

THE IMMACULATA

# LIFE, PEACE & JUSTICE MINISTRIES

“Love One Another”

## Catholic Social Teaching: Option for the Poor and Vulnerable



*“When the Church talks of the preferential option for the poor, it means that we need always to keep in mind how any decision we make might impact the poor. But it also means we need to put the poor at the center of our thinking.”* -Pope Francis; “Let Us Dream: The Path to a Better Future”.

Until we personally feel and truly comprehend the pain and suffering of the poor and vulnerable in our community, we cannot carry out Christ’s admonition: “Just as you did to the

least of these...” (Matt 25: 31-46) The morality of society is judged by how well our most vulnerable members are faring. The gospel calls us to radical and self-giving love—to meet the needs of the poor and to oppose the structures that perpetuate poverty and abuse those in need. True worship is to work for justice and care for the poor and oppressed. Part of caring for the poor of the world is to acknowledge that “the Earth belongs to everyone, not to the rich.” Pope Paul VI, “On the Development of Peoples,” 1967.

Fr. Gregory Boyle, in “Tattoos on the Heart: The Power of Boundless Compassion” writes about a circle of compassion with God. No one is standing outside of that circle. We are “moving ourselves closer to the margins so that the margins themselves will be erased. We stand there with those whose dignity has been denied. We locate ourselves with the poor and the powerless and the voiceless.” Fr. Boyle’s work with male and female gang members in Los Angeles gives us examples of how we can find ways to reach out and discover the humanity of all God’s people in our local community: immigrants, homeless, elderly, unemployed, indigenous.

Let us ask ourselves:

1. Am I disproportionately concerned for my own good at the expense of others?
2. How can I engage in service and advocacy work that protects the dignity of poor and vulnerable populations?
3. What can I do to protect the vulnerable and empower those who are poor and powerless?



Image Courtesy of Turelio

### Wisdom from Pope Francis

“Whoever experiences Divine Mercy is impelled to be an architect of mercy among the least and the poor... let us receive mercy and let us give mercy.”

-Communal Reconciliation Service - March 2014



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### WATCH



When we encounter the poor, do we come with humility, not

superiority? This short video on **Option for the Poor and the Vulnerable** reminds us to be advocates, not saviors.

[Watch now...](#)

### ACT



Would you like to learn ways you can help the poor become

successful, independent members of society? Your life skills can help others!

[Act now...](#)

### READ



This recent article from America Magazine reminds us that the **poor are**

**always with us!** It recounts the Haitian earthquakes of 2010 and again in 2021.

[Read now...](#)