

Lesson Plan

Learning about Solidarity: Research and Reflection With the Catholic Social Teaching Documents

INTRODUCTION

Two basic fundamental themes permeate the Catholic Social Teaching Documents: human dignity and human sociality. The dignity of each person stems from being made in the image of God. Our social nature stems from being made in the image of our God who is the Trinity. This means that, “Human dignity can be realized and protected only in community” (Economic Justice for All, #28). We are created to be in *solidarity* with one another, wherein “love implies concern for all” (Economic Justice for All, #365). This requires overcoming today’s individualistic mentality and other barriers that prevent us from being one human family. Solidarity helps us see one another as persons, and not just as instruments to be disregarded or exploited.

TIME:

- Plan 1: Provide several class periods for students to create their presentations and schedule several days for students to present them.
- Plan 2: Deliver this assignment at the beginning of the course and provide several class periods for work time. Schedule one student per day at the beginning of class to present their video and reflection.

OBJECTIVES:

- Students will learn about Solidarity, a key Catholic Social Teaching theme
- Students will study and become an expert on a specific Catholic Social Teaching Document
- Students will identify how the document they are studying promotes solidarity by referencing key quotes
- Students will demonstrate their understanding in a class presentation with a 30-second video

MATERIALS:

- A teacher copy of the *Annotated Bibliography of Catholic Social Teaching and Prejudice Reduction*
- Student access to the internet for student research
- Access to a video-making tool, such as the Animoto website at <http://animoto.com/>
- One per student copy of the assignment *Learning About Solidarity: Research and Reflection with the Catholic Social Teaching Documents*
- An incentive for each student in the class: enough small prizes (wrapped candy) for all students to receive one or provide extra-credit for each student

PREPERATION:

- Create a simulation in which the students create and experience an event of Solidarity.
 1. Before class begins, select 2 students who are approximately the same strength to help you with this simulation. Explain to the students that when asked, they should volunteer and then arm-wrestle making it look like it is a tie.
 2. During class divide the students into 2 teams: blue-eyed and brown eyed.
 3. Ask for two volunteers and choose the two preselected students.
 4. Explain that they will represent each team in a one minute arm-wrestling contest. Each time a student wins, they win one prize to distribute or 5 extra-credit points to distribute to their team.
 5. Ask a student to time the contest for a minute.
 6. Conduct the contest for a minute, with neither student winning. For drama, repeat.
 7. Ask the class, “Can you think of anyway they both could have won for your teams?” Wait until it is suggested that they take turns winning. Point out that this event was set up as a competition

which divided our class. Now let's redefine the activity as a cooperate event where our competitors in now act in solidarity with each other.

8. Have the volunteers take turns winning and distribute the prizes.
- Provide each student with a copy of the excerpt from *The Catechism of the Catholic Church* - "Social Justice: Respect for the Human Person, Equality and Differences, Human Solidarity" (CCC nos. 1928-1948)
 - Discussion questions for small groups to report back to the class
 - Summarize in your own words the CST theme of Solidarity
 - Summarize the various ways the simulation activity illustrated the CST theme of Solidarity
 - Identify 5 biblical stories which teach the value of Solidarity
 - Identify 5 historical events in which people set aside differences and crossed social, economic, or political barriers to be in Solidarity and advance human dignity and human rights
 - Referring to the list of CST documents in the "Annotated Bibliography of Catholic Social Teaching and Prejudice Reduction" handout, match each student with one of the documents or have each student select a document they are interested in studying.
 - Distribute and explain the assignment handout "Solidarity: Research and Reflection with the Catholic Social Teaching Documents."
 - Provide time for students to research their document and construct their video presentation.
 - Schedule student presentations.