faith DOING justice

ihs AUSTRALIAN JESUITS

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HOW CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING HELPS US TO RESPOND TO ISSUES

INSPIRATION

Catholic Social Teaching provides inspiration for our efforts. It is one of the reasons why we do what we do.

It calls us to promote a more just society, reminding us of the essential place that work to promote the justice of God's Reign in our world holds in the mission of the Church, and in the mission of each Christian.

Catholic Social Teaching proposes principles for reflection which help us to name and explain the key values that guide us. It grounds the vision, mission and goals of Catholic organizations and social justice groups.

APPROACH

Catholic Social Teaching guides our approach to the promotion of social justice. It influences how we do what we do.

Catholic Social Teaching proposes criteria for judgment which promote certain patterns of behaviour that contribute to establishing the ethos and culture of a Catholic group or organization.

It suggests an incarnational path, seeking and finding God in people, places and events, and an inductive methodology which starts from experience rather than theory.

If we are guided by Catholic Social Teaching, our ways of acting will be respectful of the principle of subsidiarity. We will adopt a wholistic view of the human person in community, and our ways of going about things will express solidarity. The ultimate measure of our work will be the extent to which it respects, protects and promotes human dignity.

Catholic Social Teaching underpins the strategies, policies and practices of Catholic organizations and groups.

SUBSTANCE

Catholic Social Teaching influences the substance of our work. It guides the choice of what we do.

The principles of human dignity, the common good and solidarity will guide us in deciding which issues and situations require our response. They are touchstones in the development of our positions, and they guide us in prioritizing, or ranking, the relative importance of different issues and tasks.

The principle of subsidiarity will guide decisions about the concerns and tasks which are appropriate to particular organizations or groups. It helps us to discern whether a particular task or issue would be best undertaken by our group, or by smaller, more local group, or perhaps by a larger more overarching group that can coordinate efforts more effectively.

Catholic Social Teaching guides the priorities of Catholic organizations and groups, as well as the substance of the positions that they adopt on issues.

FOR REFLECTION

- Who or what inspires your work for a more just society? How do your vision, mission and goals reflect this?
- How would you describe your approach to promoting social justice? What strategies do you favour? Why?
- What criteria do you use to decide what to take on? How do you set priorities?

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