



CALLED TO ACTION

Session 6 - The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

living the Faith
celebrating Prayer
promoting Justice
ready to Serve

Song - City of God – Dan Schutte

Awake from your slumber! Arise from your sleep!
A new day is dawning for all those who weep.
The people in darkness have seen a great light.
The Lord of our longing has conquered the night.

Refrain

*Let us build the city of God.
May our tears be turned into dancing!
For the Lord, our light and our love,
has turned the night into day!*

We are sons of the morning; we are daughters of day.
The One who has loved us has brightened our way.
The Lord of all kindness has called us to be
a light for his people to set their hearts free.

Video Link:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eAECgrj_wSY

Prayer to St Joseph, Patron of Workers

St Joseph, Patron of Workers,
help us to respect the dignity of all workers.
Help us to learn about and to care about
workers who do not have fair wages, just benefits,
safe working environments.
Help us to raise our voices for justice for workers.
Help us to ask our government and our
representatives.
To develop policies that create jobs with dignity.

You taught your son
the value of work and the joy of work well done.
Teach us these lessons.
Guide us in our own work
and in the work of justice we are all called to
participate in.
Renew our strength and commitment
each day as we face the work ahead
as we labour for the common good of all.

Amen.

Scripture - Do not Withhold wages from your workers – (Deuteronomy 24:14-15)

You shall not withhold the wages of poor and needy laborers, whether other Israelites or aliens who reside in your land in one of your towns. 15 You shall pay them their wages daily before sunset, because they are poor and their livelihood depends on them; otherwise they might cry to the Lord against you, and you would incur guilt.



Called to Action: Written by The Logos Project on behalf of Auckland Catholic Youth Ministry enabling young people to live their faith.



Church Teaching - Catechism of the Catholic Church 2434

2434 A *just wage* is the legitimate fruit of work. To refuse or withhold it can be a grave injustice. In determining fair pay both the needs and the contributions of each person must be taken into account.

"Remuneration for work should guarantee man the opportunity to provide a dignified livelihood for himself and his family on the material, social, cultural and spiritual level, taking into account the role and the productivity of each, the state of the business, and the common good. Agreement between the parties is not sufficient to justify morally the amount to be received in wages.

For more information on meaningful work for the young worker and a just wage go to:

<http://caritas.org.nz/resources/social-justice-week/2013-social-justice-week-parish-resources>

Ice-Breaker - Make a machine

Select a machine, the more unusual the machine, the better. As a group they must replicate the machine involving each person in the process. If the group is large, divide the group into teams of 6-8 and have them act out a machine, while the other groups guess what machine it is. Be creative on what machine they imitate

Possible machines

- Washing machine
- Telephone
- Bottle top making machine
- Kitchen blender
- Donut hole maker
- Computer
- Coffee machine
- Car assembly line
- Toasted sandwich maker
- Xbox one/ ps4

Debrief: Towards the end of the activity, ask the participants, what was it like to construct a machine? Ask them if they felt some a sense of achievement?

Remind them that people who work in factories and other kinds of production experience a similar situation. They, too, feel challenged because of the sensitivity of the work but also have a sense of achievement when they accomplish them.



Activity - Biblical Teaching on the Rights and Responsibilities of Workers

Background:

The economy must serve the people and not the other way around. The Catholic Church had always promoted the dignity of work and protected the rights of workers. Work is more than just a way for a person to make a living; it is way for human being to continue participating in God's creation. We have the responsibility to make the world a better place and one way of doing it is to work for the betterment of our society. Human labour should be protected and not to be exploited. Basic rights of workers like the right to productive work, to fair wages and the right to organise should be respected.

Task 1

Introduce the idea of worker's rights to the whole group and emphasis that with every right comes a responsibility.

RIGHTS	RESPONSIBILITIES
Work	Work if one is able
Just wage	Work hard and honestly
Safe workplace	Work carefully, note any safety problems to employers
Association (union)	Use to present problems to employers, help other members perfect their crafts, do not use to bully employers
Strike	Use only as a last resort, be mindful of responsibility to the common good

List all RESPONSIBILITIES on one side of the board and mix all the RIGHTS on the other side. Ask the participants to match the RESPONSIBILITIES to their corresponding RIGHTS. Alternatively, print this page and cut up the table above into pieces and then ask participants to match up the rights with the responsibilities.



Task 2

Divide the group into two groups of equal size. Give them a bible each and the assigned scripture passages and questions. Ask them to search for the answers in each scripture passages. After both groups found the answers in each passage, ask them to come up with a skit that they will present to the other group. Each group will try to figure out the answers to the questions of the opposite group (you may wish to give the other group the questions that relate to the skit).

Group 1

Proverbs 6:6-11	Whom should we imitate when we work? What will happen to us if we are too lazy?
Ecclesiastes 3:22	What good advice is given in this passage?
Matthew 24:45-51	What is the payoff for a vigilant worker?
Answers:	Work like an ant poverty will come on us enjoying your work the vigilant worker will be put in charge

Group 2

2 Thessalonians 3:10-12	What is the problem in the community that causes Paul's warning? What instructions did he give?
John 4:34	What is Jesus' true work?
John 6:28-29	What is the work of Jesus' followers?
Answers:	Restore what is lacking in faith Love one another Jesus must do the will of the one who sent him The followers should believe in God

Reflection Questions:

What do the scripture passages teach us about human work?

Why do we have to work?

What are the spiritual aspects of human labour?

Final Reflection:

Invite one of the participants to read the prayer from the beginning of the Liturgy of the Eucharist of the Mass (see below). Ask the rest of the participants to listen attentively and be mindful of any words about 'human labour' from the prayer.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the **bread** we offer you:
fruit of the earth and **work of human hands**,
it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

Blessed are you, Lord God of all creation,
for through your goodness we have received
the **wine** we offer you:
fruit of the vine and **work of human hands**,
it will become for us the bread of life.

Blessed be God for ever.

The fruits of creation (earth and vine)
together with the work human hands produce
results that will make it possible for Christ to
be truly and substantially present. Creation
and human labour can bring forth the
presence of something holy.

