Social Action Commission Focus for the Month

Rights and Responsibilities

Focus: Responsible Use of Wealth

The United States Council of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) describes this principle:

Human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities--to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

How Catholic Teachings Guide Responsible Stewardship of Wealth

(excerpts)

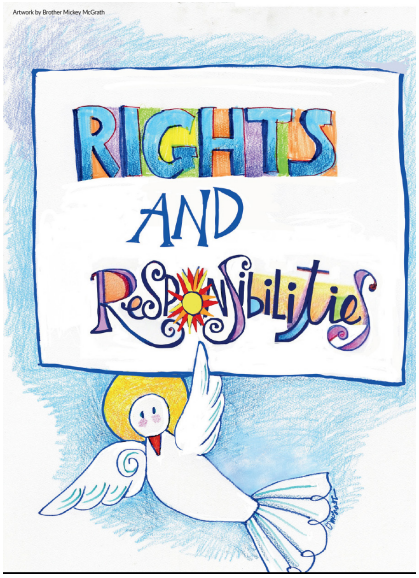
In Catholic teaching, wealth is not inherently evil, but it is a gift from God that comes with significant responsibilities. The Church recognizes that material resources can be used for good or for harm, depending on how they are managed and distributed.…

This understanding challenges the modern notion that wealth is solely a result of personal effort and should be used exclusively for personal benefit.…

In the Old Testament, we see that the land and its resources belong to God, and the people of Israel are called to be stewards of these gifts. The concept of the Jubilee Year, when debts were forgiven and land returned to its original owners, demonstrates God's concern for economic justice and the prevention of permanent poverty.…

Moreover, God is able to make every grace abundant for you, so that in all things, always having all you need, you may have an abundance for every good work.

2 Corinthians 9:8



In the New Testament, Jesus frequently addresses the proper use of wealth. His parables about the talents, the rich fool, and the rich young man all teach important lessons about stewardship.…

The Acts of the Apostles describes how the early Christians 'had everything in common' and distributed to each according to need.…

The principle of the universal destination of goods teaches that all created goods are meant for all people. While private property is legitimate and necessary, it must always be understood in the context of the common good.…

Good stewardship also means being prudent in our financial decisions. This includes living within our means, avoiding excessive debt, saving for the future, and making wise investments. However, prudence must be balanced with generosity.…

How we invest our money is also an important aspect of responsible wealth stewardship. Catholic social teaching provides guidance on what types of investments are morally acceptable.…

The entire article can be found at:

https://catholicbibleonline.com/blog/catholic-teachings-guide-responsible-stewardship-wealth/

What can we do?

Prayer for Basic Rights

Lord of Wisdom, awaken us
to our duty to care for the basic needs of all people.
Strengthen with hope
people denied their human rights and freedoms.
Provide us all with the voice to cry out
for justice for the poor and the oppressed.
Amen.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Secretariat of Justice and Peace
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This prayer can be said as part of your daily prayer practice, with your family perhaps at meal time, or with any group you meet with during the month.

- Read Economic Justice for All https://www.usccb.org/resources/economic_justice_for_all_1.pdf
- Reflect on the 1996 statement, A Catholic Framework for Economic Life, https://www.usccb.org/resources/catholic-framework-economic-life
- Explore the Secretariat of Justice and Peace summary resource https://www.usccb.org/resources/economic-justice-all-summary-resource

Discussion Guide

Rights and Responsibilities

A Discussion Guide is available from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Relief Services. It Includes:

- Opening Prayer
- YouTube Video
- Scripture Passage for Reflection
- Sharing on Scripture
- Passages from Catholic Tradition for Reflection
- Discussion of Passages
- Call to Action
- Sending Forth

This and other resources can be found at: https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/upload/cst-101-rights-and-responsibilities-discussion-guide.pdf

Video on Rights and Responsibilities

A video from the USCCB and CRF on this topic can be found on YouTube. https://www.usccb.org/beliefs-and-teachings/what-we-believe/catholic-social-teaching/rights-and-responsibilities

‘Economic Justice for All’ marks 40 years

In November, the Catholic Church in the U.S. will commemorate the 40th anniversary of “Economic Justice for All,” a landmark pastoral letter from the U.S. bishops on Catholic Social Teaching and the American economy.

“Economic decisions have human consequences and moral content; they help or hurt people, strengthen or weaken family life, advance or diminish the quality of justice in our land,” the bishops wrote in their 1986 pastoral letter.

Finally, join the Catholic Labor Network (CLN) for a live webinar Nov. 12 from 7:30- p.m. (Eastern Time) titled “Economic Justice and a Commitment to the Future.” Three panelists will ground the audience in the history and background of “Economic Justice for All.” Then, the gathering will engage in an honest assessment of the realities of economic justice today, particularly for people of faith. The webinar will also explore connections between the 1986 pastoral letter and Pope Leo’s new encyclical, *Magnifica Humanitas*. Register here. https://catholiclabor.org/events/