

RESPONSE TO THE CRY OF THE POOR

Description

The Response to the Cry of the Poor is a call to promote eco-justice, aware that we are called to defend human life from conception to death, and all forms of life on Earth. It refers to the persons who are poor and others who suffer or are disadvantaged because their human rights and /or dignity are not respected. Their situation is often exacerbated by the impacts of pollution and the deterioration of the environment.



Scripture

Whoever oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God. Proverbs 14:31

Whatever you did for the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me. Mt 25:40

You shall not oppress or afflict a resident alien...You shall not wrong any widow or orphan. If ever you wrong them and they cry out to me, I will surely listen to their cry.

Ex. 22:20-22

Open your mouth in behalf of the mute, and for the rights of the destitute; Open your mouth, judge justly, defend the needy and the poor! Proverbs 31: 8-9



Laudato Si'

Both everyday experience and scientific research show that the gravest effects of all attacks on the environment are suffered by the poorest.

LS #48

Generally speaking, there is little clear awareness of problems which especially affect the excluded people. Yet they are the majority of the planet's population, billions of people. LS #49

A true ecological approach...must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor. LS #49

When we fail to acknowledge as part of reality the worth of a poor person... ..it becomes difficult to hear the cry of nature itself. Everything is connected. LS #117



We need to strengthen the conviction that we are one single human family. There are no frontiers or barriers, political or social, behind which we can hide, still less is there room for the globalization of indifference. LS #52

In the present conditions of global society, where injustices abound and growing numbers of people are deprived of basic human rights and considered expendable, the principle of the common good immediately becomes, logically and inevitably a summons to solidarity and a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters. LS #158

Our Bishops

A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members are faring. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

"The Church's love for the poor . . . is a part of her constant tradition." This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor. . . "Those who are oppressed by poverty are the object of a preferential love on the part of the Church which, since her origin and in spite of the failings of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation."

Catechism of the Catholic Church

The primary purpose of this special commitment to the poor is to enable them to become active participants in the life of society. It is to enable all persons to share in and contribute to the common good.

Economic Justice for All

The needs of the poor take priority over the desires of the rich; the rights of workers over the maximization of profits; the preservation of the environment over uncontrolled industrial expansion; the production to meet social needs over production for military purposes.

Economic Justice for All

Reflection

As you reflect on where you live, what communities and people are most directly affected by pollution and climate change?

What are local environmental issues unique to your community that impact the health of your neighbors and your local ecosystem?

How do you feel called to defend human life from conception to death and all forms of life on Earth?



How are you already responding to the Cry of the Poor? What additional ideas do you have to promote a response to the Cry of the Poor in your community?

Prayer

God of solidarity, we pray that you help us to grow in our attention to the realities of the most vulnerable. We uplift the impacts of pollution on mothers and their unborn babies, BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, People of Color) communities that are statistically more likely to be located near environmental hazards, low-income communities that are often considered “the path of least resistance” for the placement of highways and factories, and the plants, animals, and ecosystems that cannot defend themselves against pollution and environmental degradation. May we build a capacity to take action as advocates in a way that defends the well-being of all people from conception to death, and of all forms of life on our planet. *Ignatian Solidarity Network*



Media

[CST 101 | Option for the Poor and Vulnerable - YouTube](#)

Human Dignity in Catholic Tradition

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NkaRfYYTiuY>



Actions

Acquaint yourself with Jubilee USA [Jubilee USA Network](#)

Join [Bread for the World](#); sign up for their email advocacy alerts.

Educate yourself on [Environmental Racism in St. Louis](#) (environmentalracismstl.com)

Volunteer at a food pantry, soup kitchen, homeless shelter, thrift store.

Donate unused/unwanted items to St. Vincent DePaul Society or similar agency.

