

## 'Preferential Option for the Poor' Support Document



'Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.'

Proverbs 31:9

### Catholic Social Teaching Series Overview

This resource is one of six presentations which have been created to support schools in developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) as outlined in the revised Religious Education Directory (RED), 'To Know You More Clearly'. The presentations are as follows:

1. Care of Creation
2. Preferential Option for the Poor
3. Solidarity and Peace
4. Community and Participation
5. Dignity of Workers
6. Human Dignity

These presentations have been designed/structured so that the various components can be delivered as a whole, or different elements can be incorporated into different lessons/assemblies with a CST focus.

A brief introduction to the history CST (including an excellent 'CST in Three Minutes' video from Trócaire (<https://www.trocaire.org/>)) is incorporated in the first presentation 'Preferential Option for the Poor' resource: sides 8 – 30.

If your children have no prior knowledge of the origins of Catholic Social Teaching and its various precepts, this video provides an excellent introduction.

This presentation introduces/revises the various precepts of CST and subsequently focuses on the theme of 'Preferential Option for the Poor'.

We hope that you and your pupils find this resource both engaging and informative as we celebrate the Church's 'best kept secret'!

## 1. Aims

Through using these materials, pupils will:

- Explore the various precepts of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) in action through the work of ACN (Focus: The Preferential Option for the Poor).
- Understand how CST is embedded in scripture and explore how this is evident in both the Old and New Testaments.
- Reflect on how the world would be a better place if everyone chose to love their neighbour as themselves.
- Develop an understanding of the work of ACN to support poor and vulnerable Christian communities around the world (Focus: Syria and Nigeria).
- Reflect on societal exclusion and consider how they could follow in the footsteps of Jesus through supporting the work of ACN.
- Be able to describe how the work of ACN in the service of others is an example of following 'The greatest commandment'.
- Engage with fundraising and prayer to support the work of ACN.

## 2. Catholic Self-Evaluation Document - Evidence

Through using this resource, school leaders will be able to provide evidence to support judgements in the following aspects of the Catholic Self-Evaluation Document (CSED):

### Catholic Life and Mission (CLM)

CLM 1.3 Moral Development

CLM 1.4 Catholic Social Teaching

CLM 1.5 Respect for Self and Others

CLM 3.5 Commitment to Catholic Social Teaching

CLM 3.7 The Catholic Curriculum

### Religious Education (RE)

RE1.1 Development of Knowledge, Understanding and Skills

RE 1.3 Religious Literacy

RE 2.6 Spiritual and Moral Development

RE 3.1 RED

RE 3.5 Curriculum Design

RE 3.7 Enrichment

### Collective Worship (CW)

CW1.4 Influence of Curriculum and School Life

CW 1.5 Impact

CW 2.1 Centrality

CW 2.4 Use of scripture

CW3.5 Leaders' Knowledge and Skill

### 3. 'To Know You More Clearly': The Religious Education Directory (RED)

The spiral structure of the curriculum enables a build-up, layering a critical dimension each year, deepening pupils' understanding of the story of salvation, developing a common language, and exploring the 'memory of the Church' and her teachings and how these have formed part of the history of ideas in the development of humanity.

The spiral pathway students follow from their first steps into Catholic education means that teachers can plan for progression, moving through basic questioning and notional understandings to ever deeper levels of engagement with Christianity's divine and human drama and its significance for humankind. (RED: 'To Know You More Clearly'; 2023)

Whilst these materials do not aim to cover the full progression and understanding required by the RED in its spiral curriculum, they do aim to supplement and enhance this learning.

#### Knowledge Lenses – End of Phase Expected Outcomes

The RED identifies six knowledge lenses which detail what should be known by the end of each age-phase. This resource can support teachers in helping to evidence expected outcomes in the **Hear, Believe, Celebrate** and **Live** knowledge lenses.

Go to pp33 – 34 of 'To Know You More Clearly' for further commentary on Catholic Social Teaching within the revised RED.

#### Ways of Knowing

The RED identifies three 'ways of knowing' in its Programme of Study that enable skills to be developed at an appropriate level. The development of these aspects allows each knowledge lens to be explored appropriately. The ways of knowing are Understand (U), Discern (D) and Respond (R).

End of phase Age-Related Expectations, that could be linked to this resource are listed below.

- Age 5 - 7

U1.6.2. Recognise that Catholics are a part of a global Christian family, and all Christians are sisters and brothers

U2.6.2. Describe an initiative Christians work on together locally and/or globally in the service of others

D2.6.1. Consider an answer, with relevant reasons, to the question 'Who is my neighbour?'

- Age 7 - 9

R.4.1.2. Reflecting on the how the virtues of faith, hope and love help them to be a good neighbour.

R.4.3.1. Reflecting on those that society excludes today and consider how they could show love for these people as Jesus did.

R.4.3.2. Considering how Jesus serves others and discuss how Christians can follow this example today. What could this mean for their lives and the lives of their local communities?

R.4.4.1. Reflecting on how the life and work of a person or organisation (historical or contemporary) lives out the works of mercy and/or the love for those oppressed by poverty and the inspiration they offer for their life.

- Age 9 - 11

R5.1.3. Discussing what loving our neighbour means for Christians today, for example, welcoming asylum seekers and refugees. Express a point of view and give reasons relating to the Church's teaching on the common good and love of neighbour.

R5.3.4. Reflecting on how the communities they are part of could be transformed if everyone chose to love their neighbour as themselves.

R6.1.1. Considering the ways in which their life and the life of their communities could be transformed by taking seriously the belief in the innate dignity and equality of all human beings.

R6.4.2. Considering how love of neighbour could transform their life and the lives of the communities they are part of, describing the actions they could take to begin this transformation.

U6.5.6. Describe how one charity studied witnesses its Christian faith through its work.

R6.5.3. Reflecting on how the work of charities can support people facing injustice or persecution.

#### 4. Presentation Overview/Notes

Slide 1	You could explain that this presentation is one of a set of six (1/6) and that the focus for this 'session' is the Preferential Option for the poor.
Slide 2	'Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.' (Proverbs 31:9) Q: How might this relate to the theme?
Slides 3 - 7	Introduce 'CST' as the Church's 'best kept secret'. Q: What might this mean?
Slides 8 - 9	Explain that you will be showing a short three-minute video from Trócaire (an Irish charity striving to overcome the challenges of poverty and injustice in the

	<p>developing world - <a href="https://www.trocaire.org/">https://www.trocaire.org/</a> which provides an insight into the history of Catholic Social Teaching and three of its 'precepts'.</p> <p>Explain that there are six questions that you would like the children to answer; they could work in pairs to do this. Can they also find another interesting fact? The questions could be shared on a flipchart/whiteboard for ongoing reference.</p> <p>Play the video, allowing children to record their answers and any other information they find interesting. If required, the video could be played again/paused as appropriate.</p>
Slides 10 - 30	<p>Explore the children's answers, focusing on any 'new' vocabulary as appropriate.</p> <p>What 'other' information did the children discover/record?</p>
Slides 31 - 32	<p>Explain that various Catholic organisations (such as Trócaire, CAFOD and Caritas) have different CST headings, but that they all refer to the same Catholic teachings. Introduce the six 'themes' that you will be exploring over the course of the year.</p>
Slides 33 - 34	<p>Introduce the theme for today's session – The Preferential Option for the Poor'.</p> <p>Q: What do you think preferential means?</p> <p>The 'preferential option' means allowing someone to have the first choice, giving someone the best that is available,</p>
Slide 35	<p>Further explore the term 'preferential' and introduce new vocabulary as appropriate (marginalised; vulnerable).</p>
Slides 36 - 37	<p>Introduce 'The Greatest Commandment' from Matthew's Gospel; explain that Jesus was being 'tested' by the Sadducees and Pharisees when he provided them with the answer to their question. This could be explored further if time allows.</p>
Slides 38 - 42	<p>Return to the 'CST in 3 Minutes' video; further explore the 'Option for the Poor'.</p> <p>Q: Do you remember what it said about this in the video?</p> <p>Q: Why do you think that the word 'preferential' might have been left out?</p> <p>Q: What do you think is meant by 'turns society on its head'?</p>
Slides 43 - 45	<p>Read the passage from Hebrews: 'Do not neglect to do good and to share what you have, for such sacrifices are pleasing to God.' (Hebrews 13:16).</p> <p>Q: How does this passage relate to the 'Preferential Option for the Poor'?</p> <p>Allow children the opportunity to discuss in pairs/groups.</p>
Slides 46 - 49	<p>Introduce Aid to the Church in Need (ACN) if pupils are not familiar with their work (<a href="https://acnuk.org/">https://acnuk.org/</a>).</p> <p>Having read through slide 46, ask the questions on slides 47 – 48; allow children time to discuss as appropriate.</p> <p>Q: How would you feel if you were in this situation?</p>

	<p><b>Q: What could you do to help people in this situation?</b></p> <p>Explain that Syria and Nigeria are just two of the countries that ACN works in to support poor/vulnerable communities.</p>
<b>Slides 50 - 54</b>	<p>Focus on Syria, particularly recent projects following the earthquake in February 2023 which devastated whole communities. <b>Slide 52</b> features a short video in which Xavier (an ACN worker) provides an insight into life directly after the earthquake. <b>Slides 53 and 54</b> outline various projects undertaken by ACN in the aftermath of the earthquake. Discuss children's thoughts on these projects and how they relate to the CST precept of the Preferential Option for the Poor (many of these families lost their homes/possessions in the earthquake).</p>
<b>Slides 55 - 59</b>	<p>Focus on Nigeria: <b>Slide 57</b> outlines how ACN supports refugees (this may need to be explored further) to grow their own crops, along with providing support in terms of their mental wellbeing. <b>Slide 58</b> focuses on how ACN provides children with the opportunity to practice/develop their faith despite the hardships that they face. <b>Slide 58</b> features a 'Thank You' message from the auxiliary bishop of Maiduguri.</p>
<b>Slides 60 - 61</b>	<p>Explain that ACN is a charitable organisation and that as such, they are dependent on contributions from individuals/organisations</p> <p>Could your class/school support the work of ACN through organising a fundraising event? This could be explored further/later.</p> <p>Reinforce the importance of remembering the people/communities that ACN supports in their prayers</p>
<b>Slides 62 - 69</b>	<p>In these slides, various scripture passages related to the 'Preferential Option for the Poor' are provided for the children to reflect on/discuss. You could choose to focus on one/two passages in particular, assign particular passages to different groups of children, or provide the children with the opportunity to choose (<b>Slide 69</b> can be adapted accordingly depending on how you choose to use this activity).</p>
<b>Slides 70 - 72</b>	<p>These slides serve as a possible 'plenary' session which provides the children with the opportunity to reflect on their learning/understanding at an appropriate level.</p> <p><b>Q: What have you learnt from this session?</b></p> <p><b>Q: What might you do differently (or extra) following this session?</b></p> <p><b>Q: Do you have any questions?</b></p>
<b>Slides 73 - 80</b>	<p>Prayer and Reflection: children could be asked to read various prayers depending on their age; provide an opportunity for spontaneous prayer as appropriate.</p>

	Remind children that their ongoing prayers for the people/communities supported by ACN are greatly appreciated/welcome.
Slides 81 - 82	Catholic Central video on CST; this could be shared with the children separately or following the 'CST in 3 minutes' video.
Slide 83	Glossary of Terms – definitions of key terms/vocabulary used during the session; this is not an exhaustive list and you may need to explore other vocabulary at an age-appropriate level.
Slide 84	Closing Slide.

## 5. Fundraising for ACN

ACN is always grateful for the funds raised for its projects. Please note that the projects mentioned in this presentation are an example of its work. Your funding may go to these or similar projects.

Thank you for all that you do to support the work of ACN, both in your fundraising and in your prayers which are equally important.

Please let us know how you have raised funds via

- Twitter (X): @acn\_uk
- Instagram: @aidtothechurchinneed\_uk