

## ***Ministry Resources for Justice and Service: An Overview***

*Ministry Resources for Justice and Service* offers faith communities program resources and strategies to engage youth in justice, direct service, and advocacy. This resource contains eight gathered sessions around specific justice issues, an overnight retreat on service to the poor, and two half-day retreats or evening reflections on simplicity and racism. All the sessions utilize the pastoral circle process to immerse youth in a justice issue, educate them on the "why" of injustice, help them reflect on the issue from a faith perspective, and support them in choosing a faith response to combat injustice. The resource also offers practical strategies for engaging youth in the work of justice, service, and advocacy in faithful, age-appropriate and proactive ways.

## **Manual Contents: An Overview**

### **Part A: Living Discipleship Today Through Service, Justice, and Advocacy for People in Need**

Part A of the manual explores the central concepts of service, justice, and advocacy. It explains the process of involving young people in direct service through preparation, engagement, reflection, and celebration. It also includes an explanation of the pastoral circle process, which engages people in seeking justice through involvement, social analysis, theological reflection, and action. This part also lists suggested resources for the adult facilitator on Catholic social teaching and current justice issues.

### **Part B: Pastoral Circle Justice Sessions**

The justice sessions include opportunities for young people to learn more about justice issues and to explore the Scriptures and Catholic social teachings' call to serve the poor and to stand up to injustice. You may choose to use the material in this section in its entirety, or you may select sessions that you think will be best for the young people with whom you work. The sessions are not sequential, so you may organize them in the way that is most appropriate for your situation.

Each session begins with a brief overview, a list of expected outcomes, the core session at a glance, the necessary materials, and the preparation required by the facilitator. Within the session is a complete description of its procedures, including the four movements of involvement, exploration, reflection, and action possibilities. Closing prayer follows.

Related Scriptural passages, *CYB* articles, and musical selections from *Spirit & Song* are provided when appropriate. Some of the sessions provide a list of media resources—such as print, movie, and Internet—for more exploration. Family approaches provide simple follow-up suggestions for family learning, prayer, and service. In addition, all the activities can be enhanced by the creativity and expertise of the adult leader.

### Session Overviews

#### Chapter 2: A Catholic Approach to Justice and Service

- This session helps participants explore the wisdom found in the Church's social teaching and examine how it can be used to guide their involvement with people in need today.

#### Chapter 3: Life: Who Gets to Choose?

- This session engages the participants in examining their opinions and feelings about a particular life issue—the death penalty—then puts them in dialogue with the Church's seamless garment approach to all life issues.

#### Chapter 4: Children's Rights: National, Global and Galactic

- This session helps participants explore the meaning of children's rights and apply what they learn from international conventions and the wisdom of the Church to the situation of children in need.

#### Chapter 5: Exactly What Is a Just Wage?

- In this session, participants see the connection between their own work experience as an employee and that of the working poor, examine wages, learn how much a dollar buys, and learn how much money a family must earn to live above the poverty line. Participants also look at what the Church teaches about just wages and work.

#### Chapter 6: Working for the Common Good

- This session explores the theme of the common good as a basic tenet of Catholic social teaching and makes participants aware of the power they have to bring about positive change in the world.

#### Chapter 7: Caring for Creation: Environmental Justice

- In this session participants examine the environment that surrounds them; explore the dangers that threaten the environment locally, nationally, and internationally; and reflect on an environmental statement from the U.S. Catholic Bishops.

#### Chapter 8: How Can War Be Justified?

- This session explores what it means to follow the God of peace and do God's will in an imperfect world. Participants explore the concepts of nonviolence and just war as faith responses to the disregard for human dignity and human rights.

#### Chapter 9: Hunger Among Us

- This session helps participants explore the reality of hunger, take an initial step in being part of the solution, and learn options for where their concerns can lead them.

## Part C: Justice Retreats and Extended Sessions Using the Pastoral Circle Process

### Retreats Overview

Chapter 10: Responding in Service to the Needs of the Poor (An Overnight Retreat Experience)

- This retreat experience helps participants understand the causes and consequences of poverty for individuals and society, and respond in faithful service to the needs of the poor. The retreat format allows concentrated time to learn, reflect, and serve.

#### Chapter 11: Simplicity or Stuff: Which Will You Choose? A Lenten Evening Reflection

- This session is designed as a Lenten evening reflection to engage youth in examining their lives in light of the Gospel challenges to pray, fast, and give alms. Using a justice perspective, the facilitator leads the young people through activities, which place their own spending and consumption habits in relationship to what others have and lack.

#### Chapter 12: Racism: Our Response (A Half-Day Retreat)

- This session investigates the ways the participants can respond to racism as Catholic Christians. The session begins with a simulation game designed to illustrate the many issues that surface when we interact with cultures that are unfamiliar. Large-group and small-group discussions help the participants reflect on their own experiences with racism and begin to name some action steps they can take to combat racism.

## Part D: Strategies for Justice and Service Work with Youth

Engaging young people in the social ministry of the Church is not optional—it is demanded by the Gospel and our Catholic faith. This section of the manual includes strategies, both gathered and non-gathered, for connecting young people with justice and service through a faith perspective. The strategies' design supports you in providing service experiences, service learning, advocacy, and cultural awareness to youth. The strategies are not sequential

or programmatic. They suggest ideas to strengthen the justice work you are currently doing or are the catalyst for stretching into new areas of justice you have never before explored with the young people of your parish.

#### Chapter 13: Planning Effective Service Projects with Youth

- This strategy offers helpful insights for planning and implementing service projects with young people. In addition it gives concrete suggestions for evaluating and choosing appropriate service agencies and work sites.

#### Chapter 14: Researching a Justice Issue

- Practical methods and actual sources for conducting preliminary research on justice and service topics are the basis of this strategy. The strategy covers ideas for engaging youth in the research personally, as well.

#### Chapter 15: Doing Advocacy with Youth

- Suggestions, tools, and resources for adding advocacy to all direct service programs or conducting advocacy strategies independent of service projects make up this strategy.

#### Chapter 16: Using Scripture to Educate Youth in Justice and Service

- Suggestions for resources and methods that engage young people in exploring the scriptural foundations of justice issues are found in this strategy.

#### Chapter 17: Preparing Speakers and Panel Members to Educate Youth in Justice

- Included in this strategy are practical tips for selecting and preparing speakers who will inspire and motivate young people to take action against injustice.

#### Chapter 18: Learning from Other Cultures

- This strategy offers ideas to inform young people of the richness of diversity by engaging them in family traditions, the local community's traditions, and ethnic calendar events and celebrations.

#### Chapter 19: Using Calendar Connections through the Year

- This strategy offers ways to connect liturgical and secular calendar events to create in young people a deeper awareness of their Catholic identity and of justice issues.

#### Chapter 20: Recognizing and Celebrating Youth Service

- Provided in this strategy are ways to honor the service of young people and to celebrate their discipleship in action.