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 |
|  | **Caring For Creation:****An Activity for Understanding the Necessity for Social Justice** |
| What’s the Point? | This year is all about seeing ourselves in the world. Hopefully this activity will accomplish two things: teaching the teens about their place in the working of the world at this time and what it must feel like not to be included. We emphasize God’s justice – where everyone gets what they need, because that is how God created the universe. Creation belongs to everyone, and God expects us to shepherd and share it appropriately. Another subtitle might be “*Understanding the Distribution of Wealth and Resources in the World Today and Its Ramifications*.” |
| **Background Information** | ***Reference**** *CCC: ¶* ***46***; *282-324; 337-349; 792;* ***2402-2407****;*
* NAB : *Gn* 1:1-31; *Gn* 2:15; *Lv* 25:1-7; *Dt* 10:14; Ps 24:1-2; *Dan* 3:56-82; *Mt* 6:25-34; *Rm* 1:20; *1 Cor* 10:26

When we acted out the distribution disparity in the first class, it was meant to show how there are many factors in justice: where you live, what resources are available to you, what kind of options are available, the disposition of governments and businesses. The point of Justice is that those things should not matter, that we all work toward the appropriate disposition of goods and services so that each person can reach some potential – the potential that God created them to be.So we start this year by examining Creation. This is not about some tree-hugging, senseless agenda. Creation is everything that God has made, that is, at least from our point of view, everything. Everything we can know, everything we can sense, everything we can think, everything we can experience: time, space, plants, motion, smiles, babies. We believe in a *physical* Creation. We believe ourselves to be the greatest creation, but that we are also just a part of Creation. What God makes is perfect; what we make is flawed. We confuse our own designs with the greater good, but only Creation is the greater good. And so, we are called to care for Creation – all of it. But why? Did not God give it to us saying “*Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that crawl on the earth.*” (*Gen* 1:28)And that is true. These are God’s words to us but He is talking about Creation as He created it, not as we imagine it or desire to control it for our own personal benefit. What God gives us is life, pure and simple. There are no hidden angles, nothing that is not both physical and visible. Even the things which are ‘invisible’ are still known to us; there are no secrets that have not been revealed to us. And because we are physical, corporeal beings, we have physical needs. And so too does the rest of Creation. “*The goods of creation are destined for the entire human race. The right to private property does not abolish the universal destination of goods.*” (*CCC* 2452**)** God gave use of Creation to us, but we are not the creator. God creates, God sustains. God’s is Creation and all Creation is God’s, we are merely his stewards. The Sanctity of Life, all life but especially human life, is our rule in seeking justice. If human life is the greatest gift and all Creation serves human life and God will always give us what we need, so according to that Scripture we can do what we want, right? No. Well then, one might argue God gives and sustains all life and we know that death is just a doorway so it is okay to kill people to help them get to God? No. And so it is with Creation. As with all things we have rights and responsibilities. We live in balance with nature as we live in balance with each other. So, if for no other reason we must take care of Creation because it is God’s gift. But that is not all. We must take care of it because it is a gift to all, not just the few. Our use of nature can cause injustice. So as important as our responsibilities to nature are they are doubly to each other.“*The truth about creation is so important for all of human life that God in his tenderness wanted to reveal to his People everything that is salutary to know on the subject. Beyond the natural knowledge that every man can have of the Creator, God progressively revealed to Israel the mystery of creation. He who chose the patriarchs, who brought Israel out of Egypt, and who by choosing Israel created and formed it, this same God reveals himself as the One to whom belong all the peoples of the earth, and the whole earth itself; he is the One who alone ‘made heaven and earth’. Thus the revelation of creation is inseparable from the revelation and forging of the covenant of the one God with his People. Creation is revealed as the first step towards this covenant, the first and universal witness to God's all-powerful love.*” (*CCC* 287-8)Everything aims us toward God. Creation itself witnesses to the Glory of God (*cf*. *Ps* 19:2). We are the created and we are created to love and serve God. We develop our conscience and reach out beyond ourselves because God has placed His Spirit within us, and made us His sons and daughters through the gift of His Son. All of this takes place within Creation. We must start to understand the meaning of Creation by understanding our role it in. What kind of stewards are we? How do we view Creation? And thereby everyone else? Our inability to see our own impact upon Creation points to an inability to see the effect of our daily lives on the world around us. We must be responsible with Creation, see the suffering and injustice caused by our desire for cheap goods, plentiful gas, overstocked shelves, and mountains of refuse. |
| Materials Needed | * Carts for “resources”
* Cups (represents large economies manufacture)
* Napkins (represents small economies manufacture)
* Ice (represents the amount of potable water)
* Food (representing, well, food)
* Drinks (represents oil/energy)
 |
| **Activity** | **None** **(3 min)** |
| **Understanding Distribution** **(45 min)****ALL SNACKS AND DRINKS WILL BE GATHERED TO THE FRONT (on stage)**The activity is simple in concept but complex in execution. First, using the guidelines below, each table’s leaders must pick an economic/political system from which they will operate. They are the leaders of said system, and will dictate how people who live under their rule will function within the system.“Resources”, in the form of the usual snacks, will then be distributed out to the ‘world’ as they pretty much are in our day and age, with the table representing the US economy and political system getting the lion’s share.In the mix is the ‘World Bank’, run by the moderator. The world bank will retain “money” (candy) which it will dole out to needy countries with serious conditions attached to the loan. It will also retain some resources which it will use as a means of giving some countries economic development aid with similar strings attached.Resources are limited so for example there will be less cups than there are people.Each table’s leaders must decide from the following types of government (traits are just for guidance apply any you want):* Democracy/Capitalist
	+ Benevolent in giving
	+ Voracious in consuming
	+ Waste is rampant
	+ Money and resources are distributed by incentive
* Socialist
	+ Similar to democracy except money is distributed ‘equally’ which can at least slow down the consuming and waste
* Theocracy
	+ Isolationist
	+ Consumption is controlled by the leadership
	+ Money and resources are distributed only for the good of God
* Dictatorship
	+ No sharing – harshly discouraged in others
	+ Only leader and cronies consume voraciously
	+ Money and resources are retained by the leader
	+ What little waste remains is consumed by the leader (think shanty towns near dumps)
 |
| **Outline** | **Prayer**:  | *Ps 96.* |
| **Presentation**:  | *PowerPoint.* |
| **Activity**:  | *Get To Know You*  |
| **Table Discussion**:  | *Questions*. |
| **Post Discussion:** | *None.* |
| **Closing Prayer**:  | *Group Prayer/Petitions.* |
| **Prayer** | **Introductory Prayer:** (**2 min,** after candle is lit…**)*****Psalm 96****Sing to the LORD a new song; sing to the LORD, all the earth. Sing to the LORD, bless his name; proclaim his salvation day after day. Tell his glory among the nations; among all peoples, his marvelous deeds. For great is the LORD and highly to be praised, to be feared above all gods. For the gods of the nations are idols, but the LORD made the heavens. Splendor and power go before him; power and grandeur are in his holy place. Give to the LORD, you families of nations, give to the LORD glory and might; give to the LORD the glory due his name! Bring gifts and enter his courts; bow down to the LORD, splendid in holiness. Tremble before him, all the earth; declare among the nations: The LORD is king. The world will surely stand fast, never to be shaken. He rules the peoples with fairness. Let the heavens be glad and the earth rejoice; let the sea and what fills it resound; let the plains be joyful and all that is in them. Then let all the trees of the forest rejoice before the LORD who comes, who comes to govern the earth, To govern the world with justice and the peoples with faithfulness.*  |
| **Pre-discussion Presentation** | Presentation (15 min) |
|  |  |
| **Activity / Table Talk** | Table Discussion (15 min) |
|  | Ask the questions as a group.1. Who feels satisfied?
2. Who got everything they wanted?
3. How much did work with the other “countries”?

Go to each table and ask:1. What was your “country”?
2. What was your “resource\(s)”
3. Who got to eat?
4. Who got to drink?
5. How successful do you think your country was at meeting your needs?
6. Did the leaders help or hinder you?
7. Did you feel free to meet your needs?
8. What did you learn about the effects of governments and resources?
9. Who do the resources of the Earth belong to?
 |
| Post-Discussion Activity | ***None* (0 min).**  |
|  |  |
| Closing | **Announcements and Prayer (5 min).**  |
|  | **Group Prayer**Canticle of the SunMost High, all powerful, good Lord, Yours are the praises, the glory, the honor, and all blessing. To You alone, Most High, do they belong, and no man is worthy to mention Your name.Be praised, my Lord, through all your creatures, especially through my lord Brother Sun, who brings the day; and you give light through him. And he is beautiful and radiant in all his splendor! Of you, Most High, he bears the likeness. Praise be You, my Lord, through Sister Moon and the stars, in heaven you formed them clear and precious and beautiful. Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Wind, and through the air, cloudy and serene, and every kind of weather through which You give sustenance to Your creatures.Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Water, which is very useful and humble and precious and chaste. Praised be You, my Lord, through Brother Fire, through whom you light the night and he is beautiful and playful and robust and strong. Praised be You, my Lord, through Sister Mother Earth, who sustains us and governs us and who produces varied fruits with colored flowers and herbs. Praised be You, my Lord, through those who give pardon for Your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are those who endure in peace for by You, Most High, they shall be crowned. Praised be You, my Lord, through our Sister Bodily Death, from whom no living man can escape. Woe to those who die in mortal sin. Blessed are those whom death will find in Your most holy will, for the second death shall do them no harm. Praise and bless my Lord, and give Him thanks and serve Him with great humility. AMEN |
| Reminder | **\*\*\*\* REMEMBER IMPORTANCE OF RECORDING ATTENDANCE!!** This is a legal document! Please, write down on your attendance sheet the name of any teen at your table, whether they are on your roll or not. |
| Attachments | **Below:*** *Activity Guide*.
* *Additional Background*.
 |

## Opening Activity – Distribution of Wealth and Resources

After deciding, table leaders are given amount of dollars based on these *very* rough estimates trying to come close to 100%:

* Democracy: 50% of world GDP (2003 CIA world fact book)
* Socialist: 5% of world GDP (2003 CIA world fact book)
* Theocracy: 15% of world GDP (2003 CIA world fact book)
* Dictatorship: 20% of world GDP (2003 CIA world fact book) (loans)

Food is released by resource availability. Some countries (tables) have cups, some napkins, some food, some drinks, some ice, etc., etc.

Big nations go first.

Begin by explaining to your group the nature of your ‘country’. If you want ask them how they think a country of that type is run and/or acts. (10 mins)

The moderator will come around and facilitate trade among the ‘countries’.

Resources or money may be traded for food or other resources.

Simple loans may be negotiated (subject to existing debt and .

Larger countries get a bigger break (more buying power)

## Lecture/Group Activity/Discussion

Discuss how your ‘country’ acted. What were the frustrations that they experienced in trying to get resources, sell resources, help others? Expand on the experience with the posters from the beginning of the year.

*Basic Idea:*

The world's richer nations use tremendously more of its resources than do the poorer ones. Because the depletion of natural resources will affect everyone, the current situation is highly unfair from the Third World's perspective.

The United States, with only 5% of the global population, uses 30% of the world's natural resources. Other major industrialized countries also consume natural resources to a far greater extent than an equitable distribution would allow.

Only about 25% of the world's people live in developed countries, yet they use 80% of its non-fuel minerals. Many of these minerals originate in the less developed countries. Some experts say that the richer nations underpay the poorer ones through domination of international trade (think coffee growers).

Less developed countries need to sell their natural resources to developed nations in order to acquire capital necessary for their own economic development.

However, in the future, the economic growth of less developed countries may be severely impaired by a lack of the resources they are now selling. Also, some people say that rather than promoting the economic growth of undeveloped countries, the current trade relationship only serves to encourage growth in the developed nations.

Many people in less developed countries have advocated major changes in the world economy that would seek to distribute wealth more equally. This could be accomplished though debt relief, removal of trade barriers, and increasing the power of less developed countries in groups like the IMF.

Our inability to control our consuming has far-reaching consequences even from a practical point of view, much less a religious and justice framework.

*DATA*: (earthtrends.wri.org; research.amnh.org; [www.un.org](http://www.un.org); [www.worldwatch.org](http://www.worldwatch.org); library.thinkquest.org; [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org); [www.redefiningprogress.org](http://www.redefiningprogress.org); [www.myfootprint.org](http://www.myfootprint.org) (great quiz!); [www.learning-network.org/global/issues/index.html](http://www.learning-network.org/global/issues/index.html); [www.imf.org](http://www.imf.org) (especially www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2000/01/pdf/apptab.pdf); [www.photius.com/rankings/](http://www.photius.com/rankings/) (2003 GDP list); [www.bir.org/](http://www.bir.org/) (recycling); www.ci.keene.nh.us/publicworks/recycle/aroundtheworld.html)

* n% of the population consumes n% of the world’s resources at x rate (just to name a few)
	+ **Resources** — Resource Consumption: Paper and paperboard
	Units: metric tons 2002
		- North America: 98,308,744
			* Canada: 8,801,000
			* Greenland: 586
			* United States: 89,507,135
	+ **Energy** — Energy Consumption: Consumption per capita
	Units: Thousand metric tons oil equivalent 2002
		- North America: 7,928.5
		- US: **Energy** **Consumption - United States vs. World  *(1998)***
			* Oil US - 18.92 million barrels/day; WORLD - 73.6 million barrels/day (40%)
			* Natural Gas: US - 21.34 tcf/year; WORLD - 82.2 tcf/year (23%)
			* Coal: US - 1.04 billion tons/year; WORLD - 5.01 billion tons/year (23%)
	+ On average, one American consumes as much energy as:
		- - 2.1 Germans
		- - 12.1 Columbians
		- - 28.9 Indians
		- - 127 Haitians
		- - 395 Ethiopians
	+ **Agriculture and Food** — Consumption: Consumption per capita
	Units: Thousand metric tons oil equivalent 2002
		- Clear cutting, slash farming: Land erosion, floods, loss of life, housing, crops.
	+ Hazardous materials we cannot store use here are shipped to poorer communities (who have no money) and other countries (for money)
	+ Hazardous products we cannot by law sell here in the US are shipped to other countries for sale.
* According to the United Nations 1998 Human Development Report:
	+ With world population at 6 billion and rising, the richest 20% of humanity consumes 86% of all goods and services used, while the poorest fifth consumes just 1.3%. The wealthy consume 45% of all meat and fish, use 58% of all energy produced and own 87% of the vehicles.
	+ Meanwhile, 2.6 billion people lack basic sanitation, 1.3 billion have no access to clean water, 1.1 billion lack adequate housing and nearly 900 million have no access to modern health services of any kind.
	+ Americans and Europeans together spend $17 billion a year on pet food, $4 billion more than the estimated yearly additional amount needed to provide everyone in the world with basic health and nutrition.
	+ The burning of fossil fuels has almost quintupled since 1950. Consumption of fresh water has doubled since 1960, and wood consumption (for household and industry use) is 40% higher than 25 years ago.
	+ Commercial fishing is threatened worldwide by over-fishing: one-quarter of all fish stocks are listed as "depleted" or in danger of being depleted; another 44% are being fished "at the biological limit." This is driven by export demand for animal feed and oils, not by food needs, but it strains the primary protein source for nearly a billion people in 40 developing nations.
	+ Americans each consume 260 lbs. of meat per year on average, most of it hamburger; the average in Bangladesh is 6.5 lbs.
	+ Global spending on advertising, which stimulates consumption, multiplied nearly sevenfold from 1950 to 1990, when the total was $257 billion, or $48 for each person on the planet. It has nearly doubled again since then, to $435 billion, and is increasing faster than incomes or population, especially in developing nations.
* The Worldwatch 2004 report (which seems to use some UN statistics) states as many as 2.8 billion people on the planet (half of the people in the world) struggle to survive on less than $2 a day, and 1.2 billion who live in extreme poverty with less than $1 a day, and more than one billion people lack reasonable access to safe drinking water. The report counterbalances some so-called luxury consumer expenditures with spending on essentials that offers food for thought. For instance, the world spends $18 billion on makeup, compared with $12 billion for women's reproductive healthcare. Americans alone spend $17 billion on pet food, while worldwide elimination of hunger and malnutrition would cost about $19 billion. Some calculations show that the Earth has 1.9 hectares of biologically productive land per person to supply resources and absorb wastes. Yet the environmental demands of the world's economies are so large that the average person today uses 2.3 hectares of productive land.
* Producing a quarter-pound of hamburger requires 100 gallons of water, 1.2 lbs. of feed grain and energy equal to a cup of gasoline, causing the loss of 1.25 lbs. of topsoil and producing greenhouse gas emissions equal to a 6-mile drive in a typical U.S. automobile.
* One in four people in the developing countries lack adequate housing (Don’t know US).
* n% of consumed resources are thrown away ( In 1998 the EPA estimated that 84.1% of solid waste was paper; 27.7% was yard waste; 22.4% was plastic; 22.1% was food waste; 16.8% was metals; 15.5% was rubber/leather/textiles; 12.5% was glass; 11.9% was wood. This does not include water waste)
* We spend $n and use land, water to do so.
* n% of the water in the world is potable; n% of that is polluted.
* n% of most countries resources remain in those countries
* Increased consumption is not producing a parallel increase in happiness. The National Opinion Research Center of the University of Chicago has found that the proportion of Americans who say they are "very happy" has remained at about one-third since 1957, although personal consumption has more than doubled. (Alan Durning, *How Much is Enough? The Consumer Society and the Fate of the Earth*)

What does Church Teaching tell us about this?

*The Catechism of the Catholic Church:*

Its teaching about creation, says much about the relations that ought to characterize man and the rest of creation. In no. 340, it states, "Creatures exist only in dependence on each other, to complete each other, in the service of each other." Moreover, "There is a solidarity among all creatures...." (no. 344, emphasis in original). And what is our role in this? We were created "to offer all creation back to" God (no. 358) and "to share in [God's] providence toward other creatures; hence [our] responsibility for the world God has entrusted to" us (no. 373). To sum up the argument: Although the things of earth will not last forever, they are nonetheless to be offered to God the Father through Jesus Christ, as part of the restoration of all things in him. Only in this way can the wounds of original sin, which affected even inanimate things, be healed. Moreover, the earth and even all the cosmos is waiting for the cooperation of the "sons of God" with this work of restoration and healing, for man was created "to offer all creation back to" his Creator.

*Renewing The Earth* (USCCB 1991 - [www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.htm](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/bishopsstatement.htm)) was written to:

1. to highlight the ethical dimensions of the environmental crisis;
2. to link questions of ecology and poverty, environment and development;
3. to stand with working men and women and poor and disadvantaged persons, whose lives are often impacted by ecological abuse and tradeoffs between environment and development;
4. to promote a vision of a just and sustainable world community;
5. to invite the Catholic community and men and women of good will to reflect more deeply on the religious dimensions of this topic; and
6. to begin a broader conversation on the potential contribution of the Church to environmental questions.

*A Catholic Framework for Economic Life (USCCB 1996)*

1. The economy exists for the person, not the person for the economy.
2. All economic life should be shaped by moral principles. Economic choices and institutions must be judged by how they protect or undermine the life and dignity of the human person, support the family, and serve the common good.
3. A fundamental moral measure of any economy is how the poor and vulnerable are faring.
4. All people have a right to life and to secure the basic necessities of life (e.g., food, clothing, shelter, education, health care, safe environment, economic security).
5. All people have the right to economic initiative, to productive work, to just wages and benefits, to decent working conditions as well as to organize and join unions or other associations.
6. All people, to the extent they are able, have a corresponding duty to work, a responsibility to provide for the needs of their families, and an obligation to contribute to the broader society.
7. In economic life, free markets have both clear advantages and limits; government has essential responsibilities and limitations; voluntary groups have irreplaceable roles, but cannot substitute for the proper working of the market and the just policies of the state.
8. Society has a moral obligation, including governmental action where necessary, to assure opportunity, meet basic human needs, and pursue justice in economic life.
9. Workers, owners, managers, stockholders and consumers are moral agents in economic life. By our choices, initiative, creativity and investment, we enhance or diminish economic opportunity, community life, and social justice.
10. The global economy has moral dimensions and human consequences. Decisions on investment, trade, aid and development should protect human life and promote human rights, especially for those most in need wherever they might live on this globe.

INJUSTICE = SUFFERING

Economic, agricultural, resource, biological & energy injustice.

Our current use of the planet’s resources and human populations cannot be sustained

By caring for ourselves we care for creation and vice versa.

Pick through T2 garbage.

City of Keene, NH

A Look Around the World

We hear a lot about the success of recycling in other parts of the world. How does the United States measure up? If it were only so simple to answer that question. The fact is that the United States is unlike every other country in that we consume and discard so much more material than any other industrialized country that comparison is almost impossible.

One area that can be compared and is illustrated in the graphs is the generation rate of municipal waste in pounds per capita per day. The average person in this country produces a little over 4 pounds of discards per day, every day. Of that 4 pounds, approximately 1 pound of material is recycled. Compare that to Spain which averages a little over 2 pounds of discards per person, per day, of which a little under 1/2 pound is recycled. Why the difference? Packaging can account for a large percentage of the difference in discards, but the reality is that the average Spaniard does not consume as much as their United States counterparts.





The case studies to watch are those countries that are beginning to industrialize such as China and several Latin American countries. As their affluence grows so will their discards. Previously the majority of discards in these countries was organic which was consumed by animals or decomposed. Formal waste management programs will need to accompany the economic growth so as to protect human and environmental health and safety.

Also interesting will be the recycling infrastructure of these countries which has been like an underground economy. Many thousands of people work in open dumps looking for salvageable material. Almost nothing goes to waste. A cassette tape for example will be disassembled with the plastic case going to one vendor, the metal screws that held the tape to another vendor, the rubber rollers to another vendor, the tape itself......... The work conditions are horrid. The workers earn enough to keep food on the table, but not much else. There is a similar underground recycling network in the United States, but the degree of salvage is far less. Where the worker in China can earn a few pennies a day by salvaging a relatively low value material to buy rice, only high value material such as aluminum, some types of paper or redemption containers are salvaged by the underground network in the United States.

The United States is the king of consumption, but we are getting better at realizing that our discards are resources with value.

Using secondary materials involves substantial energy savings when compared with primary production.

|  |  |
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| Recycled **Steel** | : **74%** energy saved compared to primary production |
| Recycled **Aluminium** | : **95%** energy saved compared to primary production |
| Recycled **Copper** | : **85%** energy saved compared to primary production |
| Recycled **Lead** | : **65%** energy saved compared to primary production |
| Recycled **Paper** | : **64%** energy saved compared to primary production |
| Recycled **Plastics** | : **80%** energy saved compared to primary production |

Secondary production is less polluting than primary production.

Producing from recycled paper means **35% less water pollution** and **74% less air pollution**.
Producing from recycled steel means **86% less air pollution**.

LOANS

Country Name:

Government:

Please state need:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Food | $ |
| Shelter | $ |
| Infrastructure | $ |
| Development | $ |
| Total Amount | $ |

Be aware that amounts and repayments will be made as a percentage of GDP versus existing debt.