

THE IMMACULATA

# LIFE, PEACE & JUSTICE MINISTRIES

“Love One Another”

## Catholic Social Teaching: Rights and Responsibilities



*“It is not enough to talk about the teachings of Jesus and to know Catholic social teaching. We must put them into practice. The seven themes of Catholic social teaching provide much needed guidance for individuals, communities, institutions, and governments. We cannot just ‘talk the talk’, we need to ‘walk the walk.’ This social mission of the Church belongs to all of us. It is an essential part of what it is to be a believer.”* -United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, “In the Footsteps of Jesus” 2004

God’s message asks us to be active, not passive or complacent, in defending the rights of all His people. We are created in God’s image. As such, all people have the right to life. People also have the right to those things that preserve their dignity, or quality of life: food, shelter, health care, education, and meaningful employment. We must respect the rights of others and care for others according to God’s commandments and example. The Catechism of the Catholic Church states, “The equality of man rests on the dignity of all persons and their rights and responsibilities.”

The prophet Isaiah decried ancient Israel’s unfaithfulness to the covenant with God in these words: “Woe to those who enact unjust statutes and who write oppressive decrees, depriving the needy of judgement and robbing my people’s poor of their rights.” (Isaiah 10: 1-2) This message is as relevant to us today as it was in ancient Israel’s time. Pope John Paul II reminds us, “We are all really responsible for all. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace.”

Let us ask ourselves:

1. Am I serious about my responsibilities to ensure the rights of persons in need are realized?
2. What can I do to ensure that all citizens have access to life’s basic necessities of food, clothing, housing, and medical care?
3. How can I contribute to a society where all persons have access to good education and employment opportunities?

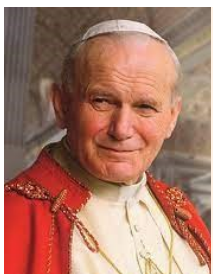


Image courtesy of St John Paul II National Shrine

### Wisdom from Pope John Paul II

“Christians have often denied the Gospel... they have violated the rights of ethnic groups and peoples and shown contempt for their cultures and religious traditions: be patient and merciful towards us, and grant us your forgiveness”

-Prayer V of the Universal Prayer 2005



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## WATCH



**Do we treat every person we meet as God in disguise?** This short Video on

**Rights and Responsibilities** teaches the importance of our advocacy for the rights of all humankind. We cannot overlook

[Watch now...](#)

## REFLECT



**“What we are called to respect** is each person’s life, physical integrity, dignity

and rights deriving from that dignity, reputation, property, ethnic and cultural identity, ideas and political choices. ”

[Reflect now...](#)

## READ



In this timely article by Claire Giangrave, she writes about the **struggle for the**

**rights of Christian worship** under the Taliban. Learn about the Afghans’ appeal to Pope Francis for assistance.

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