

CELEBRATING YOUNG PEOPLE AWARDS

Powered by Million Minutes

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YOUTH GROUP & SCHOOL ACTIVITIES

The Celebrating Young People Awards honour the achievements of those truly remarkable young people who make our communities and our world a better place.

The Celebrating Young People Awards celebrate the principles of Catholic social teaching. The principles provide some guidance on how to approach situations in the world and how to live our lives. The awards will celebrate young people across England and Wales who are putting these principles into practice. The awards are run by Million Minutes, in partnership with St Mary's University, Twickenham.

This resource sheet provides you with a 90 minute youth work session to be used in youth groups or informally in school or college. It is designed to open up the six guiding principles from Catholic social teaching at the heart of the Celebrating Young People Awards. Each principle is opened up in a 10 minute activity. As such, it is fast-paced. At the end of the session, all are invited to reflect on where they see these principles lived out, who they might nominate and also to consider what positive action the group can take.

Celebrating Young People Awards

The Pope Francis Award

The St Josephine Bakhita Award: Celebrating human dignity

The Dorothy Day Award: Fostering community and participation

The Jimmy Mizen Award: Promoting solidarity and peace

The Cardinal Hume Award: Living out the option for the poor

The Joseph Cardijn Award: Protecting the dignity of workers

The Barbara Ward Award: Caring for the environment

The CYMFed Award: Inspiring youth leader

See millionminutes.org/awards for full details



It is not enough to say we are Christians. We must live the faith, not only with our words, but with our actions.

*Pope Francis,
Twitter, January 2014*

In partnership with



St Mary's
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We must never forget how many Christians are giving their lives in love... They are dedicated in many other ways to showing an immense love for humanity inspired by the God who became man. I am grateful for the beautiful example given to me by so many Christians who joyfully sacrifice their lives and their time. This witness comforts and sustains me in my own effort to overcome selfishness and to give more fully of myself.

Pope Francis,
Joy of the Gospel, 76



EXPLORING CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

Explain that today you're going to be looking at something which is often called the best kept secret of the Catholic Church. There's a set of guidelines about how we should treat one another and the world, which help us to live our lives to the full, and ensure others do, too. We're going to look at six guidelines in turn.

The dignity and equality of each human person: Every human being is lovingly and beautifully made in God's image and likeness. The other principles flow from this.

The call to participation and community: Human beings exist in relation to one another. All of us are called to participate, to join in, to work for the common good of all.

A preferential option for the poor: Caring for those living in poverty is a fundamental duty of us all. The voice of people living in poverty needs to

be heard. We must enable those living in poverty to play a full, active role in society.

The dignity and rights of workers: The right to work, to have a job, to earn money and so support your family are all connected to the dignity of each individual. They deserve a fair wage and proper working conditions.

Solidarity among peoples and the promotion of peace: We seek the good of one another, aware of our dependence on one another. Peace flows from this. We are called to live honestly with one another, working together in love for the good of all. This is what will lead to true peace.

Care for the earth: God created the earth. Often, the way we treat creation leads to the harm both of it, and of those living on it. We need to treat the earth with respect.

DIGNITY AND EQUALITY OF EACH HUMAN PERSON

Stick a post it note or large label on everyone's back and give everyone a pen.

- Everyone encouraged to walk around and write one positive thing on the person's back about them. Make sure everyone understands that it's about affirmation.
- Once people have done this, before they are allowed to look at what's on their backs, bring the group together in a circle for the opening prayer.

For the prayer

You need a candle and a piece of mirror card for each person in the group (A6/postcard size is fine) and some permanent markers

- Begin with the sign of the cross
- Invite someone to read Genesis 1:26-31

Every human being is the object of God's infinite tenderness, and he himself is present in their lives... every person is immensely holy and deserves our love.
Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel, 274

Group Discussion

If you don't have time to use all six activities you may still want to talk through each of the six principles of Catholic social teaching (they are included on one of the PowerPoint presentations at millionminutes.org/resources). Then answer the following questions:

1. What young people do you know who live out these principles in their lives - in small ways or big? Sometimes it might be an invisible project, or it could just be someone quietly doing amazing things. Encourage the group to nominate the young people you discuss.

2. What actions can you think of as ways to ensure that each principle is lived out in the world, both locally and globally? Challenge the group to identify actions that are real and practical, and will help make a change.

- This is the very heart of what we call Catholic social teaching – how our faith challenges us to treat one another and the world. We believe that we are made in God’s image and likeness. In a special way, we are part of God’s family, lovingly made by God. As part of God’s family, every other person – whether male or female, Catholic or not, from the UK or around the world, even if we’ve never met them – they are our sister or brother. As part of the global family, we want to support and love each person. Simply by being born, everyone deserves our respect, even if we don’t always think the same way or agree on things. All of us are equal before God. Lovingly and specially created by God.
- Invite people to look in their piece of mirror card, maybe bending it to see themselves properly, and realise how they are loved by God, created by God, full of gifts and unique talents, and yet equally special before God.
- Invite people to take the sticker from their back and to read the positive things others see in them, and to stick this onto their piece of mirror card.
- Ask people to sign their name across the piece of mirror card, as a sign of them acknowledging who they are, their unique worth, their specialness before God, and to place it around a lit candle. As they do so, remind them that we all make up the Body of Christ. Our community, locally and globally, requires all of us to play our unique part to enable all people to have the best lives they can.
- Pray together the Glory be, giving thanks to God for our own gifts and talents, and those of all in our group.

CALL TO COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

I ask you to be builders of the world, to work for a better world. Dear young people, please, don't be observers of life, but get involved.

Pope Francis, World Youth Day Prayer Vigil, 2013

- Get the group to stand in a circle and have a ball of wool. The group throws the ball across the circle to one another, keeping hold of the wool so that a web begins to emerge.
- Once everyone is holding some wool (some may have held it twice), take hold of the ball yourself.
- Pull on parts of the wool and see how people react.
- Explain that in a similar way that everyone is holding the wool and connected, in the world we're all connected. Our actions have consequences on other people. The decisions we make.
- Cut the string in a couple of places. Quickly, we can become disconnected from others close by. We need one another. We're all connected. Ask people to name some communities which they belong to (eg family, school, parish, neighbourhood, global, sports teams, music groups...).
- Pope Francis said at World Youth Day in Brazil, “Dear young people, please don’t be observers of life, but get involved. Jesus did not remain an observer, but he immersed himself. Don’t be observers, but immerse yourself in the reality of life, as Jesus did”.
- Who do we know who lives this out in their lives? How can we live this in our own lives?

PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

Ask for 10 volunteers to stand in a line. You will need 10 equal

This is why I want a Church which is poor and for the poor. They have much to teach us... We are called to find Christ in them, to lend our voice to their causes, but also to be their friends, to listen to them, to speak for them

Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel 198

sized chocolate bars (try to get Fairtrade).

- This line represents the entire population of the UK.
- These 10 chocolate bars represent all of the wealth of the UK.
- Ask the group how the wealth should be divided up amongst the group and pass out the chocolate (don't eat it!).
- Then ask how they think it is divided up and redistribute the chocolate.
- Then show them how it is actually divided
 - 4 people get one bar to share
 - 2 people get one bar to share
 - 2 people get 2 bars to share (or one each!)
 - 1 person gets 2 bars
 - 1 person gets 4 bars
- Ask people if they think it's fair.
- The richest 20% have 60% of the UK's wealth; and actually, the richest 1% have most of it.
- In actual fact, the poorest 20% (2 of the 4 people) only actually have one tiny part of that chocolate bar.
- There is real poverty all around us.
- Jesus says in the Parable of the Sheep and Goats that whenever we help someone who is hungry, thirsty, needs clothing, needs shelter, is ill – we're not just helping to transform that person's life, we're also helping him.
- Do we know anyone we can nominate for the Cardinal Hume Award?



THE DIGNITY AND RIGHTS OF WORKERS

There is no worse material poverty... than the poverty which prevents people from earning their bread and deprives them of the dignity of work

Pope Francis, to a conference on unemployment, May 2013

Work is fundamental to the dignity of a person. Work, to use an image, 'anoints' us with dignity, fills us with dignity, makes us similar to God, who has worked and still works, who always acts...

Pope Francis, Feast of St Joseph the Worker and World Labour Day, 1 May 2013

Briefly, use the following questions to consider why Pope Francis (and the Church) says that work is 'fundamental to the dignity of a person':

- What does work enable us to do?
- Why is work important?
- What will people lack if they don't have work?

Encourage the young people not only to think about money. For example, how does work help give someone a sense of purpose, help them to use their gifts and talents, contribute to society, take care of their family?

When work becomes only about the pursuit for money, then somewhere in the process people will suffer.

- Imagine your group was creating your own company and will start employing workers tomorrow. Agree a 'charter for workers' setting out the principles you would want your company to work by.

SOLIDARITY AMONG PEOPLES AND THE PROMOTION OF PEACE

- Have a range of newspapers and magazines, local and national. Get people to go through them, ripping out examples of conflict, war, violence, and if possible, peace that they find.
- Encourage people to share what they find, what struck them, how surprised them, how many examples of peace building they found.
- Have the following quotations printed out large. What appeals about the statements? What challenges? Are they right?
 - “Peace is not just the absence of war. It involves mutual respect and confidence between peoples and nations. It involves collaboration and binding agreements. Like a cathedral, peace must be constructed patiently and with unshakable faith.” St John Paul II, Homily in Coventry, 1982
 - “If you want peace, work for justice.” Pope Paul VI 1972
 - “Until exclusion and inequality in society and between peoples are reversed, it will be impossible to eliminate violence.” Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel
 - Solidarity is about being alongside others. As we saw earlier, if we’re all created by God, we’re linked to all other people. It has to affect the way we treat one another. Peace starts with us. The way we interact with one another, the way we treat one another.

In our world... different forms of war and conflict are re-emerging, yet we Christians remain steadfast in our intention to respect others, to heal wounds, to build bridges, to strengthen relationships and to “bear one another’s burdens” (Gal 6:2).
Pope Francis, Joy of the Gospel, 67

Pope Francis has encouraged us “To pray for someone with whom I am irritated is a beautiful step forward in love”. Tonight, hold someone who irritates you in prayer.

CARE OF CREATION

Play “Agree/Disagree/Not sure” using the following statements. Get people to go to a corner of the room, or stand on a continuum depending on their answer to the statements (NB The final two quotations are from Pope Francis). Pull out some of their responses.

- Climate change is real.
- People going hungry every day is more important than recycling.
- All Christians should be vegetarians.
- The book of Genesis tells us that God created man and woman entrusting them with the task of filling the earth and subduing it, which does not mean exploiting it, but nurturing and protecting it, caring for it through their work.
- Creation is a wonderful gift.

The book of Genesis tells us that God created man and woman entrusting them with the task of filling the earth and subduing it, which does not mean exploiting it, but nurturing and protecting it.
Pope Francis, Feast of St Joseph the Worker, 2013

You may want to finish with the quotations from the Bishops of England and Wales, who said in The Call of Creation,

“Individual actions may seem insignificant but together the small steps of many people can have an astonishing impact.”

We can often feel that what we do, whether around creation, or social justice in general, won’t make an impact, but together, we can make a huge difference.

CONCLUSION

- Explain that we have quickly looked at six areas of Church teaching – ways of looking at the world, at others, at how we treat creation:
 - The dignity and equality of each human person
 - The call to community and participation
 - The preferential option for the poor
 - The dignity and rights of workers
 - Solidarity among peoples and the call for peace
 - Care of creation
- Invite people to think about the principle/guideline:
 - Who do we know that lives out this principle? Who can we nominate for an Award?
 - Around this guideline, what are the issues in your local area/parish?
 - What is the principle saying about that issue?
 - What could you do as an individual or group to make a difference to people affected?
- Give people time to discuss, then share back.
- Explain that this is only a beginning. We, too, can put these principles into action. What can we do?
- To finish, bring people back together around the candle from the start of the session. Share with the group these words from Pope Francis at World Youth Day in Brazil, 2013:

“Dear young people, please, don’t be observers of life, but get involved. Jesus did not remain an observer, but he immersed himself. Don’t be observers, but immerse yourself in the reality of life, as Jesus did.

In front of us are some of the gifts and talents we share. When we unite together, like we did with the ball of string, we can do something incredible. We’re called to be involved, in life, with people close by and far away, with those we know and strangers, all sisters and brothers in Christ.

As we go from here, let’s hold before God some of the people who may have come to mind as we’ve thought about people who may be suffering in our community, our country, our world. Think of one or two names, images, even people we may not know, as we hold them in our hearts.

And let’s pray together the prayer which unites us all, praying to our common Father who makes us sisters and brothers of each other.”

- Our Father...

GET INVOLVED

Inspired? Want to get involved and make a change? There’s lots more information online, including resources, presentations and ideas of how to support other young people at millionminutes.org

Million Minutes powers siLENT - a sponsored silence in Lent to help give a voice to young people who are not heard or overlooked in society. You could stay silent: millionminutes.org/silent



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