

LIFE Meeting

Social Justice

April 12, 2017

1. Ice Breaker: Find the Path

2. Opening Prayer

Nathan

3. Large Group

Morgan and Casslyn

4. Small Groups: Learn a Social Justice (end at 7:47)

5. Large Group: Wrap Up

Meg

6. Closing Prayer

Jesse

- Next Meeting: May 12th Natural Revelation
- Planning Meeting April 26th at 6:00
 - Food: Super Group!! Nathan, Meg, Molly, Kinley, Casslyn, Sophia

Icebreaker – Find the Path

We, the core team, have come up with a path on the ground. And your challenge is to guess the correct path. You can either work with a partner or by yourself. You will take turns guessing. **The trick is you may not speak.** Once you make a guess, the core team member in charge will either ding or buzz you. If you hear a ding you can keep on going but if you hear a buzz you have to go to the end of the line and try again! Remember to choose wisely. If you are not

Opening Prayer

Kings and Queens - Audio Adrenaline

<https://youtu.be/vtXC-Mvunc8>

Little hands, shoeless feet, lonely eyes
looking back at me
Will we leave behind the innocent too
brief
On their own, on the run when their lives
have only begun
These could be our daughters and our
sons
And just like a drum I can hear their hearts
beating
I know my God won't let them be
defeated
Every child has a dream to belong and be
loved

Boys become kings, girls will be queens
Wrapped in Your majesty
When we love, when we love the least of
these
Then they will be brave and free
Shout your name in victory
When we love when we love the least of
these
When we love the least of these

Break our hearts once again

Help us to remember when
We were only children hoping for a friend
Won't you look around these are the lives
that the world has forgotten
Waiting for doors of our hearts and our
homes to open

Boys become kings, girls will be queens
Wrapped in Your majesty
When we love, when we love the least of
these
Then they will be brave and free
Shout your name in victory
When we love when we love the least of
these
When we love the least of these

If not us who will be like Jesus
To the least of these
If not us tell me who will be like Jesus
Like Jesus to the least of these

Boys become kings, girls will be queens
Wrapped in your majesty
When we love, when we love the least of
these

Then they will be brave and free shout
your name in victory
We will love we will love the least of these
We will love the least of these
We will love the least of these
We will love the least of these
We will love the least of these
We will love the least of these

There has always been inequalities present in the world. Dating way back to the predatory dinosaurs, to Lazarus, to our third world countries today. Too often is such inequalities looked over. This is what creates social justice issues; encompassing child poverty to racism to abortion. The social tendencies that are led out today are what continue to help these issues thrive. But what if we were to take action to spark change? What if we were to love the least of these? If we put ourselves in the shoes of those affected we can start to realize the extreme of the injustice and start of to create different social norms. Eradicating these injustices lead to limitless opportunities. Those affected may even become kings or queens. As your people let us joyfully proclaim, may the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary Amen.

Large Group

Introduce Social Justice: PPT

Transition to Small Groups

Take a minute to think about your life....and all the blessings in it. You have a roof over your head.....a car to drive.....food to eat..... family and friends who love you.....an education.....a choice in what you do each day. Now imagine you didn't have these things. What would you do? How would your life be different?..... Would you want someone to fight for you? To give you a chance to live a full, safe, and happy life? To have the opportunities you only ever dreamed would be yours to behold?

Let us pray:

Mary, our mother, mother of all,

We journey as pilgrims

To sacred spaces,

Where all are welcomed, all are family.

Guide our steps as we search for your face

In the faces of those who suffer,
Those who thirst for healing, for justice, for peace.
May we know the place we are called to
When we recognize and embrace them,
And know we have reached home.

As your people let us joyfully proclaim, May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.

Homelessness

Layout:

- Read prayer
- Read 2 short stories
- Read intro to homelessness
- Cut out facts and have everyone read one fact
- Discuss catholic social teachings
- Do activities
- Discuss as a large small group and make action plan poster

Prayer for small small group:

Then the King will say to those on his right, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. 35 For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, 36 I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' 37 Then the righteous will answer him, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you, or thirsty and give you drink? 38 And when did we see you a stranger and welcome you, or naked and clothe you? 39 And when did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?' 40 And the King will answer them, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers,[a] you did it to me.' (Matthew 25:34-40)

Short story:

A Mother's story:

"For over a year our small apartment complex was cited for housing code violation after housing code violation. The landlord cashed our rent checks but he turned his back on his property and on us. So we formed a tenant's association. We repaired what we could as well as we could. And we waited united in terror... A small community under siege waiting for attack.

When the thanksgiving season came around, we relaxed. No city government in the northern U.S. Would put families out of their homes in winter. Never in America!

My work phone rang at 4 o'clock on the Friday before thanksgiving. My nine-year-old daughter was crying. Mommy they're putting my bed on the sidewalk. I can't find my coat. They're stealing our furniture. Oh mommy, make them stop."

There we stood. Our children and our elderly shaking with cold and shock... Watching as our cherished possessions were put to curb like so much trash. A dozen policemen and marshals watched us carefully so we wouldn't disturb the peace. Why were we being watched like criminals? And why did the police handcuff my neighbor and throw him into the paddy wagon for kicking the tire of a police car. Of course he was angry. Who wouldn't be angry? And they wouldn't listen to us...wouldn't talk to us. We were faceless voiceless refugees. Where are you taking my clothes? Her toys? Our china and linens? Where is my couch? Where is the scrapbook? Is this a pogrom? If we didn't do anything wrong, why do i feel so ashamed? Why do i feel that i am a failure? If we didn't do anything wrong, why do we live in fear that our employers will fire us if they know we're homeless? My daughter is afraid to tell her friends the truth. So she tells them we live with granny. But granny died two years ago. My child is ashamed. Homelessness has degraded and discounted her. At nine, her dreams are dying. I wish i could promise her it would be better tomorrow. But tomorrow may never come for us."

Intro to homelessness:

Homelessness mirrors everything that is broken in our society. It reflects our biases, our meanness, our lack of compassion and our views of each other as fellow human beings.

It's poverty, oppression, ostracism, inequality, and racial injustice.

Over the years, homelessness has come to be increasingly narrowly viewed, and sometimes defined. But if we take a step back, it's clear that homelessness is really nothing more or less than an extreme form of poverty. It's a step in a continuum of vulnerability.

People become homeless for reasons ranging from eviction, to job loss, to health crises, to domestic violence, to substance addiction. These are some of the immediate, precipitating events that can send a person or a family or a youth into the streets or shelters, someone's floor.

We view homelessness as a human rights issue, and it's a basic human rights principle that rights are interdependent. It's hard—or even impossible—to go to school, to work, to vote, to keep a family together, if you don't have food to eat, health care for body and mind, or a home to live in. Ending and preventing homelessness in America is a matter of basic social justice.

Facts & Stats: (U.S.)

CUT OUT

- Homelessness
 - Over half a million people are homeless. 600,000 people do not have a home to sleep in on any given night.
 - A quarter of these people are children. 138,000 under the age of 18.
 - Main factors: Poverty, Lack of affordable housing, Job loss, Lack of health care, Mental illness, Substance abuse, Domestic violence
 - There are fewer places for poor people to rent than before. One eighth of the nation's supply of low-income housing has been permanently lost since 2001. The U.S. needs at least 7 million more affordable apartments for low-income families, and as a result, millions of families spend more than half of their monthly income on rent.
 - One in five homeless people suffers from untreated severe mental illness.
 - Cities are increasingly making homelessness a crime. 24% of cities make it a city-wide crime to beg in public, 33% make it illegal to stand around or loiter anywhere in the city, 18% make it a crime to sleep anywhere in public, 43% make it illegal to sleep in your car, and 53% make it illegal to sit or lie down in particular public places.
 - 27% of adults who are homeless were in foster care in their youth
 - Most studies show that single homeless adults are more likely to be male than female
 - 42 percent African-American, 38 percent white, 20 percent Hispanic, 4 percent Native American and 2 percent Asian.
- Addiction
 - About 40% of the homeless population is dependent on drugs or alcohol
 - Among surveyed homeless people 38% have an alcohol problem, and 26% report problems with other drugs
 - Surveys of homeless populations conducted during the 1980s found consistently high rates of addiction, particularly among single men
 - Addiction disorders among all single adult men who are homeless is about 65%
 - About one-third of the people without homes are alcoholics
 - Polydrug use — using two or more drugs in combination — has become more popular among all adults
- Foster Care
 - Foster care leads to high levels of homelessness, pregnancy, addiction, and higher rates of sex trafficking.
 - Half of sexually trafficked minors in California come from the foster care system.
 - A lot of kids in foster care are addicted to drugs either because their parents were or because drugs can take their pain away.

- About 40,000 infants are put in foster care every year.
- A lot of teenagers age out of the foster care system without proper support and end up on the streets.

Catholic Social Teaching:

Questions:

1. How do you feel when you see a homeless person? What's your first thought?
2. What are some stereotypes you have heard about homeless people? (dirty, smelly)
3. Do you know what Catholic Social Teaching is?
 - a. Catholic Social Teaching is based on the belief that God has a plan for creation, a plan to build his kingdom of peace, love and justice. It holds that God has a special place in this story for each of us, whoever we are. touches upon many different aspects of life, from the family to international development, how we think of those who are homeless to how we care for the environment, and from how we shop and consume to the rights of workers and the dignity of work.
4. Do you know the seven themes?
 - a. Dignity of the Human Person, Call to Family, Community and Participation, Rights and Responsibilities, Preferential Option for and with People who are Poor, Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers, Solidarity, Care for God's Creation.
5. Which do you think homelessness would fall into? Why?
 - a. Discussion / opinion (mainly Option for Poor and Vulnerable)
6. What do you think the church thinks about homelessness? (from council of bishops)
 - a. Church view: 'The home – a place of security, care for family and hospitality – is regarded now less as an essential need and therefore a right, and more as a financial asset'.
 'There is another less attractive side of the housing market: the desire to acquire more than is required. Since the mid-1980s, the average size of houses has increased from 162 to 215 square metres, while the average number of occupants has fallen from 3.5 to 2.6 people'.
 'Homelessness has a terrible effect on anyone, but it is particularly devastating for families' [...] It is distressing that 22 per cent of people seeking the support of homeless services have done so as a result of domestic or family violence. Their homelessness adds to the terrible trauma already experienced when violence occurs in a family'.
7. Do you think it is our responsibility to help fight this issue? Elaborate.

Addiction (Meg)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yaxeMUETyi0> (2:54)

"Alcoholics and addicts who have become homeless often find it difficult to "see the light at the end of the tunnel." My own experience has been that even after staying sober for several months, getting off the streets was not easy. There were times when I thought I'd be homeless for the rest of my life and wonder why I even bothered to stay sober." -an account from a homeless addict

1. How many people when thinking about homeless people believe that usually they are addicted or abusing some substance like alcohol or drugs?
2. How often do you hear the phrase, "that homeless person will just use your money to spend it on drugs or alcohol"?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zAq2DTHpK88>

1. After watching that video, what do you feel now? Opinion? Anything surprise you?
2. Often times it is not a person's willing fault that they are addicted. There are many reasons why they feel the need to abuse these substances: Low education, Lack of family structure, Mental illness, Low-skilled employment, Poor physical health, High arrest rates
3. Are there any ways you feel you can help this issue, especially with addiction?
 - a. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Service Administration

Foster Care (Morgan)

Video: <https://youtu.be/IOeQUwdAjE0>

This video shows how a lot of children end up in foster care and then later can lead to homelessness.

Questions:

1. What stood out in this video? Did anything surprise you?
2. Why do you think it's so hard for foster children to adapt and change?
3. How do you think you would handle the little girl's situation if it were you?
4. How can we help foster children?

(*If needed)

There are children who have many possessions which some children without homes can only dream about. We should realize that there are many who are less fortunate than

themselves.

We will express the possessions they have that children without homes might lack.

Method:

1. Discuss some things about the value of having a family, a home, clothing, food, privacy, pets,
2. What are your most valued possessions and who are the most valued people? What could you not do without in your life?

Wrap up as big small group:

"Jesus takes the side of those most in need. As followers of Christ, we are challenged to make a fundamental 'option for the poor'--to speak for the voiceless, to defend the defenseless, to assess life styles, policies, and social institutions in terms of their impact on the poor. poverty is not merely the lack of adequate financial resources. It entails a more profound kind of deprivation, a denial of full participation in the economic, social, and political life of society and an inability to influence decisions that affect one's life. Therefore we should seek solutions that enable the poor to help themselves through such means as employment. The first line of attack against poverty must be to build and sustain a healthy economy that provides employment opportunities at just wages for all adults who are able to work. Poverty is intimately linked to the issue of employment. Expanded employment especially in the private sector would promote human dignity, increase social solidarity, and promote self reliance of the poor" -Economic Justice for

Large small group questions:

1. What did you learn?
2. How do you feel now about homelessness now that you have heard more about it?
3. What did you learn about how foster care is related to homeless children or about how addiction is related to homelessness?
4. How do you feel you can make a difference, no matter how big or small?
5. How are we as Catholics called to fight this social justice issue?
6. Do you feel differently about homelessness now? Any opinions changed?
7. Make a list of what we can do: ACTION PLAN
 - a. Hand out lunches, keep some fruit snacks on you at all times, etc.

Human Trafficking Small Group

Prayer

A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, when he was attacked by robbers. They stripped him of his clothes, beat him and went away, leaving him half dead. A priest happened to be going down the same road, and when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. **32** So too, a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. **33** But a Samaritan, as he traveled, came where the man was; and when he saw him, he took pity on him. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring on oil and wine. Then he put the man on his own donkey, brought him to an inn and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii [c] and gave them to the innkeeper. 'Look after him,' he said, 'and when I return, I will reimburse you for any extra expense you may have.' "Which of these three do you think was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of robbers?" The expert in the law replied, "The one who had mercy on him." Jesus told him, "Go and do likewise."

God, as we enter our small group, please give us the mercy you gave the Good Samaritan. Give us your eyes, so that we may see the dignity in each person. Help us work together that we may reflect your love for others. May the Father, Son and Holy Spirit be Glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary.

Info on issue

Two main categories

1. Slavery/labor trafficking
2. Sex trafficking

<https://polarisproject.org/human-trafficking>

Powerpoint

Catholic Social Teaching connection

Dignity of the human person

Rights and dignity of workers

Solidarity

Personal Stories

<http://fox42kptm.com/archive/sex-trafficking-in-nebraska>

<https://polarisproject.org/blog/2015/04/14/survivor-story-boyfriend-turned-trafficker>

<https://polarisproject.org/blog/2015/11/30/survivor-story-global-journey-help-her-family>

Discussion

- As we discussed, there are different forms of human trafficking. If you came across a person being trafficked, what would your initial reaction be?
- Trafficking is often called modern day slavery. Why do you think this comparison is made? What are the same/what is different?
- 300000 people being trafficked. Why do you think that number is so large? Why do you think human trafficking goes unreported so often?
- We mentioned how catholic social teaching relates. Do you agree? Do you think there is anything else that left uncovered that should be?
- What advice could you offer to victims in trafficking? Is there anything you would say to a trafficker?
- How would you explain human trafficking to a person who doesn't know what it is? What do you think the most effective way to spread awareness is?
- One form of human trafficking is child labor. Many different products the US consumes are partially produced with forced or harsh labor conditions. What lifestyle changes could you make to help fight human trafficking?
- What are steps we could take to combat human trafficking? Come up with a short action plan.

LARGE small group

Discussion questions:

1. What struck you most from the discussion in your small group?
2. Which story seemed the most plausible? The most implausible?
3. What are some ways we can combat this problem?
 - a. Sex trafficking?
 - b. Human trafficking
 - i. Workers rights
 - ii. Slavery
 - iii. <http://www.behindthebrands.org/en-us>
 - c. One of the biggest roadblocks in fighting against human trafficking is the lack of data we have surrounding the issue. How does this affect your solutions?

Activity

Make a poster that poses the question "Now we know...What do we do?"

Write down the "solutions" the group came up with

Be ready to present it to the LARGE group when get back

Closing Prayer

God of freedom, beauty and truth
we believe that your deepest desire,
your most powerful energy,
is that all creation might know abundant life.

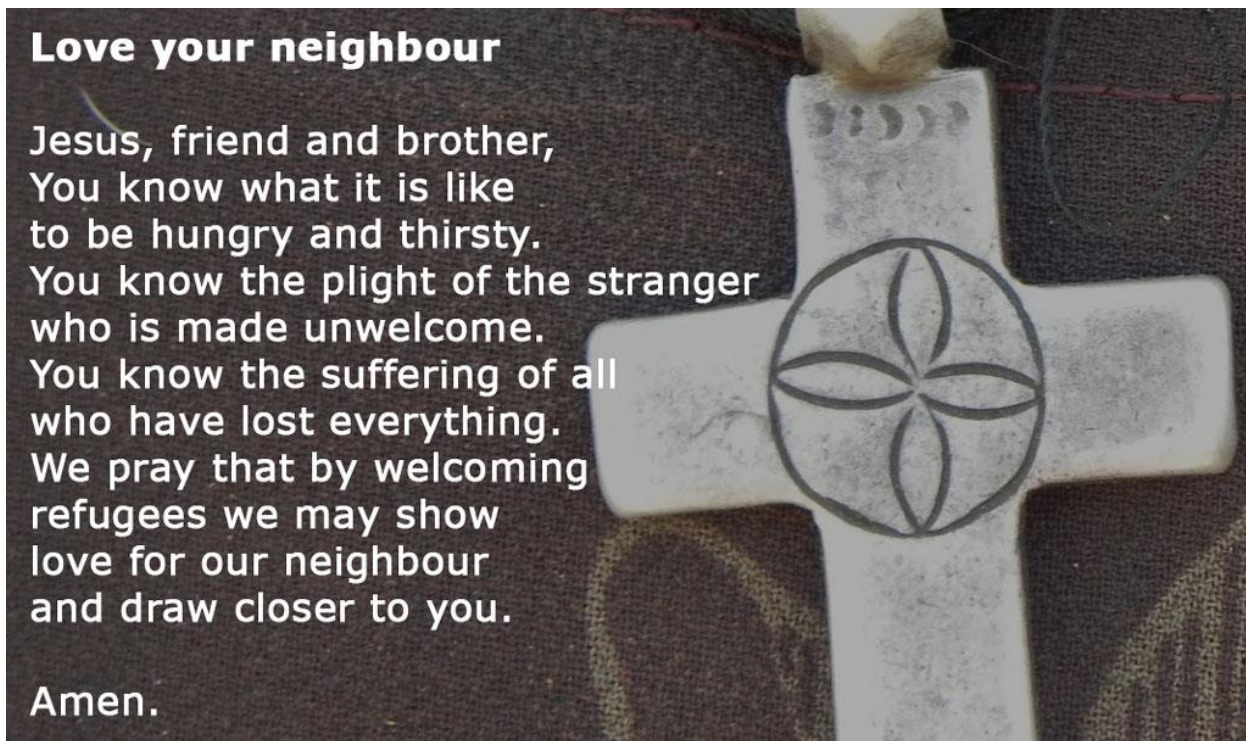
We raise our voices in prayer
for our sisters and brothers,
women and girls, men and boys,
who are modern day slaves;
They are your beloved daughters and sons,
exploited sexually or forced to work
because of human violence and greed.

Fill us with your compassion and love
that those who are trafficked might know
healing and justice;
that traffickers will come to repentance and
conversion;
that all of us might live in such a way
that others are not made to pay the price
for our comfort and convenience.

Hasten the coming of the day when all
people
and our precious Earth itself
will be treated, not as a commodity,
but as radiant images of your freedom,
beauty and truth. Amen.

Refugees Small Group

Prayer:



Questions before Prezi:-

1. What's your definition of a refugee?
2. What do you know about detention centers?
3. What do you know about services to help refugees?

Questions:

1. Basic thoughts on PowerPoint/questions?

JOIN TOGETHER

Activities:

- make "awareness trinket"- blue for refugee hope

Will need:

- fine tip sharpies
- Ribbon
- Safety pins

How to make change:

- Lutheran family services
- Sacred heart
- Money
- Food
- Clothing
- Awareness

Large Group

DEEP large group discussion:

- Present topics
 - Talk about them
 - What we learned
 - How they feel they can make a change
 - Their view vs. catholic view
-
- Closing :<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4z7gDsSKUmU> (kid president, how to change the world (a work in progress))

Closing Prayer

If we are the Body - Casting Crowns

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9_7j1SMuTN0

It's crowded in worship today
As she slips in trying to fade into the faces
The girl's teasing laughter is carrying farther than they know
Farther than they know

But if we are the body
Why aren't His arms reaching?
Why aren't His hands healing?
Why aren't His words teaching?
And if we are the body
Why aren't His feet going?
Why is His love not showing them there is a way?
There is a way

A traveler is far away from home
He sheds his coat and quietly sinks into the back row
The weight of their judgemental glances
Tells him that his chances are better out on the road

Jesus payed much too high a price
For us to pick and choose who should come
And we are the body of Christ

Jesus is the way

Social Justice is a difficult subject. Hunger, addiction, discrimination and many other injustices often feel overwhelming. There are no simple answers. However, that doesn't mean nothing can be done. Famous Philosopher Galileo Galilei said "I do not believe that the same God who has endowed us with sense, reason, and intellect has intended us to forgo their use." As members of the Body of Christ, it is our responsibility to help those in need. As we leave, I encourage everyone to use your God-given gifts to uphold the dignity of every human, so that the Father, Son and Holy Spirit may be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary.