

RED TABLE

Racial Economic Equality

In your Bible, read Galatians 3:27-4:7.

Heirs are people who inherit property or wealth from their parents. What is it that we might inherit as children of God and heirs through God?

What are some ways that a person could be "enslaved to the elemental powers of the world" (Galatians 4:3)?

The Jewish community at the time was made up of Hebrew-speaking Jews and Greek-speaking Jews. The early Christian communities had people who had grown up Jewish and also people who had been pagan but become Christian without first becoming Jewish.

What kinds of groups in our society remind you of this kind of division within the same larger community?

Now read the box "Respect Radical Equality" at the left column of page 1560 in your Bible.

How can you help create a world where everyone is regarded as equally valuable?

[RED Table continued]

Next, learn about Catholic teachings against racial injustice.

The Catholic Church speaks out about racial injustice and encourages people to recognize one another as united by a common humanity and as children of God.

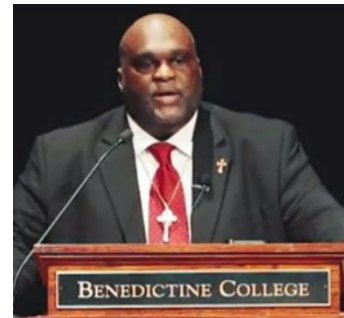
Read the U.S. Bishops' statements about Racial Economic Inequality taken from “Open Wide Our Hearts, A Pastoral Letter Against Racism” (2018).

Which facts, trends, or statements did you find eye-opening or upsetting in this information?

Taking Action with our 2 Feet of Charity and Justice

In a 2020 speech at Benedictine College, Harold Burke-Sivers, a Catholic deacon who is African-American, offered 8 steps Catholics should take to combat racism.

1. See past stereotypes and see people.
2. Stop supporting people who perpetuate racist stereotypes.
3. Appreciate the gift of cultural diversity.
4. Make an effort to promote dialogue and conversation.
5. Reevaluate law enforcement policies.
6. Put God back in society.
7. Pray and fast.
8. Ask for the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary.



Name a step from that list which would be an act of **CHARITY**. What about it makes it an act of charity?

Name a step from that list which would be an act of **JUSTICE**. What about it makes it an act of justice?

BLACK TABLE

Immigration

In your Bible, read Matthew 2:13-23.

In this passage we read the story of what happened after the birth of Jesus and the visit of the magi (wise men or kings) who came to visit and adore him.

What was Herod's job? (*HINT: look earlier, at Matthew 2:1*)

What made it not safe for Mary and Joseph to remain in Bethlehem where they were?

How might Mary and Joseph have felt as they arrived in Egypt?

Now read the box “Who Is My Neighbor?: Jesus’ Refugee Family” at the top of page 1237 in your Bible.

Imagine what might make refugees feel mistreated by the people in their new country. Name three challenges a refugee could face.

[*BLACK TABLE continued*]

Next, learn about Catholic teachings about immigration.

The Catholic Church speaks out about the rights of migrants, including immigrants and refugees, to share in our world's opportunities and have their human dignity respected.

The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops present 5 Catholic Principles of Migration:

1. Persons have the right to find opportunities in their homeland.
2. Persons have the right to migrate to support themselves and their families.
3. Sovereign nations have the right to control their borders.
4. Refugees and asylum seekers should be afforded protection.
5. The human dignity and human rights of undocumented migrants should be respected.

Which of these principles might be harder to live by than the others? What might the challenges be?

Taking Action with our 2 Feet of Charity and Justice

Pastoral Migratoria, an Immigration Ministry based in Chicago, supports groups of people in different Catholic parishes who are helping immigrants with their needs and working for changes to our country's immigration system to make it more just.

Read the brochure about the work of Pastoral Migratoria.

Name an activity listed in the brochure which would be an act of **CHARITY**. What about it makes it an act of charity?



Name an activity listed in the brochure which would be an act of **JUSTICE**. What about it makes it an act of justice?

In your Bible, read Matthew 20:1-16.

In this passage we read Jesus' parable of the workers in the vineyard, who are called to work at different times during the day but all paid the same amount at the end of the day.

For what kinds of jobs in our own era are workers called to come on shift at different times during the day, as they become needed to work?

Why do you think the vineyard owner pays the workers the way he does?

Do you agree with the workers called earlier in the day, that they should have been paid more than the workers called later in the day? Why or why not?

Now read the box "Catholic Connection: Working to Live" in the left column on page 1274 in your Bible.

Besides the concerns of added costs that could endanger small businesses, what might be some of the complications in trying to make sure everyone is paid at least what is needed to survive?

[GREEN TABLE continued]

Next, learn about Catholic teachings on the living wage.

The Catholic Church speaks out about the rights of workers to receive just compensation, good working conditions and to be able to provide for at least the basic needs of their families.

The Center for Social Concerns at the University of Notre Dame proposes 7 points for a framework to evaluate if wages are just wages or not.

1. Wage enables decent life for worker and household (meets needs, safe work, reasonable hours).
2. Wage enables asset-building (savings & property purchases).
3. Wage provides basic social security for worker and household (healthcare, retirement, emergency expenses).
4. Wage structure does not discriminate (gender, race, ethnicity, etc.).
5. Wage is not excessive.
6. Wage reflects participation by workers (input, unions or other collective bargaining).
7. Wage considers performance, qualification, and type of work.

Which of these points do you think will vary the most from situation to situation? What would make it that way?



Taking Action with our 2 Feet of Charity and Justice

Arise Chicago is a local interfaith non-profit organization that partners with workers and churches to fight workplace injustice through education, organizing, and advocating for public policy changes. Recently they have been providing help to workers at El Milagro Tortillas.

Read the petition about the situation at El Milagro.

Give an example from the petition which, if done, would be an act of **JUSTICE** by the El Milagro management. What about it makes it an act of justice?

Imagine an activity which would be an act of **CHARITY** (by you or by the management) toward the workers at El Milagro. What about it makes it an act of charity?

PURPLE TABLE

Criminal Justice

In your Bible, read Acts of the Apostles 16:16-34.

In this passage we read the story of what happened to the apostles Paul and Silas when they were arrested in the city of Philippi, where they first brought the Christian faith into Europe.

In your own words, what specific action by Paul caused the Roman colonial authorities to punish Paul and Silas?

What do you think is just or unjust about the ways Paul and Silas were treated?

Would you have reacted to the earthquake in the same way as Paul and Silas? Why or why not?

Now read the box “Growing in Faith: Hopeless and Hurting” at the bottom of page 1542 in your Bible (near a different passage later in the Bible, 2 Corinthians 4:7-18).

Which actions of Paul and Silas gave hope and encouragement to those imprisoned with them or to their jailer?

Next, learn about Catholic teachings about criminal justice.

The Catholic Church speaks out about the rights of those affected by the criminal justice system, including victims, offenders, and prisoners, to have their human dignity respected. →

[*PURPLE TABLE continued*]

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote some foundations for criminal justice policies:

1. Protecting society from those who threaten life, inflict harm, take property, and destroy the bonds of community.
2. Rejecting simplistic solutions such as "three strikes and you're out" and rigid mandatory sentencing.
3. Promoting serious efforts toward crime prevention and poverty reduction.
4. Challenging the culture of violence and encouraging a culture of life.
5. Offering victims the opportunity to participate more fully in the criminal justice process.
6. Encouraging innovative programs of restorative justice that provide the opportunity for mediation between victims and offenders and offer restitution for crimes committed.
7. Insisting that punishment has a constructive and rehabilitative purpose.
8. Encouraging Spiritual Healing and Renewal for those who commit crime.
9. Making a serious commitment to confront the pervasive role of addiction and mental illness in crime.
10. Treating immigrants justly.
11. Placing crime in a community context and building on promising alternatives that empower neighborhoods and towns to restore a sense of security.

Which of these foundations do you think could have changed what happened to Paul and Silas? In what ways?

Taking Action with our 2 Feet of Charity and Justice

Kolbe House, based in Chicago, serves individuals and families affected by the criminal justice system.

Read the news article about the work of Kolbe House last May during the pandemic.

Name an activity described in the article which would be an act of **CHARITY**. What about it makes it an act of charity?

Name an activity described in the article which would be an act of **JUSTICE**. What about it makes it an act of justice?

ORANGE TABLE

Poverty and the Wealth Gap

In your Bible, read Luke 16:19-31.

In this passage we read a parable Jesus tells about how a rich man treated the poor man Lazarus during his lifetime, and the consequences they each face in eternal life.

Where in our city do we see persons who are wealthy walk past persons who are poor, often without helping them or even acknowledging their presence?

Imagine that you are the rich man. What might you have been thinking about or looking at instead of paying attention to Lazarus by your door as you passed through it every day?

Imagine that you are Lazarus. How would you feel to finally be seen by the rich man now that you are both dead?

Now read the box “Who Is My Neighbor: The Great Chasm” at the top of page 1374 in your Bible.

What could help us to realize that we are responsible to be concerned for and sensitive to the needs of others who do not have as much as us?

Next, learn about Catholic teachings about poverty.

The Catholic Church speaks out about the rights of the poor to have a voice in decisions which affect them, and on the injustice of economic systems which maintain people living in a state of poverty in which they cannot provide for their basic needs. →

[*ORANGE TABLE continued*]

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops wrote six moral principles for economic justice:

1. Every economic decision and institution must be judged in light of whether it protects or undermines the dignity of the human person.
2. Human dignity can be realized and protected only in community.
3. All people have a right to participate in the economic life of society.
4. All members of society have a special obligation to the poor and vulnerable.
5. Human rights are the minimum conditions for life in community.
6. Society as a whole, acting through public and private institutions, has the moral responsibility to enhance human dignity and protect human rights.

Which of these moral principles do you think could have changed what happened to Lazarus?
In what ways?

Taking Action with our 2 Feet of Charity and Justice

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD), which began in Chicago, seeks to eliminate the structural, root causes of poverty by funding community groups that are led by the people they help.

Read the news article about the anniversary of CCHD last November during the pandemic.

Name the activity encouraged by the article which would be an act of **CHARITY**. What about it makes it an act of charity?

Name an activity described in the article which would be an act of **JUSTICE**. What about it makes it an act of justice?

BLUE TABLE

Cycle of Violence

In your Bible, read Genesis 4:3-16.

In this passage we read the story of Cain and Abel, brothers and the sons of Adam and Eve, whose sacrifices were not equally preferred by God, and the results of Cain's jealousy of Abel.

What offerings did Cain and Abel make to the Lord?

What do you think God meant by saying to Cain, "sin lies in wait at the door" (verse 7)?

What could have happened to Cain if he had not received God's mark?

Now read the box "Catholic Connection: Stop the Cycle" at the left side of page 28 in your Bible.

In your own words, why should we respect the life of someone whose actions have shown no concern for life?

Next, learn about Catholic teachings about the cycle of violence.

The Catholic Church speaks out about the rights of those affected by the cycle of violence, including the right of victims to seek safety, the rights of perpetrators to seek counseling and reconciliation, and the rights of all to live without fear of violence. →

[*BLUE TABLE continued*]

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops described some assets that our Church has in dealing with the challenges of violence:

- the example and teaching of Jesus Christ;
- the *biblical values* of respect for life, peace, justice, and community;
- *our teaching* on human life and human dignity, on right and wrong, on family and work, on justice and peace, on rights and responsibilities;
- *our tradition* of prayer, sacraments, and contemplation which can lead to a disarmament of the heart;
- *a commitment to marriage and family life* to support responsible parenthood and to help parents in providing their children the values to live full lives;
- a *presence* in most neighborhoods -- our parishes and schools, hospitals and social services are sources of life and hope in places of violence and fear;
- an *ethical framework* which calls us to practice and promote virtue, responsibility, forgiveness, generosity, concern for others, social justice and economic fairness;
- a *capacity for advocacy* that cuts across the false choices in national debate -- jails or jobs, personal or social responsibility, better values or better policies;
- a *consistent ethic of life* which remains the surest foundation for our life together.

There are many different kinds of cycles of violence – domestic violence, street or gang violence, gun violence, etc. Describe how one of these assets might help with breaking the cycle for one of these types of violence.

Taking Action with our 2 Feet of Charity and Justice

Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (PBMR), based in Chicago, builds relationships among youth and families impacted by violence, creates safe spaces where people can process trauma and heal, and promotes restorative justice as an approach to conflict and a way to restore relationship.

Read the news article about the special events PBMR held in October.

Name an activity described in the article which is an act of **CHARITY**. What about it makes it charity?

Imagine an act of **JUSTICE** which would be a next step to follow up on gathering the needs of the community. What about it makes it justice?