... by their cost alone, armaments kill the poor by causing them to starve. (Vatican statement to the United Nations – 1976)

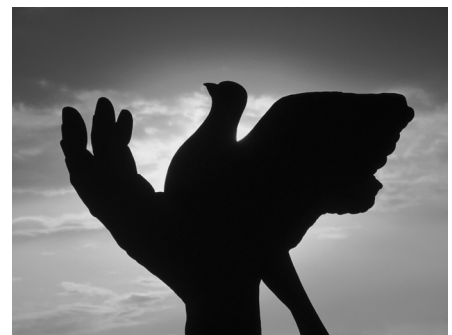
Much violence is based on the illusion that life is a property to be defended and not to be shared. (Henri Nouwen)

Peace is our gift to each other. (Elie Wiesel)

### Task Eighteen

Read and reflect on the above statements about peace:

- Which statement best expresses for you what *shalom* is about?
- Which statement best suggests that peace is more than the absence of war?
- Write a statement of your own about peace.





# The Church's Teachings on Peace and War

For Christians, peace is more than the absence of war. It is the effort to build the conditions which ensure there will never again be war. Peace is built on justice and forgiveness. Study the following summaries of the Church's teachings on peace and war taken from the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*.



Because, in recent times, terrorism has become one of the greatest threats to international security and peace, Church teachings about terrorism are also included for study.

## Church Teachings on Peace and War

Peace and violence cannot dwell together, and where there is violence, God cannot be present. (CSDC 488)

Creation, which is a reflection of the divine glory, aspires to peace. God created all that exists, and all creation forms a harmonious whole that is good in every part. Peace is founded on the primary relationship that exists between every human being and God, a relationship marked by righteousness. (CSDC 488)

The promise of peace which runs through the entire Old Testament finds its fulfillment in the very person of Jesus .... Jesus is our peace. He has broken down the dividing wall of hostility among people, reconciling them with God. (CSDC 491)

War is a "scourge" and is never an appropriate way to resolve problems that arise between nations, it has never been and it will never be, because it creates new and still more complicated conflicts. (CSDC 497)

Peace is the effect of the blessing that God bestows upon his people: "The Lord lift up his countenance [face] upon you, and give you peace". (CSDC 489)

Peace is the fruit of justice, understood in the broad sense as the respect for the equilibrium of every dimension of the human person. Peace is threatened when people are not given all that is due to them as human persons, when their dignity is not respected and when civil life is not directed to the common good. The defence and promotion of human rights is essential for the building up of a peaceful society and the development of individuals, peoples and nations. (CSDC 494)

In biblical revelation, peace is much more than the simple absence of war; it represents the fullness of life. (CSDC 489)

Working for peace can never be separated from announcing the Gospel, which is in fact the good news of peace addressed to all men and women. (CSDC 493)

Peace is also the fruit of love. True and lasting peace is more a matter of love than of justice, because the function of justice is merely to do away with obstacles to peace: the injury done or the damage caused. Peace itself, however, is an act and results only from love. (CSDC 494)

In the end, war is the failure of all true humanism, it is always a defeat for humanity: never again some peoples against others, never again! ... no more war, no more war! (CSDC 497)

Seeking alternative solutions to war for resolving international conflicts has taken on tremendous urgency today, since the terrifying power of the means of destruction – to which even medium and small-sized countries have access – and the ever closer links between the peoples of the whole world make it very difficult or practically impossible to limit the consequences of a conflict. It is therefore essential to seek out the causes underlying bellicose [war-like] conflicts, especially those connected with structural situations of injustice, poverty and exploitation, which require intervention so that they may be removed. For this reason, another name for peace is development. Just as there is a collective responsibility for avoiding war, so there is a collective responsibility for promoting development. (CSDC 498)



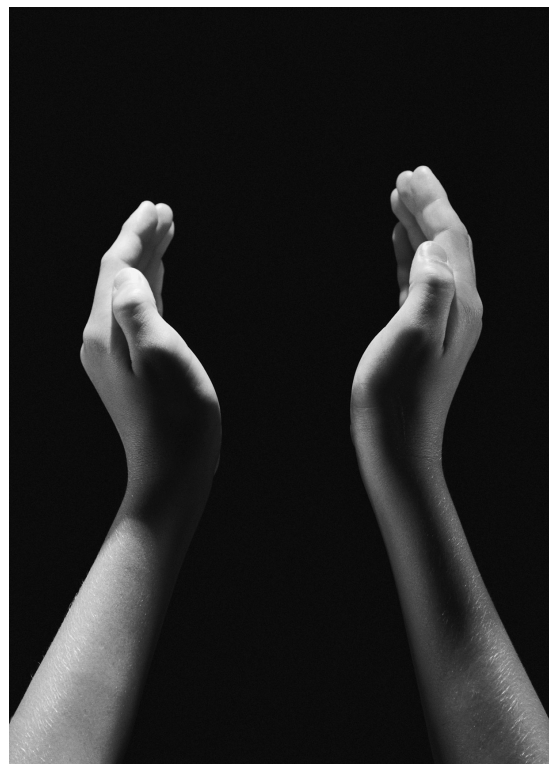
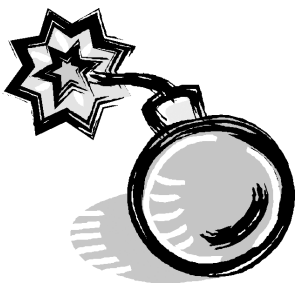
## Church Teachings on Terrorism

Terrorism is one of the most brutal forms of violence traumatising the international community; it sows hatred, death, and an urge for revenge and reprisal. From being a subversive strategy typical of certain extremist organisations, aimed at the destruction of material goods or the killing of people, terrorism has now become a shadowy network of political collusion. It can also make use of sophisticated technology, often has immense financial resources at its disposal and is involved in large-scale planning, striking completely innocent people who become chance victims of terrorist actions. The targets of terrorist attacks are generally places of daily life and not military objectives in the context of a declared war. Terrorism acts and strikes under the veil of darkness, with no regard for any of the rules by which people have always sought to set limits to conflicts, for example through international humanitarian law; in many cases terrorist methods are regarded as new strategies of war. Nor must we overlook the causes that can lead to such unacceptable forms of making demands. The fight against terrorism presupposes the moral duty to help create those conditions that will prevent it from arising or developing. (CSDC 513)

It is a profanation and blasphemy to declare oneself a terrorist in God's name. In such cases, God, and not only people, are exploited by a person who claims to possess the totality of God's truth rather than one who seeks to be possessed by the truth. To define as "martyrs" those who die while carrying out terrorist attacks distorts the concept of martyrdom, which is the witness of persons who give themselves up to death rather than deny God and love. Martyrdom cannot be the act of a person who kills in the name of God.

No religion may tolerate terrorism and much less preach it. Rather religions must work together to remove the causes of terrorism and promote friendship among peoples. (CSDC 515)

Terrorism is to be condemned in the most absolute terms. It shows complete contempt for human life and can never be justified, since the human person is always an end and never a means. Acts of terrorism strike at the heart of human dignity and are an offence against all humanity; there exists, therefore a right to defend oneself from terrorism. However, this right cannot be exercised in the absence of moral and legal norms, because the struggle against terrorists must be carried out with respect for human rights and for the principles of a state ruled by law. The identification of the guilty party must always be duly proven, because criminal responsibility is always personal, and therefore cannot be extended to the religions, nations or ethnic groups to which the terrorists belong. International co-operation in the fight against terrorist activity cannot be limited to repressive and punitive operations. It is essential that the use of force, even when necessary, be accompanied by a courageous and lucid analysis of the reasons behind terrorist attacks. Also needed is a particular commitment on the political and educational levels in order to resolve, with courage and determination, the problems that in certain dramatic circumstances can foster terrorism: the recruitment of terrorists is easier in situations where rights are trampled and injustices are tolerated over a long period of time. (CSDC 514)



## Task Nineteen

Either:

- a) Make a list of eight or ten Church teachings about peace.  
or  
b) Link the start of each sentence in column one of the table below with its correct ending from column two to complete some Church teachings about peace.



Column One	Column Two
1. The foundation of peace is	A. the fullness of life.
2. God is	B. a defeat for humanity.
3. The bible presents peace as	C. given to God's people.
4. Peace is much more than	D. be separated from the Gospel.
5. Peace is the blessing	E. the absence of war.
6. Jesus fulfils	F. avoiding war and promoting development.
7. Working for peace cannot	G. love.
8. Peace is threatened	H. the right relationship between people and God.
9. The protection of human rights is	I. when people are not given what is due to them.
10. War is always	J. the underlying causes of conflict are also removed.
11. Another name for peace is	K. the Old Testament promises about peace.
12. It is never appropriate to use war	L. not present where there is violence.
13. By removing injustice, poverty and exploitation	M. to resolve problems.
14. Peace results only from	N. necessary to build a peaceful society.
15. There is a collective responsibility for	O. development.



### Something to Think About

- Which of the Church teachings on peace do you think are the most important? Why?
- Which are the easiest and the hardest to understand?
- Which are the most challenging to follow?

## Anti-Nuclear New Zealand

Aotearoa New Zealand doesn't often grab the world's attention, but during the mid-nineteen-eighties our country took an anti-nuclear stance which made the world take notice. The New Zealand government made it clear that New Zealanders no longer wanted nuclear-armed or nuclear-powered ships coming to their ports. Until that time these ships had been, almost exclusively, American naval ships on shore leave. The ships themselves, and the sailors, were welcome, but the nukes were not. Despite the fact that New Zealand's relationship with the American government has been under stress since that time because of our anti-nuclear position, New Zealand has remained firm in its anti-nuclear stance.

### Something to Discuss

**In what ways does Aotearoa New Zealand's anti-nuclear position reflect the Church's teachings on peace?**

### Task Twenty

**Use the Church's teachings about terrorism to guide you in a response to the following headlines. Your response may be in the form of a poem, a prayer, a letter, or a diary entry. Illustrate it if you wish.**

**Terrorist Methods Now Strategies of War**

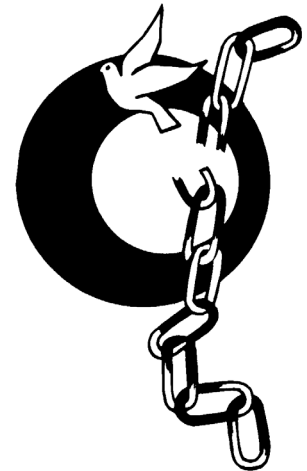
**Terrorist Martyr Kills in God's Name**

**Terrorist Fights for Justice**

**End Conditions that Create Terrorism**

**Religions' Role in Struggle against Terrorism**

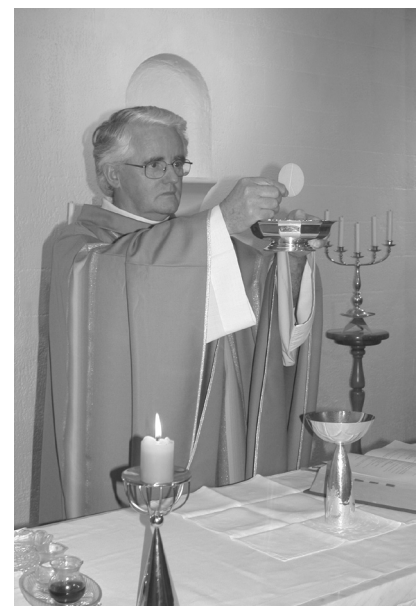
**No Trial for Suspected Terrorist**



### The Eucharist – A Source and Sign of Peace

During the celebration of the Mass, Catholics are very much aware of Jesus' peace-giving presence in their midst.

Before receiving the Body and Blood of Christ in Holy Communion, we express our unity in Christ and *aroha* for each other with a prayer of peace. When we offer each other the Sign of Peace we show that we intend to put our words of peace into action.



**Celebrant:**

Lord Jesus Christ, you said to your apostles: I leave you peace, my peace I give you. Look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church, and grant us the peace and unity of your kingdom where you live for ever and ever.

**People:**

Amen.

**Celebrant:**

The peace of the Lord be with you always.

**People:**

And also with you.

*Then the deacon, or the celebrant, may add:*

**Celebrant:**

Let us offer each other the sign of peace.

**All make a sign of peace according to local custom.**

**All:**

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: have mercy on us.

Lamb of God, you take away the sins of the world: grant us peace.



At the end of Mass the celebrant dismisses the people gathered with these words:

Go in the peace of Christ.  
or  
The Mass is ended, go in peace.  
or  
Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

We reply:

Thanks be to God.



In saying these words we express our commitment to take Christ's peace into the world and to share it with those we meet in our daily lives.



**Something to Discuss**

**How does our participation in the celebration of the Mass**

- a) **Help us become people of peace?**
- b) **Make us responsible for taking Christ's peace to the world?**

**Task Twenty-One**

Here is a poster showing different ways that people can build peace in the world. Produce a poster of your own, combining text and illustrations, which suggests ways in which peace can be established and developed.

## 50 ways to build World Peace

Take your share of responsibility for the world 

Send letters to newspapers Welcome strangers

Be friends with neighbours Write to world leaders

Don't make others wrong  Mediate a conflict

Smile at people when you're walking Start a petition

Seek mutual understanding  Don't just talk. Act!!

Aid the starving  Live simply so all can simply live

Don't fight, Forgive Create a world for grandchildren

Teach your children about Peace  Learn new ways

Stand up against bullying  Join peace protests

Help those in need Educate others Exercise tolerance

Meditate Cultivate Inner Peace Talk about Peace

Know your actions matter!  Wear a Peace badge

Help provide what's missing Protest at Arms sales

Campaign against war Write to local politicians

Share what you have  Care for your environment

Start a peace rally Support hunger charities

Have a loving attitude Do voluntary service overseas

Become an activist Speak up for Peace Think positive

 Be open minded Participate Aim so everyone wins

Listen before you react to anger

Consider others  Actively support Peace initiatives

Exchange ideas Help others be heard

Don't believe "I can't do anything" Avoid prejudice

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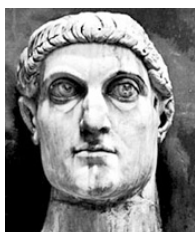


# Part Eight:

## No More War

### Focus:

- Traditionally the Church has taught that there may be some circumstances in which a war may be justified.
- The just war theory provides guidelines to help determine when a war might be justified and how it could be waged in a just manner.
- Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has consistently rejected violence, and has affirmed justice and forgiveness as the way to peace.



The Emperor Constantine

## The Just War Theory

While the Church teaches that every peaceful means of resolving conflict must be explored before violence is used, the Church also recognises that there may be times when the use of force is required.

*A war of aggression is intrinsically immoral. In the tragic case where such a war breaks out, leaders of the state that has been attacked have the right and the duty to organise a defence even using the force of arms. (CSDC 500)*

Following the official recognition of Christianity by the Emperor Constantine in the early years of the fourth century AD, the Church increasingly became involved in wars waged by various emperors.

The just war theory, first developed by Saints Ambrose of Milan and Augustine of Hippo, was an attempt to determine under what conditions Christians might engage in warfare. It provides guidelines to help determine when war might be justified and how it could be waged in a just manner.



## Criteria for a Just War

The criteria for deciding whether or not **to enter** into war are:

1. **Just Cause:** There must be a real danger to innocent life and to the conditions necessary for decent human existence and the protection of human rights. Wars of revenge are not justifiable.
2. **Lawful Authority:** The use of force must be in the service of the common good. War can only be declared by those who have responsibility for the common good. Governments that systematically oppress their people for whatever reason – including the grounds of “national security” – can lose their authority to govern. In such situations, the issue of who has authority to launch a war is more complex.
3. **Right Intention:** The intention for entering war must be to protect human life and human rights. Its ultimate goal must be peace and

reconciliation. These can be achieved only by avoiding massive destruction or harsh sanctions.

4. **Comparative Justice:** In the absence of an agreed global moral or legal authority, all nations must recognise that their claims to having a just cause are relative and must be compared honestly and fairly to the claims of their opponents. No state should act on the basis that it has absolute justice on its side.
5. **Last Resort:** All peaceful alternatives must have been explored and exhausted before war can be justified. Nations of the world should be working together to strengthen the capacity and the moral authority of the United Nations to mediate and / or prevent conflicts.
6. **Probability of Success:** There must be a reasonable hope of victory. When it is likely that a war will not be successful, it must be rejected.
7. **Proportionality:** In deciding whether or not to enter war, the good expected to be achieved by it must outweigh its costs in terms of human suffering and damage to property.

The criteria for **how** to wage war once the decision has been made to enter into it are:

1. **Minimum Force:** In the course of hostilities the force used must not be greater than the original aggression. The impact of the war on the poor and the helpless must be considered as they are usually the ones who have the least to gain and the most to lose when war's violence touches their lives.
2. **Discrimination:** Acts of war may be directed only against unjust aggressors, never against innocent people caught up in a war they did not create and could not prevent. Directly intended attacks on civilians and non-military targets are not permitted. The Second Vatican Council condemned the use of weapons of mass destruction (such as nuclear bombs) on cities.
3. **Right Intention:** Even in the midst of conflict, the aim of political and military leaders must be to establish peace with justice. Acts of vengeance and random violence, whether by individuals, military units or governments, are forbidden.

## The Just War Theory in the Twenty-First Century

The just war theory is clear that in any war the use of arms must not produce evils that are greater than the evil to be eliminated. In the twenty-first century, where a number of the world's nations have the potential to cause great loss of life and much suffering through the deployment of weapons of mass destruction, many Christians believe that a just war is no longer possible.



### Task Twenty-Two

- Under what circumstances, according to Catholic teaching, is it acceptable for a state to use the force of arms?**
- What is the just war theory?**
- How did the just war theory come to develop?**

### Something to Discuss

**Work in a pair or small group. Choose a war – past or present – that you are familiar with.**

**Use the above criteria to decide:**

- Whether the reasons for entering the war were / are just.**
- Whether the war was / is fought in a just manner.**

**You must be able to give reasons for your decision.**

### Prayer of Saint Francis of Assisi

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace:  
where there is hatred, let me sow love;  
where there is injury, pardon;  
where there is doubt, faith;  
where there is darkness, light;  
and where there is sadness, joy.

O Divine Master, grant that I may not so much seek  
to be consoled as to console,  
to be understood as to understand,  
to be loved as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,  
it is in pardoning that we are pardoned,  
and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.



## Forgiveness and Non-Violence

Throughout Christian history, side by side with the just-war theory there has been a strong tradition of non-violence – as seen in great figures of peace such as Saint Francis of Assisi (1181-1226).

Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church in its teachings has shifted its emphasis from the just war theory to the gospel of love and peace.

Pope John Paul II, in his World Day of Peace address delivered in the January following the terrorist attacks of September 11th 2001, spoke of forgiveness:

*Forgiveness is above all a personal choice, a decision of the heart to go against the natural instinct to pay back evil with evil.*

By choosing to emphasise that peace, justice and forgiveness cannot be separated – especially at a time when many people were angry and calling for war – John Paul presented a serious challenge to Christians:

*The pillars of true peace are justice and that form of love which is forgiveness. ... No peace without justice, no justice without forgiveness: this is what in this Message I wish to say to believers and non-believers alike, to all men and women of good will who are concerned for the good of the human family and for its future. (Pope John Paul II – Message for World Day of Peace 2002)*

**Task Twenty-Three**  
**How is Pope John Paul II's vision of peace similar to that of Saint Francis of Assisi?**

**Something to Think About**  
**Why is it so difficult to bring about true and lasting peace?**



**No peace without justice,  
no justice without forgiveness.**

**(Pope John Paul II)**



## Part Nine:

### See, Think, Judge, Act – A Method for Action

#### Focus:

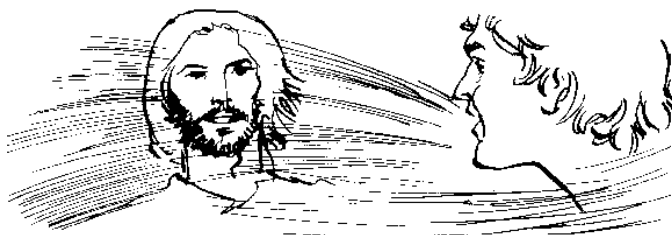
- **Jesus challenged people to see, judge and act in response to the realities around them.**
- **The See-Think-Judge-Act Method enables people to respond to the injustices around them and take action to change them.**

## What Would Jesus Do?

As Christians we are challenged to follow Christ's example and to "imitate" God in the way we live our lives:

*Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us... (Ephesians 5:1-2)*

When faced with a moral challenge or an issue of justice it is appropriate for Christians to ask, "What would Jesus do?". Often, however, the problems of social justice seem overwhelming in their size and complexity. Deciding how Jesus would act in such complex situations is not always easy.



## See, Judge, Act

Jesus expected people to open their eyes to what was happening around them, to make up their minds about what they saw, and to commit themselves to action – to see, judge, and act. Matthew's Gospel describes a question put to Jesus, and an answer given. Jesus challenges John the Baptist to draw his own conclusion about Jesus' true identity from what he sees and hears:

*When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, 'Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?' Jesus answered them, 'Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.'*  
(Matthew 11:2-5)

In the first half of the twentieth century, a Belgian priest, Father Joseph Cardijn (1882-1967), made popular a three-part method of moral decision-making known as See-Judge-Act. Cardijn developed this approach while he was chaplain to groups of Christian factory workers and encouraged them to use it to make improvements to their working conditions.

Cardijn's approach, used by the Christian Family Movement, Young Christian Workers, Young Christian Students and others, can be explained in simple terms:

- **Observe** the world around you.
- **Judge** what you see in the light of Gospel values and the teachings of the Church.
- **Act** to make your world a better place.

Since Cardijn's time, the See-Judge-Act method has had a great influence on the theory and practice of social justice, especially among Catholics. Sometimes known as the reflection and action method, it was adopted by Pope John XXIII in his social encyclical *Pacem in Terris – Peace on Earth*.



**Joseph Cardijn**  
(1882-1967)

Another step – **THINK** – is sometimes added to make the process clearer:

#### **Step One: SEE**

Explore and probe an experience or situation to discover its positive and negative values:

- What exactly is happening?
- What is this doing to people? (the consequences)
- Why is this happening? (the causes)

#### **Step Two: THINK**

Express and clarify your ideas. Learn by listening to others and sharing your understandings with them:

- What do you think about all this?

#### **Step Three: JUDGE**

Explore and probe an experience or situation to discover its positive and negative values:

- What do you think should be happening?
- What does your faith say?

#### **Step Four: ACT**

Action can take many forms. It may be a personal or group action:

- What exactly is it that you want to change? (long-term goal)
- What action are you going to take now? (short-term goal)
- Who can you involve in your action?

### **Task Twenty-Four**

- In groups, read and discuss the See-Think-Judge-Act approach outlined in this section of the topic until you are sure that you understand what is involved in each of the four phases.**
- Choose a situation / issue where you think particular injustices exist. The situation / issue may be local, national or international.**
- Apply the See-Think-Judge-Act process to your chosen situation / issue. This may take some time and involve some research. Your teacher may allow some class time for this.**
- When the group has finished working through the four phases, write up a report.**



**In your report note such things as:**

- **The situation / issue you chose**
- **Your reasons for choosing it**
- **The information you found out about the situation / issue**
- **The sources and methods you used for step two (Think)**
- **What you discovered in step three (Judge) and what sources were used**
- **What you learned from this activity.**

# Part Ten:

## Acting Justly, Building Peace

### Focus:

- It is easy to be overwhelmed by the many injustices that surround us.
- Everyone can take small steps to build justice and peace in their daily lives.

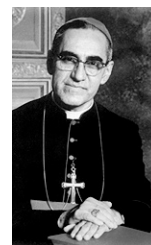
## Working for Justice

Most people hope to make the world a better place to live in. They want to get rid of the barriers that separate “winners” from “losers” and see the good things that God gives us shared more fairly among everyone.

During his three years as archbishop of San Salvador, Oscar Romero (1917-1980) became known as a fearless defender of the poor and suffering. His work on behalf of the oppressed earned him the admiration and love of the peasants he served and, finally, an assassin’s bullet.

*There aren't two categories of people. There aren't some that were born to have everything, leaving the rest with nothing, and a majority that has nothing and cannot taste the happiness that God has created for all. The Christian society that God wants is one in which we share the goodness that God has given for everyone.*

(Archbishop Oscar Romero – December 16, 1979)



While some people, like Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, die courageously serving the cause of right, it is all too easy for most of us to be overwhelmed by the injustices that we see around us.

The challenge to live justly can only be faced if a person has a strong spirituality to sustain them. Prayer is an important first step in changing our own lives and changing the world.

### Something to Discuss

**How far are you prepared to go in the service of a just cause?**

### WAYS TO BUILD JUSTICE AND PEACE

- **PRAY** regularly for justice and peace.
- **LEARN** more about Catholic social teaching and its call to protect human life. Stand with the poor and care for creation.
- **REACH OUT** across boundaries of religion, race, ethnicity, gender and disabling conditions.
- **LIVE JUSTLY** in your whānau (family), school, workplace, and social life.
- **SERVE** those who are poor and vulnerable, sharing more of your time and talents.
- **GIVE** more generously to those in need at home and overseas.
- **SUPPORT** government policies that protect human life, promote human dignity, preserve God’s creation and build peace.
- **ENCOURAGE** others to work for greater charity, justice and peace.



### Something to Think About

- **What steps do you already take to build justice and peace in your daily life?**
- **What on the list do you most agree with?**
- **What on the list do you least agree with?**
- **What do you think you do well already?**
- **What do you feel you need to put more effort into?**
- **Is there anything you would like to add to the above list?**



### Task Twenty-Five

**For each day of the coming week jot down one specific thing you will do to build up justice and peace.**

## Summary

- **Justice exists when people live in right relationship with *Te Atua*, each other, and the world around them. *Tika* demands that we give them what is their due.**
- **God's justice is revealed through the events of the Old Testament – the liberation of the Israelites from Egypt, the Covenant on Sinai, and in the message of the prophets. It is fulfilled in Jesus Christ who establishes God's reign of justice, peace and *aroha*.**
- **We grow in justice by following *Hehu Karaiti*, the perfect model of justice.**
- **The Church has always been committed to the welfare of its members and of society, but the tradition of teaching on social justice issues began in 1891 with the publication of *Rerum Novarum – Concerning New Things*.**
- **Catholic teachings about justice are based on a number of key principles that come from Scripture and the natural law, and which are expressed in the Church's on-going tradition.**
- **Human dignity, freedom and responsibility are central considerations in any discussion of social justice. What the Church teaches about them shapes its approach to other justice issues, such as work and race.**
- **Peace is built on *tika*, forgiveness, *pono* and *aroha*. It is much more than the absence of war.**
- **Traditionally, the Church has taught that in some circumstances war may be justified. The just war theory provides guidelines that help determine when a war might be morally justifiable and how it could be waged in a just manner.**
- **At this time, when a number of the world's nations have the potential to cause great loss of life and much suffering through the deployment of weapons of mass destruction, the possibility that a war can be "just" must be questioned.**
- **Since the Second Vatican Council, the Church has consistently rejected violence, and has affirmed justice and forgiveness as the way to peace.**
- **Jesus challenged people to see, judge and act in response to the realities around them. By doing so, we can take steps to build justice and peace in our daily lives.**

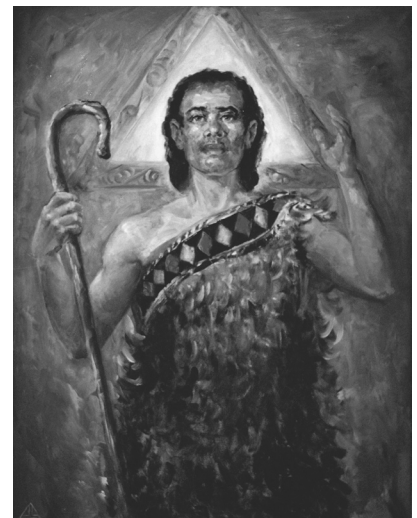
# GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS

This glossary gives explanation of Māori terms which are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it.

Pronunciation - correct pronunciation of Māori comes only with practice in listening to and speaking the language. The English phonetic equivalents provided under each Māori word are intended to provide a reasonably accurate guide for students. If in doubt please seek assistance from someone practised in correct pronunciation of Te Reo Māori.

' indicates stressed syllable

<b>Aroha</b> – úh-raw-huh	In general, means love and/or compassion. Note that the word is used in two senses: 1. a joyful relationship involving the expression of goodwill and the doing of good, empathy. 2. sympathy, compassion towards those who are unhappy or suffering.
<b>Atua</b> – úh-too-uh	The Māori word Atua has been used to describe God in the Christian sense since missionary times. Before the coming of Christianity, Māori used the word atua to describe many kinds of spiritual beings (in the way we now use the word "spirit") and also unusual events. Io was the name given to the Supreme Being before missionary times. Many, but not all, tribes had this belief in Io.
<b>He Tangata</b> – heh túh-nguh-tuh	Human beings, humankind.
<b>Hehu Karaiti</b> – héh-hoo kuh-rúh-ee-tee	Jesus Christ.
<b>Mana</b> – múh-nuh	Spiritual power and authority. Its sources are both divine and human, namely, God, one's ancestors and one's achievements in life. Mana comes to people in three ways: <b>mana tangata</b> from people, <b>mana whenua</b> , from the land, and <b>mana atua</b> , from the spiritual powers. Please note: when mana refers to Mana of God it is written as Mana.
<b>Pono</b> – páw-naw	Integrity.
<b>Rongopai</b> – ráw-ngaw-puh-ee	Gospel or Good News. Ngā Rongopai (plural). Te Rongopai (singular).
<b>Tapu</b> – túh-poo	This word is used in three senses: 1. restrictions or prohibitions which safeguard the dignity and survival of people and things. 2. the value, dignity, or worth of someone or something, eg the holiness of God, human dignity, the value of the environment. 3. the intrinsic being or essence of someone or something, eg Tapu i Te Atua is the intrinsic being of God, the divine nature. Please note: when tapu refers to the Tapu of God it is written as Tapu.
<b>Te Rangatiranga</b> – teh ruh-nguh-tée-ruh-tuh-nguh	The Kingdom or Reign of God.
<b>Tika</b> – té-e-kuh	Justice.
<b>Whakapono</b> – fúh-kuh-paw-naw	Faith.
<b>Whānau</b> – fáh-nuh-oo	Extended Family.



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

- LOGO: Annette Hanrahan RSCJ
- PHOTOGRAPHY: Carol Devine; Corbus Images; Digital Stock Corporation; Bigstockphoto.com (front and back cover)
- MODELS: Special thanks to Fr Ray Schmack of Holy Cross Chapel Christchurch and the Year 12 students: Sian Doidge, Jamal Fortes, May Jarvis, Andrew McKenzie, Fatima Tanielu, Nimo Vili and Hannah Robinson of Catholic Cathedral College, Christchurch.

## FIRST EDITION (1991)

This booklet was part of a series prepared by the members of a Writing Party:

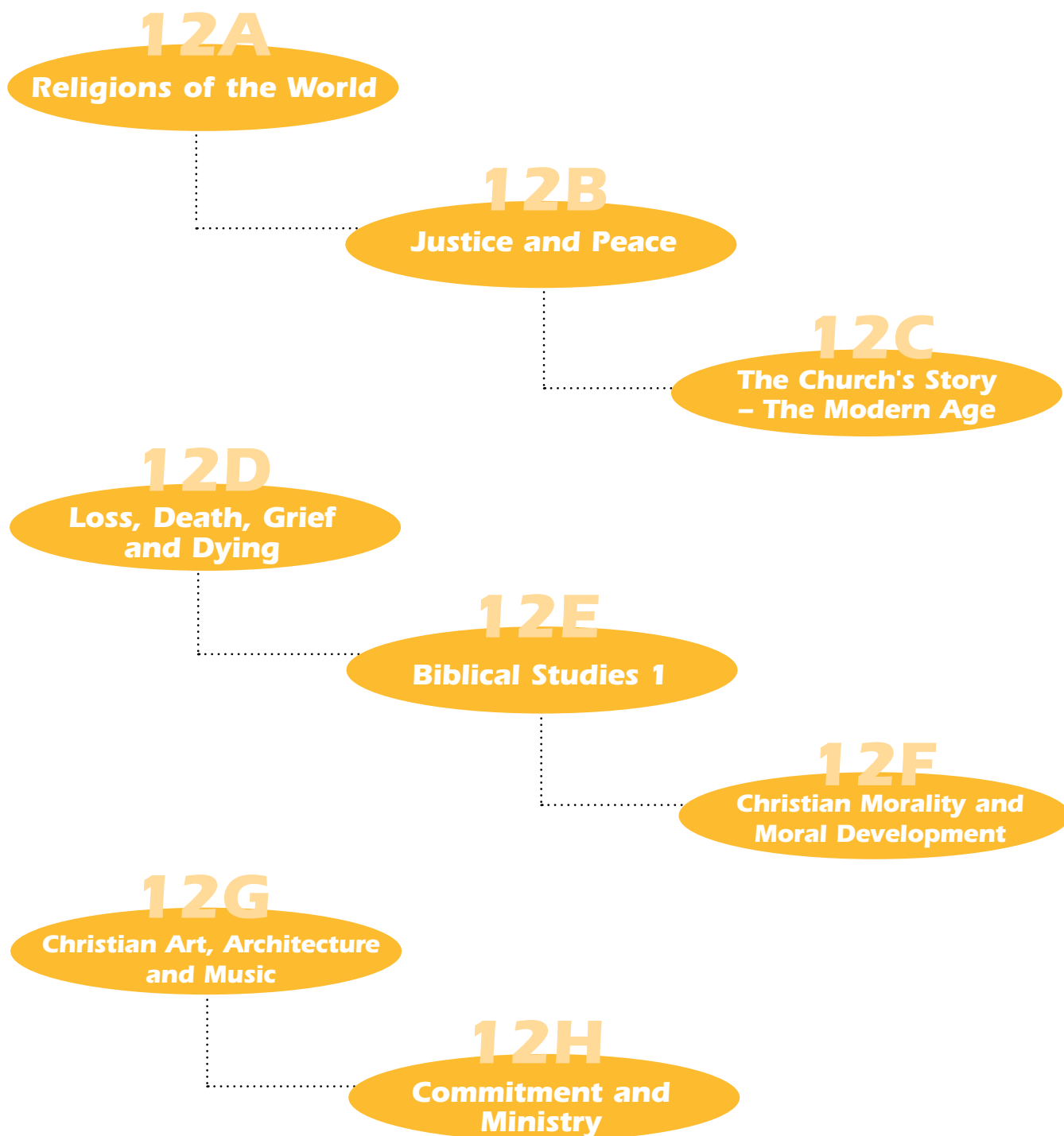
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## SECOND EDITION (2005)

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