

**GRADE 10**  
**RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**  
**BOOK THREE:**  
**PROMOTING HUMAN**  
**DIGNITY**





**Grade 10**

**Religious Education**

**BOOK 3**

**PROMOTING HUMAN DIGNITY**

This book is the third in a series of three books  
which make up the Religious Education Programme for Grade 10

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### Prayer before Class

O Holy Spirit of light and truth,  
help me now as I begin this class  
to understand what I am taught,  
to remember what I learn,  
and to work hard to learn well.  
Amen.

### Prayer after Class

We thank you O God  
for all that we have learnt.  
Reward our teachers and bless our  
companions in class.  
Protect us and help us to be happy  
and kind, now and throughout our  
lives. Amen.

Dear student:

Your exercise book is a companion to this book. By writing down your thoughts, sharing them with your teacher and with others, you will learn far more about yourself and this topic, than by reading this book by itself.

May you discover more and more, the great dignity that has been given to every person. May you be filled with the energy of the Spirit to promote human dignity in your family, village and in all areas of P.N.G. life.

# Topic One

## Made in the Image of God

### Caroline's story:

*My parents died when I was small. I think I was about 5 years old. Afterwards, I got very sick. No-one looked after me and I found my way to the hospital by following the adults. I had to walk a long way. I wore a torn skirt and I had one blouse and nothing else.*

*At the hospital somebody claimed me. The family that took me had 3 small children, smaller than me. I was given one baby to look after. I had to wash and clean the baby and I was belted if the nappies were not washed. As well I had to get up early in the morning to cook for the family. If the food is not enough, I do not eat. I have to go and work in the garden on an empty stomach, and without clothing. The family do not supply me with any clothes at all. I am belted often and cut with a knife if all my jobs are not done.*

*When I was about 10 or 11 I decided to run away. I went to another family but soon the previous family found me. They dragged me back on the ground and kicked and belted me. They took me to the house and tied me with a rope. Then the children mocked me. They shaved my hair. My whole body was swollen from head to toe.*

*I am still imprisoned by this family. These days I walk big distances uphill to the mine to sell kaukau, but the money is used by the father for gambling.*

*I have never been to school because of no school fees. On big feasts, the family goes to celebrate, but I stay home to look after the pigs.*

*I have no friends and I am very lonely. Other people in the village know my sufferings, but they don't help me.*

Read Caroline's story again to yourself, and then complete these sentences:

In this story, I felt sorry for ..... because .....

One part of the story that I felt that was not fair was .....

For sure there are some good people in Caroline's village. Why do you think no-one helps her? .....

Write a paragraph about someone you know who is suffering because the family do not treat him or her properly.

Our last book was called '**Made in the Image of God.**' It is because we are made by God, and have God's life in us, and because Jesus died for us, to show us how important we are, that human beings have a special value and respect owed to them. This respect is often called the *dignity of a person*.

The title of this book is '**Promoting Human Dignity.**' Another name for it could be 'Working for Justice'. It is not just or fair or right when people are deprived of the dignity that belongs to them as children of God.

When we try to do something about situations that are unfair, then we are both working for justice and promoting human dignity.

Concern about others is not just something extra like the margin on our page. It is like the very writing on a page itself, because it is **God** who asks us to be just and to treat others justly.



### Micah 6:8

This is what the Lord asks of you: to do justice, to show constant love, and to walk humbly with your God.

Christianity without 'action', without 'mission', without *doing* justice, is like aigir without greens. It is missing the very ingredient that makes it what it is.

By 'mission' we mean working to bring about God's kingdom, where all human beings are respected, even 'longlons' and the very poor and disabled. This is a mission to which every Christian is called.

#### The purpose of this unit.

The purpose of this unit is to help us see how the love and respect we must have for human dignity applies in our personal life, and how it also applies in all other relationships. This unit also aims to nurture in you, a deep sense of what it means to be truly human, what it means to be an ethical person, a person who possesses a faith that *does* justice.



Look up the word 'nurture' in the dictionary. What does it mean? What do you think it means to describe a person as someone who *'does'* justice?

If you nurtured a plant, what do you think you would do to it? If you nurtured a young child, what would you do?

How can we nurture in ourselves, the qualities that lead us to be ethical people, people who *have faith* and who *do justice*?

Firstly, perhaps we have to know what it means to be an ethical person. An ethical person has three qualities.

These qualities are

- **autonomy**
- **connectedness**
- **transcendence**

These words may be new to you. They contain very important ideas.

To be an **autonomous** person means that you have a sense of what is right or appropriate in a situation. It means that you are able to act freely in order to do what is good. In other words, you are not influenced by what others will think. An autonomous person finds inside their own heart, the strength to do what is right, and is able to stand away from the crowd. This ability comes not from being a loner, but from being a person involved in loving relationships with others.

The ethical person, because they are involved in good relationships with others, also expresses their autonomy in **connectedness**, with their culture, with the world, with family past and present.

Finally, the truly ethical person is **transcendent**. This means they want to be more, to do more than just the minimum. Examples of transcendent people are teachers who come early to school, or stay late, parents who adopt a disabled child, students who are willing to be responsible at work parade and not just work when they are being watched.



The ethical person is a person who strives for excellence as a **human being**, rather than just academic excellence. To strive for excellence as a human being, means taking on the burden of others. It means caring for them and being able to put yourself in their place. It means being willing to be part of something larger than your own survival and life. It really means to be somebody who is unselfish and who acts like Jesus.

How can students show they are willing to be part of something larger than their own survival?

e.g. show that they are really willing to be part of the school? .....

How do students show that they are only thinking of themselves, and not the good of the school? Give an example.

**To think about:** There can be no union with God without love, compassion, and respect for the dignity of others. When we respect the dignity of others, then we have a faith that *does justice*. This is the only genuine faith.

The most precious thing in the world is a human being. The kind of person that we have been talking about, the kind of person that we surely want to be, only comes as a result of an understanding and appreciation of what it means to be human.



There are other precious things which must also be valued, protected and developed. Some of these are our music and dancing, our beautiful country, the animals and plants, the rivers and seas. But completely above the value of all these in the eyes of God, is every human life.

The reason for this value is the fact that every human being is made in the image and likeness of God. Each human being is its own work of art, yet each is in God's image, and designed for immortality after bodily death. We can change many things about human beings, but the one thing we can never change or reverse is that we are created by God and destined for eternal life.

We are reminded many times of this truth each time we celebrate the Eucharist. One reminder is when the celebrant pours a drop of water into the wine, and says this prayer:

*'By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity'.*

So not only are we created in the image of God but we are given a share in the very divinity of God. This is almost too much for us to understand. It is something we can think about for our whole life. In the meantime though, we can easily understand that every human being has a dignity that is beyond measure. Every member of the human race should be treated with the respect which his or her dignity demands.

These truths form the basis of the Church's teaching on human rights and social justice and are the reasons why we must be involved in working to promote human dignity.

The fact that many people in our time in countries all around the world, suffer from discrimination, unfair working conditions, poverty, corruption, violence, homelessness, unemployment, pollution and prejudice, is not only an offence against their true humanity, **but also an offence against God.**



**All life comes from God and belongs to God. It is not ours to do with as we will. We must respect our lives and the lives of others.**

In relation to life we are like caretakers or stewards, people who are given the task of looking after something for someone else. This is one of the great truths found in the first chapter of the Book of Genesis. Our task, given to us by God, is to watch over all life on behalf of God, its creator. Any decisions we make about life should therefore be made in the light of this knowledge.

Before we go on to look at things we can actually be involved in, to promote human dignity and be people who 'do' justice, we need to have the answer to two excuses that people often use for not doing things which would help others.

**1.** You often hear people say things like 'I didn't cause the problem. I'm not responsible for somebody else being poor or sick, so I don't have to do anything about it.'

**Answer:** There are many things which are unjust which we did not cause. But, there are many things which we can respond to, even though we had no part in bringing about the situation in the first place.

We are not the first generation of Christians to struggle with the question of **how** to respond to God's instruction to act for justice, and we won't be the last. But the fact is we **must** respond.

This is what Jesus said about the final judgement: (Mt 25:41-45)

*The King will say to those on his left, 'Away from me to the eternal fire which has been prepared for the devil and his angels! For I was hungry but you would not feed me, thirsty but you would not give me a drink; I was a stranger but you would not welcome me, naked but you would not clothe me; I was sick and in prison, but you would not take care of me. Whenever you refused to help one of these least important ones, you refused to help me.'*

In these words, Jesus makes it very clear that we are to be people of **action**. Our religion is not a private thing for own heart. It is not even a matter of praying together, for example in a charismatic group. The word **Religion** comes from the word for **ligament**. A ligament in the body joins a muscle to a bone. Religion binds us to God, but the bond that binds us is the way we treat others and are concerned enough to act for justice on their behalf.

The second comment made has two forms:

**2a)** "I don't need other people telling me what to do. I am not hurting anyone but myself when I take drugs, commit suicide and so on. It is my life, I can do what I like with it.

**2b)** I don't want to tell others what to do. It's their life. I will mind my own business.

**Answer:** These are very false arguments. Christianity is based on the fact that no one is an island, we are sons and daughters of God, brothers and sisters to each other. We are part of the same Vine. The same life (God's life) flows through us. We are all parts of the one body. What we do, certainly involves many others. We can think of the story of the garden of Eden, where God makes it clear that we are 'stewards', not put on earth to only think of ourselves and what makes us happy, but to be a 'caretaker' of others and of the environment. If we see people wrecking other people's lives or spoiling our world, we have to have the courage to speak up and do something.

It is not easy to give up our own selfishness and to do justice. However, once we do try, we will find happiness since we are doing God's work, and God will supply the strength we need.

As we study the next chapters try to keep this first chapter in mind, because it gives us the reasons why we want to be people who promote human dignity and treat people justly.



A lot of people give up working for justice because they try to do too much. The following principles can act as a guide:

- Think globally, but act locally. In other words, try something really small.
- Don't leave things up to 'big' people, get grass-root involvement.
- Concentrate on the values of human rights (e.g. Caroline's story) Most people want to start big projects and the first thing they want is to ask for money. But would it be any use to Caroline if another school were built in the village? or a hall?
- Include women in development projects
- Start anywhere! *Justice is a 'seamless garment'*. This means that whatever we do to help in one area of injustice helps overcome the other kinds of injustice
- Know that whatever we do has value no matter how small it is.

Finally, remember that justice is one of the most important aspects of the way people relate to each other in any society. Religion is not something separate from our everyday life. What we are talking about in this unit is the obligation for all people in a community to work to reshape the organizations and structures of society for the good of all, so that each and every person has the chance to reach full human dignity.

**THE  
GLORY OF GOD  
IS A PERSON  
WHO IS  
FULLY ALIVE**  
ST. IRENAEUS



### ACTIVITIES

1. There are many problems in the world today. Some are listed below. Suppose you had the power to get rid of two of them, which of the following two would you choose? Why?

Rascalism	Volcanic eruptions
Child abuse	Earthquakes
Being homeless	Hunger
Domestic violence	Rape
Sorcery	Violent crime

2. In God's eyes we have equal dignity. We are all created in the image and likeness of God. However, God did not create all of us equal in terms of talents, abilities, intelligence, health, physical strength and so on. Is this fair? Take a look around your classroom.

a. Name some of the talents available in the classroom. ....

b. What if everyone was created the same? Every boy looked exactly the same. Every girl looked exactly the same. Every person whether boy or girl had exactly the same abilities at singing, volleyball, school work and so on. How would you feel about that? Do you think it would be a good idea?

3. Look at the words in the box opposite. What was St. Irenaeus trying to say?

Do you think St. Irenaeus would think that Caroline (in the story in page 1) was living a 'fully alive' life? So what is happening to God's glory in Caroline according to St. Irenaeus? Do you think St. Irenaeus was right or wrong to write these words?

4. Find some parables or words that Jesus used to show that human beings have a special dignity e.g. 'I am the Vine, you are the branches' (God's life is in us) Jn. 15:5.

5. The rest of St. Irenaeus' sentence is *'but life for a person consists in seeing God revealed in Jesus.'*

What do you think St Irenaeus means by this part of his sentence?



# Topic Two

## The dignity of the disabled

### A True Story:

When I was about 2 years old, I got a sickness called polio. It made one of my legs shorter than the other. In other ways I was still perfectly normal. But now I was treated differently. I can remember when I was about 6 or 7, going to the garden with my mother. On our way back, some children from my own village- in fact most of them were my relatives, starting putting a label on me - like 'no good leg', 'crooked leg', 'you cannot run fast' etc. I felt really miserable, unhappy and frustrated. I took some rocks and threw them at the children. Then I began to cry. My mother didn't even stop to help me by getting cross with the children or chasing them away. She just walked on home. I was carrying a basket of food so I left it on the road because I was upset with my mother. When I got home I went straight to her and asked her why she didn't support me. Her answer was: *If you see yourself as a cripple, you will never be happy in life.* As I went on to community school and high school I remembered her words. True, I was made fun of, and it did hurt me but I tried to keep a good relationship with the people I met by saying 'Good morning' back to people who had just insulted me and not getting cross as I did when I was a child. Deep down I know that God loves me just as much as people with good legs. In my heart I know that I am a normal human being.

Of the two reasons given below, which one do you think causes the most suffering to the person in the story?

- A. I think the person suffers because of the pain they must have when they walk.
- B. I think the person suffers when other healthy people treat them badly.

It has been said that in Papua New Guinea, the most common attitude to people with a disability, is an attitude of ridicule, that is, to make fun of the person.'

### Do you think this is a true statement?

What can we do in our society, to make people with disabilities more accepted? What has to change?

What do you think happens when parents find out after the birth of their child, that their baby is disabled in some way?

Parents have often have a picture in their minds of the son or daughter they want. If a child is born disabled, parents have a big adjustment to make. A lot of parents cope well. Others do not cope at all.

Does anyone know someone who is disabled? What would you do if you *had* a disabled child? What would you do if you *were* a disabled child?

Name a time from the Gospels, when Jesus met a disabled person. What was Jesus' reaction to disabled people?

On the next page are some comments from parents who are coping with intellectually disabled children. Read all the comments and then share your thoughts. Have the comments from these parents helped you to think differently about disabled people? Draw this scale in your book and mark where you are on it:





**Theresa:** 'I had more trouble with my non-handicapped children than with my handicapped child'

**David:** 'I love my intellectually handicapped girl. I got to play games with her for many years after my 'normal' children had given up such things.'

**Peter:** 'I feel really wanted and needed with my handicapped child, whilst my other children are wanting to be independent'.

**Henrietta:** 'There is something special about my child's simple approach to life. He has an accepting attitude to other people. He is willing to welcome others in a very simple way. He does not worry about whether a person is rich or attractive or clever'.

**Anne:** 'All of us have faults in some way or another. It doesn't seem right to draw a distinction between people who fail morally, for example corrupt business people, and people who fail in some physical or mental way. One of my children steals a lot. Another child is mentally disabled but never steals anything. They both have failings, but my disabled child's faults are more noticed than my other child's faults.'

*Below is the story of Nick, who has a very severe learning disability.*

*Nick lives in a community that cares for mentally disabled people. One day he was sitting amongst some people who were talking about what peace meant to them. They were asked to share their thoughts. Nick spoke very few words but he drew a picture of Christ on the cross, with the moon and stars under one arm, and the sun under another. When he was asked to explain, Nick said:*

*'Christ died to give us peace.'*

*A person watching the group may have thought that Nick, a mentally handicapped person, had not understood much of the conversation going on around him.*

*But the drawing Nick did was not just about peace for human beings. He had the true vision of Christ's death bringing peace to the whole universe. His picture was full of very*

very deep meaning. He understood more than the others.

*Draw your own picture of Jesus as Nick has described him. Do you like your picture? What does it mean for you?*

So far we have heard parents talk about mental disabilities. Many people also suffer from physical disabilities, like the person in our story on page 10.

*What do you think about the mother in this story?*

People with physical disabilities were once almost 'hidden' in society. Now they have all sorts of helps such as wheelchairs, and events such as the para-Olympic games. People who have been born with only one arm, or who have had both legs amputated, are not ashamed to be seen competing to the best of their ability. Physical handicaps may be a great disadvantage, but such people prove that these are no barrier to great achievement. Next are two stories of physically handicapped people, who have done great things in their lives.

Mary Verghese.

Mary Verghese qualified as a doctor in India. Shortly after completing her training, she was badly injured in a car crash. Her spinal cord was severely damaged and she was left a paraplegic (a person with both legs paralyzed).

Mary was determined however to continue with her medical work. Although she had to stay in a wheelchair, she began to specialize in surgery on people's hands and feet. This was not easy. The operations were delicate and required great skill. Added to that was the problem of operating on people from a wheelchair. It became too difficult, but Mary did not give up hope. She soon began another type of surgery. She made eyebrows for people who had lost them because of leprosy.



Although making eyebrows sounds a small thing for us, in India where there are many ex-lepers, it was very important. People are very afraid of the disease of leprosy, and employers were often suspicious of people who had been lepers, even though there was no danger of infection.

If you had no eyebrows it was a sure sign that you had been a leper. This sort of concern for people's dignity runs through Mary's work. She also works to restore to other disabled people like herself, a sense of their own worth, and she helps them live life to the full. Mary is still working even though she is now confined to bed by ill health. She is greatly involved in a project to build a Christian residential home for the physically disabled in the city of Vellore in India, where she first trained as a doctor.

### Leonard Cheshire (England)

Leonard like Mary, was a well educated person. He was a pilot in the Second World War and flew on a hundred bombing raids. He was Wing Commander of the Dam Buster Squadron and was awarded the highest military honour for bravery.

Leonard tried a number of jobs after the war but was not really satisfied. After a while, he and some of his friends set up a home for ex-servicemen who had no family. This first attempt failed. Afterwards Cheshire heard that one of his friends, Arthur, was dying of cancer. He agreed to find his friend a home. When he was unable to do so, Cheshire nursed Arthur himself, even though he had no experience of nursing. Arthur was sincere about his religion, he was a Catholic, and he died peacefully three months after Cheshire started to look after him.

The faith of his friend had a great influence on Cheshire and not long afterwards, Cheshire became a Catholic.

By this time, Cheshire felt he had a calling from God to look after those who were ill.

The local hospitals heard that he was willing to look after those for whom they had no room. He was soon looking after forty people, some were seriously ill or dying and others were frail or elderly.

For a long time Cheshire worked on his own, then others began to join him. After 2 years, the doctors warned him that he had to rest, or he would become sick from overwork. He left those who had joined him and he took a job with a company involved in aircraft manufacture.

At the factory, Michael, a young man who was an epileptic, asked him for help. Cheshire invited him to share his house. No one would give Michael a home because of his disability. Then Cheshire met Hilda, who was also disabled. He had no space in his house but he noticed a number of old huts on an airfield nearby. With the help of local volunteers he organized their renovation. 'St. Theresa's' the new home, was soon full, so Cheshire began another one. These became known as Cheshire Homes.

Overwork again caused a problem for Cheshire. He spent two years in hospital recovering from tuberculosis. While he was in hospital he still directed two projects, - a bus travelling around the country spreading the Christian message, and a series of pilgrimages to Lourdes.

By 1959, (just 14 years after the War), fifteen Cheshire Homes had been established in Britain, six in India, one in Malaya and one in Nigeria.

Some specialized in looking after the mentally ill, some were for severely disabled children, orphans, or people with TB. In 1992, Cheshire became restricted to a wheelchair himself, because of motor neurone disease. He saw it as a blessing, as part of God's plan. This was because he could now speak, not of

*'you, the disabled', but of*

*'we, the disabled'.*



By 1993, there were 85 homes in the UK and 185 in 50 countries overseas. We have one Cheshire home here in Papua New Guinea, in the suburb of Hohola in Port Moresby.



### Activities:

1. Leonard Cheshire's words in the last paragraph, are similar to those spoken once by Father Damian of Molokai. Do you know what Father Damian said? What similarity is there between Father Damian, Leonard Cheshire and Mary Verghese?

2. In what ways might bringing up a handicapped child be difficult for a family?

3. Write a paragraph explaining what the Cheshire homes do.

4. *'People with learning difficulties have nothing to offer and nothing to teach others. They are simply a burden. It would be better if they died.'*

Write some sentences in reply to a person who thought like this.

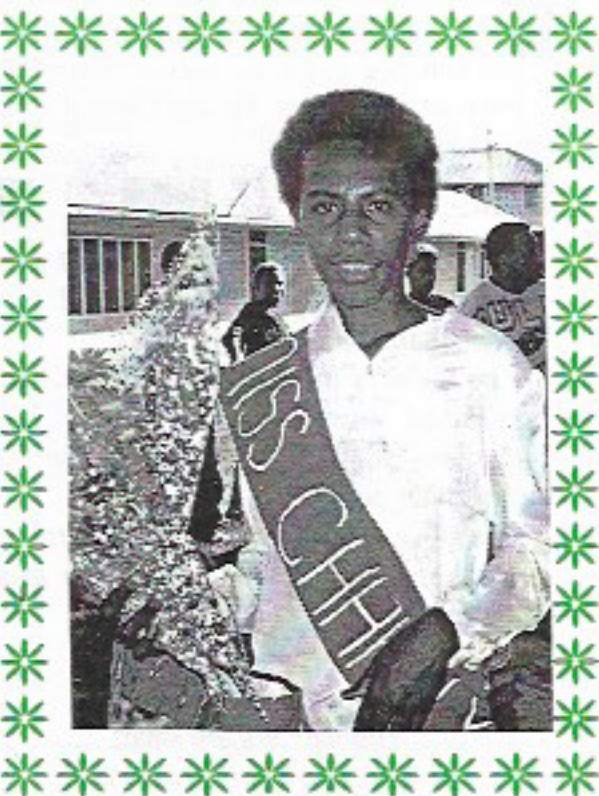
5. Why do you think that someone would actually choose to work with the disabled? Is it the sort of work you would want to do? Why?

6. Do you have to be physically and mentally fit to enjoy life?

7. When we put on concerts or items at school or in the village, often someone imitates a person with a disability, e.g. someone who limps, so that everyone will laugh. What does this say about us? Do you think we are very sensitive to other people's feelings?

8. Do you know a person with a disability? What can we do to promote the human dignity of disabled people in our community?

9. Often we think it is so important to look like our friends and to wear what they are wearing, and we can spend a lot of time worrying about how we look. But do you think people actually choose their friends on their appearance? What is it that makes you want to be friends with someone?





# Topic Three

## Racism and Prejudice

### Story:

This is a true story about a European man who lived on an island in PNG. He had a small plantation and worked it for many years. The man was quiet and shy. He lived peacefully with the local people and never made trouble with anyone.

When he was old, the man got sick. He was too sick to travel the distance to the Health Sub Centre. The local people knew he was sick, the nurses knew he was sick, but nobody did anything for him.

Later on, a nurse from another area was transferred in to this Health Centre. When she heard the story of the sick European, she quickly organized the Health vehicle and went and collected him. She arranged for his treatment and for someone to cook for him. She said to the nurses: 'Shame on you for not helping! He can't help it if he was born a European!'

People are racist when they put other people down because of their customs, food, looks, language and so on.

To be racist is to be *prejudiced*. This word prejudiced means to 'pre-judge'. Our prejudices are often based on false ideas about other people.

These false ideas often take the form of a general statement about a particular group, for example

Only men can do this job  
Old people are forgetful  
Highlanders are smart  
Young people are irresponsible

Filipinos talk 'gris'

Women are emotional

Men aren't good at childcare

Women aren't good at fixing things

*Add three more to this list!*

Look at what you have written. Do you know every single human being that belongs in that group? Do you think your statement is true? Read the story in the previous column again. Which people were racist? Why?

The nurse that transferred into the area seems to have been an organized and energetic person. What other quality did she have?

There are no character statements that can be made about a whole group of people. Most people of another culture are strangers to us. So it is very wrong to use the word 'they' are like this or 'they' are like that.

We tend to be afraid of things or people we think are different from us in some way. To cover our fear we often ridicule and mock others from a different culture. The sad part about this is that it can even lead to hatred of others. This hatred can be taught.

Have your parents or community ever said to you: 'those people *from there* are no good?'

'Taught' here does not have the same meaning as learning something in the classroom. If a young child always hears



constant criticisms of another family or group of people at home, then this child is being 'taught' to be prejudiced against that group. Children are not born prejudiced, they have to learn this.

**Close your eyes and think of a newborn child.**

Do you think this newborn has a dislike in their heart for coastals? or highlanders?

Of course not! The child does not even know yet which group he or she belongs to! But once they have been taught to dislike or fear another group, it is a very hard thing to unlearn.

We might be surprised to discover that one main reason prejudice exists is because we feel better when we have someone to blame for all the things that are wrong. So if I am poor or out of work, it is easy to look at some strangers who are employed and say, "It is their fault, coming over here and taking our jobs. They should go back to their own province." We find it easier to blame others than to look at the structures in our society that are causing the unemployment and working to do something about them.

Another cause of prejudice is that people find it hard to accept the fact that there is an unpleasant side to themselves - what St. Paul calls our unspiritual nature that fights against God & goodness (Romans 7:14-25).

It is hard to admit that we can be bad, selfish, or cruel. One way to cope with it all is to 'project' it on to others. Just like an overhead projector throws words onto a wall or screen, we say things like, it is *my teacher's fault* that I didn't do well at school. Or some students say 'It is *my family's fault* for not paying my school fees' or the *government* is to blame and so on. We are *projecting* our own problems or weaknesses onto others. If we really sat down and spent some time thinking and praying, we would realize when we are blaming others, that what we are really doing, is saying "I am a good person: it's other people who are lazy or problem people or bad".

Looking down on other people makes us feel superior. But it is not how Jesus wants us to act.

A group that stands out becomes a good target on which to project our problems. Any group will do, people from another province, or people from a different sex. It does not have to be a group of people, we can pick on one student in a class because he or she is clever, or he or she is able to speak up, or do nice assignments or whatever. When we act like this though, we are not being God's people at all.

*What can you do to help break down a particular prejudice against a group of people in your own place?*

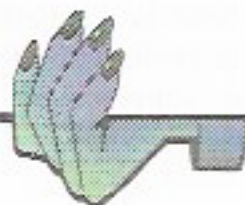
**Activities**

1. Have you ever heard threatening, abusive or insulting words used? Write a paragraph describing a time.
2. Now from your story, try to write about the feelings of the person who was being insulted. Also think about the person saying the insulting words.
3. Do you think people are offered jobs or refused jobs because of their province or country? Do you think this is fair?
4. Do you think prejudice is practiced in schools? Give examples of prejudice in your own area.
5. Read the following quotations and then give a similar story from your own place. What prejudice do these stories show?

*Can anything good come from Nazareth? (Jn. 1:46).*

*You are a Jew, and I am a Samaritan - so how can you ask me for a drink? (Jn. 4:9)*

*Prophets are never welcomed in their own home town (Lk. 4:24)*





### A story from South Africa:

South Africa is a country that once practiced legalized racism. It was called 'Apartheid'. Many people spoke out against this unjust system. Two of those who were most outstanding in speaking against the legalized racism in South Africa, were Nelson Mandela and Bishop Desmond Tutu.

Nelson Mandela spent twenty-six years in jail.

On his way to prison he said *'I have fought against white domination, and I have fought against black domination. I carry the idea of a society where all people live together in harmony and with equal opportunity. If it is necessary, I am prepared to die for this belief.'*

Many people thought Mandela would die in prison. Finally he was released, on the 11th of March, 1990. After 26 years in prison and some terrible treatment, Mandela could have been very bitter and angry. Instead he worked for peace and reconciliation between black and white people and even became the first South African president.

Another person who took a leadership role in speaking out against Apartheid was Bishop Desmond Tutu, the head of the Anglican Church in South Africa. When the South African Government condemned Tutu, he refused to keep silence. He had his passport confiscated several times, he received death threats, frequent obscene telephone calls, and was rubbished by the newspapers who supported the government. Bishop Desmond Tutu continued to hold firm however, and often said that the *South African government had no chance against the prayers of millions of Christians* for the ending of apartheid.

The Bishop also refused to support acts of violence by his own people. In 1985, a young woman called Maki Skosana was mutilated and then murdered by an angry crowd who thought she was a police informer. In a sports stadium, Tutu addressed 30 000 people present and said to them:

*'If you do that kind of thing again, I will find it difficult to speak for your freedom.'*

In 1986 when Tutu was made an Archbishop, he praised God for whom he said, no one is a 'nothing'. These are the words he prayed:

*'May Our Lord open our eyes, so that we can see the real true identity of each one of us; that we are not white or black, but a brother, a sister - and that we treat each other as such.'*

### Activities:

1. Write down whether you agree or disagree with the following statements. Write one or two sentences to support your opinion.

*A. Nelson Mandela's idea of a multi-racial society where everyone lives together in peace sounds good but it is just an impossible dream.*

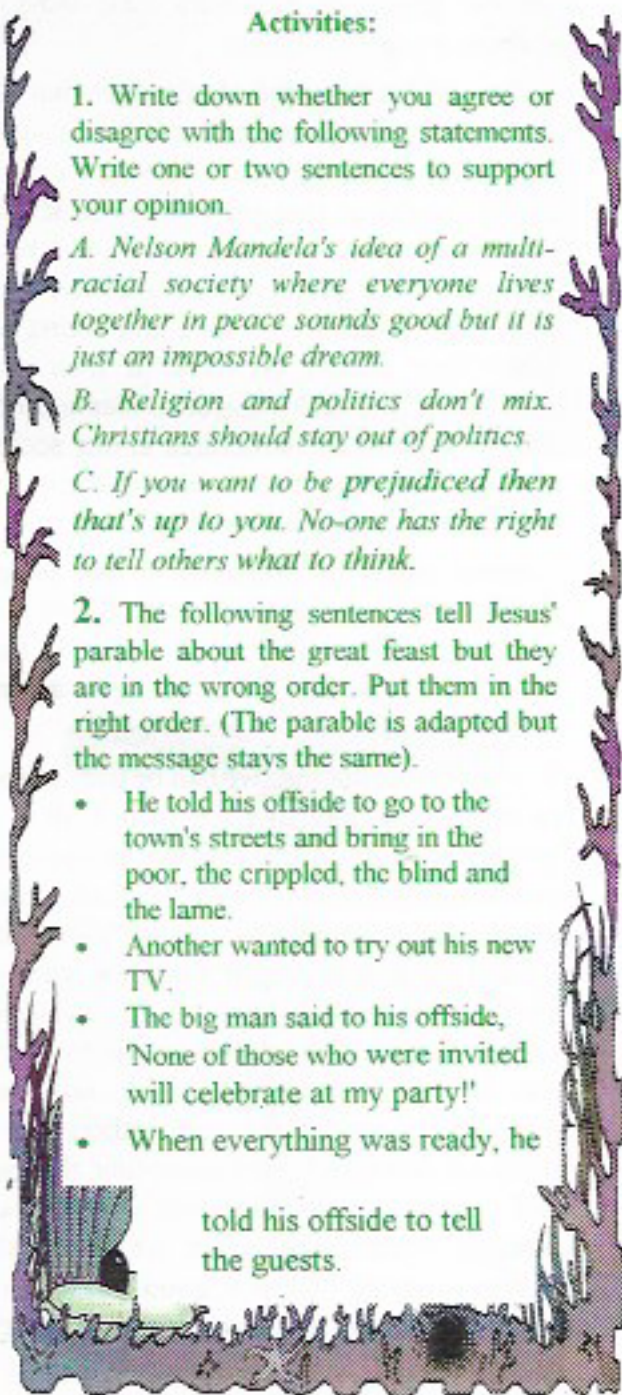
*B. Religion and politics don't mix. Christians should stay out of politics.*

*C. If you want to be prejudiced then that's up to you. No-one has the right to tell others what to think.*

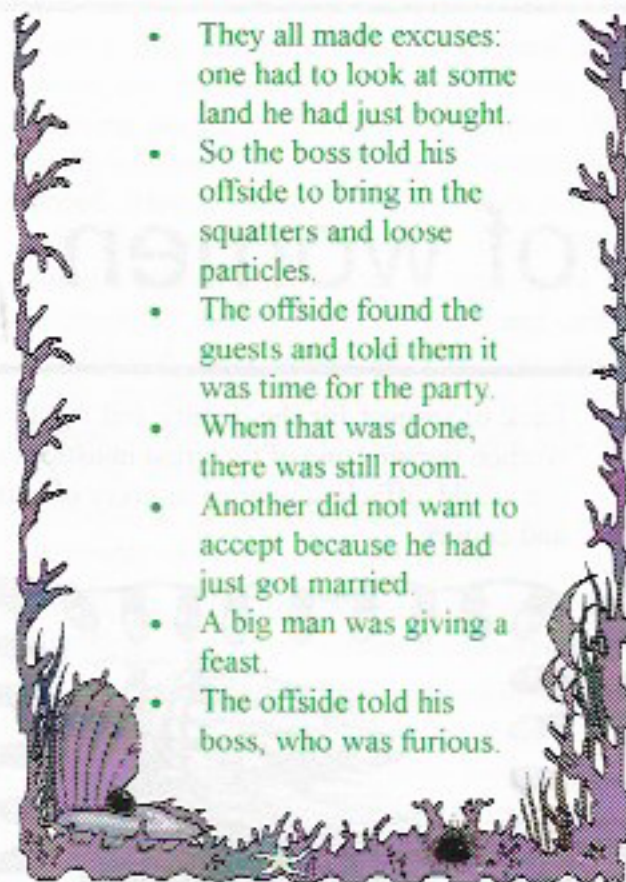
2. The following sentences tell Jesus' parable about the great feast but they are in the wrong order. Put them in the right order. (The parable is adapted but the message stays the same).

- He told his offside to go to the town's streets and bring in the poor, the crippled, the blind and the lame.
- Another wanted to try out his new TV.
- The big man said to his offside, 'None of those who were invited will celebrate at my party!'
- When everything was ready, he

told his offside to tell the guests.







- They all made excuses: one had to look at some land he had just bought.
- So the boss told his offside to bring in the squatters and loose particles.
- The offside found the guests and told them it was time for the party.
- When that was done, there was still room.
- Another did not want to accept because he had just got married.
- A big man was giving a feast.
- The offside told his boss, who was furious.

Almost all injustice in society starts with a prejudice. Prejudice gives people the perfect excuse to do nothing about an injustice. For example, if I believe that 'poor people are lazy', then I say to myself: *It is their own fault they are poor. I have no responsibility to help them.*

If I believe women are of less value than men, I say: It is okay that women get less pay than men for equal work, that women are fed less or last, that the best food can be taken for the males.

If I believe that some students from my area are troublemakers, then I persuade myself that I do not have to help them if a fight breaks out.

So in a society where people are prejudiced, it will be very difficult to 'act justly' although the opportunities are always there.

### Helps for prejudice

What then can we do, if we really want to be people who can act justly, love tenderly and walk humbly with God?

There are 3 habits we can get into, which will help us be more tolerant and respectful people.

### These habits are

- *Avoid thinking about what group a person belongs to.* Instead, think of the individual, not of the group to which he or she belongs. Keep remembering that we are all equal in God's eyes.
- *Look past any outside differences in people such as age, skin colour, dress or accent.* It is what is inside a person that is important.
- *Ignore labels about groups.* Instead try to learn as much as you can about others by first hand experience. This means you must spend time with various kinds of people.

**What is a habit?** A habit is a usual way of behaving. Once we form a good habit, it is easy for us to keep on acting in the same way. We do not even have to think about it. For example many people are in the habit of saying a prayer before they eat. This is a good habit. But if we are in the habit of acting in a bad way, then it is very hard for us to break the bad habit.

A good habit to get into is one of respect for others. If you hear a prejudiced remark or joke, say that you disagree. You don't have to be dramatic, just honest. You must of course, set a good example yourself by the way you treat people.

Overcoming prejudice is mostly a question of attitude and action. To develop the necessary attitudes and be strong enough to follow our beliefs by action we need Jesus' love and courage.

*We need the love of Jesus to change our own attitudes, and get used to calling all people our equals.*

*We need Jesus' courage to work towards improving the 'fairness' of society, so that people will no longer be looking for others to blame because of problem situations.*



# Topic Four

## The dignity of women

### Anita's Story

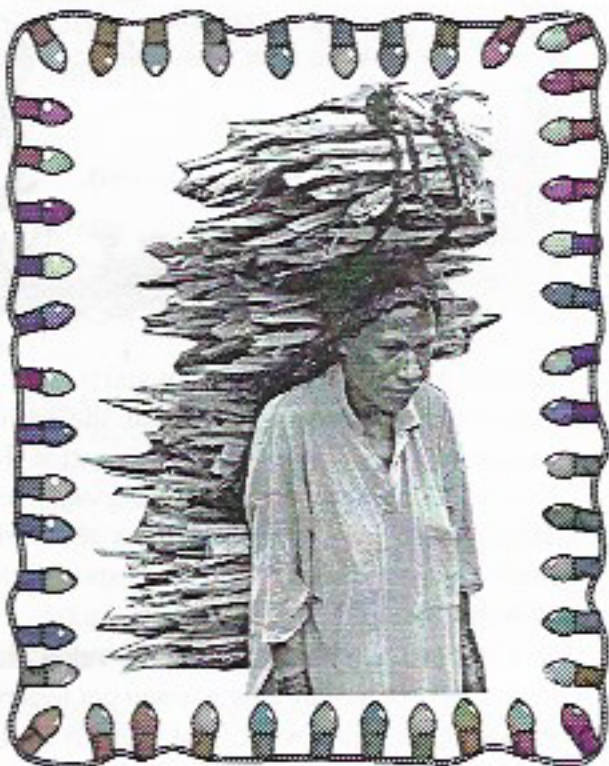
My name is Anita and I am from the New Guinea side. I was just 15 years old and living happily in my village when my uncle came from Moresby. He arranged with my uncles and parents at home for me to marry a man from my place, who was more than twice my age and working out of Moresby. I had never met this man. I did not want to leave my home and friends and marry someone I had never met. I did not even want to get married yet. I felt I was too young and I was worried because Moresby was very far away and I had never even left my village.

When I refused to go to Port Moresby with my uncle I was belted and bashed. When I kept on refusing, the beltings got worse and I was not allowed to eat. Finally they hung me from a tree. This happened more than once. They threatened me so badly I was afraid for my life, and in the end I said yes.

I came to Port Moresby with my small sister. Only the two of us. No-one met us at the airport. We were just put on the plane. At the airport, someone took us to Boroko. We sat outside the shops all day and didn't know what to do. Finally a highlander lady noticed we had been there for a very long time and she asked us were we OK. When she heard our story, she took us to her house. We told her about our uncle and this lady managed to contact him. Later my uncle came to the house and collected us. He took me to the man I was to marry. I still did not want to marry him. I tried to explain both to my uncle and to the man, but it was no use.

I had no land, no money, no airfare, no-one to look after me and nowhere else to go. I was married at 16 and already have two children. I am very unhappy.

Lack of respect for the dignity and rights of women remains one of the great injustices of our world, affecting women in every country and culture.



Women are put in a lower place than men in almost every area (women make the tea while the men make the important decisions). Because they have been labelled 'weak, mindless, emotional' they have been prevented from assuming leadership roles. Women are often denied economic, legal and educational rights. They are often paid less money for doing the same work as men. United Nations statistics show that women form half of the world's population, but they do three quarters of the world's work, receive one-tenth of the world's salary, and own one-hundredth of the world's land.



Two thirds of adults who cannot read and write are women. Over three quarters of starving people are women and children. As well, women are sexually used, beaten and raped. Men do these things to women in a way that women do not do to men. With these kinds of experiences, women have a widespread lack of self-esteem and self-confidence. This is bad for men too, who only develop a narrow band of human characteristics, such as being strong and in control. When women recover their rights as persons, it is to the advantage of the full humanity of men as well as of women.

These are some of the ways in which the dignity and rights of women are ignored.

- In many countries, the contributions of women to society are overlooked.
- Roles typically undertaken by women, are usually given little social status, for example the role of housewife.
- Women are not fully represented in leadership roles in business, community, government or the church.
- Many women live in fear of violence both in the home and outside it.
- Being a wife and mother is unpaid work in most countries and very often such women are overworked.
- If a girl becomes pregnant it is often her problem alone

*In Australia and some other countries, mothers who stay at home to bring up children get some pay from the government. Do you think this is a good idea? Why?*

*Often in PNG there are more boys than girls in a class. Why? How many girls are in your class? How many women parliamentarians do we have in PNG? Out of?*

A society that denies women the opportunity for full development, spoils its own ability to develop. After all, women make up half the population. This is one of the reasons why our country is not going ahead as it should. A successful and just society needs the contributions of both women and men.

**Why do we want to work with only half the brains and talent of a country?**

In order to acknowledge the dignity and rights of women, the experiences of women must be listened to respectfully. The views of women as well as those of men must be sought on any matter that affects both women and men.

#### **Jesus' attitude to women:**

Jesus lived in a patriarchal society, where it was said 'If a girl child is born you get nothing, if a boy child is born he is worth everything'. In ancient Israel, women were considered the property of their fathers or husbands, who had the right to sell them into slavery as punishment for any offense.

In Jesus' time, a man could divorce his wife but the wife could not divorce her husband. An unmarried girl who got pregnant could be stoned to death. There was no place for women in professional positions, not even in a job like teaching, and no place in leadership roles in the Jewish religion.

**Jesus however, did not accept these cultural attitudes and this shameful history of his society.**

Jesus allowed Mary to sit at his feet, which was how a man wanting to be educated, learnt from a rabbi. When her sister Martha complained, Jesus said 'Mary has chosen the better part. It will not be taken from her.'

Jesus' preaching proclaims justice and peace for all people, including women. He said that the prostitute would enter the kingdom of heaven before the Pharisee.

Jesus restored life to **Jairus' daughter**.

Jesus called women to be disciples. They formed part of his company in Galilee and followed Jesus up to Jerusalem. Every gospel makes it clear that they did not run and hide but stood by him in his hour of suffering. All four gospels say that it was women disciples who discovered the empty tomb and first received the news of the resurrection. All four gospels show that the women were commanded to 'Go and Tell' the news of the Resurrection.

In the early decades of the Church there is strong evidence for an active ministry of women as colleagues with men. From the Acts of the Apostles and the letters of Paul, we get the picture of women as missionaries, preachers, teachers, and leaders of house churches. They were co-workers with Paul and the others.

This was the new society founded by Jesus - no more woman or man - we are all **one** in Christ.



### The home-maker

In order to run a home, a woman has to have many skills. She needs to be an accountant, and able to budget and plan. She needs to be a counselor, able to make peace and keep different members happy. She needs to understand hygiene and health and be skilled at cooking and gardening. She also needs the skills of mothercraft, and often many extra skills like fishing, bilum or mat making to add to her usually very small income. She also needs to be creative and adaptable and often has to cope with many different tasks at once. She needs to understand the developmental stages that children and young people go through. Women who have been denied education are not going to have all the skills they need to be good home-makers and to bring up the nation's children.

### Overwork.

In some provinces in Papua New Guinea, it is common to see women struggling along with huge loads of food and firewood while a man walks along carrying nothing.

Why?

If security is needed then it is a good idea for a man or even two to come for security, but also *extra* men could come for the carrying of the food.

**It is unjust and unfair for women in these places to do all the hard work of gardening, carrying of the food, cooking and cleaning.**

What can you do to 'act justly' if this is the story in your place?

In your area, who does most of the physical work, males or females?

What can you do to help someone who is overworked?

### To think about

Have some things changed in your culture?

What has caused the change?

Why does it take so long to change things like the mistreatment of women?

### Misuse of Scripture:

It is certainly wrong to misuse Scripture so that Scripture appears to give the message that male domination is intended by God. It is a scientific fact that men have more muscle mass and more strength than women. So therefore it would seem that God made *men* for the very heavy physical work, and not women.

A typical day for many women includes six or seven hours of planting, weeding, harvesting, followed by cooking and serving. In many places around the world, the women are only able to eat after feeding the men and seeing that the children have eaten, even though they have done almost all the work of producing the food.

As well, the woman is usually the one who washes the pots, cleans the house, sweeps the ground, bathes infants, looks after the house garden, goes to the market, fetches the firewood, carries the water, cares for the elderly, the sick, and the older children.



**Many millions of women are permanently in poor health. Almost half the women in developing countries are anaemic. From girlhood to womanhood, the females of many societies are fed last and least. Malnutrition in girls is much more common than among boys.**



Activity: Copy the following table and complete it. The title is 'But that's your job'

## But that's your job!

WORK IN YOUR HOME	WHO USUALLY DOES THIS WORK?	MALE/ FEMALE	WHY DOES THIS PERSON DO THE JOB
Cooking			
Washing dishes			
Cleaning the house			
Washing the clothes			
Sweeping the floor			
Mending the clothes			
Hanging out the washing			
Folding the clothes			
Marketing			
Spending time with the children			
Collecting water			
Carrying food from the garden			
Preparing the vegetables			
Preparing the bedding			

### The Prodigal Girl

Great poets have sung of the beauties of home  
Of its comfort, its love and its joy  
How back to the place of its sheltering dome  
*Is welcomed the prodigal boy.*  
They picture the father with pardoning smile  
And beautiful clothes to unfurl  
But none of the poets have thought it worthwhile  
To speak of the *prodigal girl.*

The prodigal son can resume his old place  
As leader of fashion's mad whirl  
With never a hint of his former disgrace:  
Not so for the prodigal girl!  
The girl may come back to the home she has left  
But nothing is ever the same.  
The shadow still lingers, the gossip continues  
And the village still speaks of her shame.

Perhaps that is why when the prodigal girl  
Gets lost on life's lonely track  
She thinks of the lips that will certainly curl  
And hasn't the heart to come back.  
Yes! Welcome the prodigal son to his place!  
Kill the calf! Fill the free-flowing bowl!  
But don't shut the door in his poor sister's face  
Remember she too has a soul!

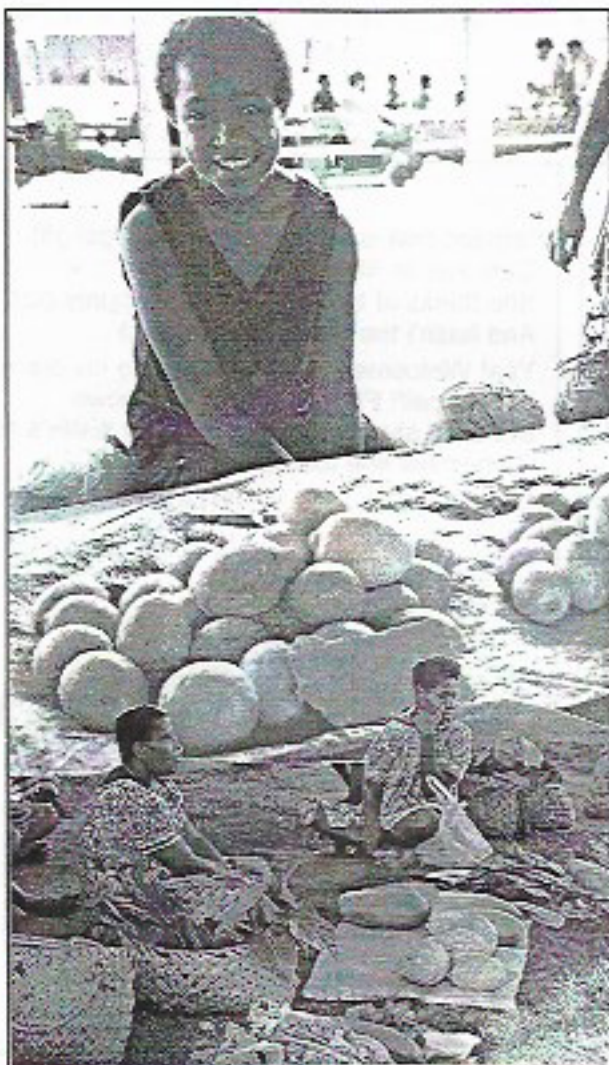




Most of the world's farmers are female. Three quarters of the world's population live in developing countries and in these countries, women produce more than half of the food, primarily to feed the men, their families and their communities. Where men are involved in food production, it is usually for the purpose of cash cropping, i.e. making money.

*Is this true in your area?*

United Nations' surveys show that women work in agriculture for more hours per day and more days per year than men, and that they are responsible for producing more than half of the food grown in developing countries. Yet the role of women farmers in feeding their families and communities is usually overlooked in national surveys of work and food production.



Below are two interesting stories. See if you can solve them:

1

There was a road accident.  
A truck ran over a man and his son.  
The father was killed outright.  
The boy was taken to hospital.  
The surgeon at the hospital recognized him.  
'My son,' cried the surgeon, horrified,  
'that's my son'.

**How can this be?**

Two judges meet unexpectedly in the street one evening and begin to talk about their work.

'What about that guy in court today?' one judge said to the other. 'If you were me, how would you decide?'

'I can't answer that,' came the reply. 'Not only did his father die five years ago - but he's my only son.'

**How can this be?**

2

### ANSWERS TO THE TWO STORIES

(Do not look until you are really forced to give up).

The surgeon in the first story is a woman.  
The judge in the second story is a woman too.

Could you work out the story of the surgeon and the judge?

Did you have to look at the answers?

Why did we find it hard to think of the answer? What is our problem?

*Put on a drama about a woman not being considered as capable as a man.*



When we automatically think of surgeons and judges as being men, then we are being 'sexist'. Sexism (like racism) is about prejudice and discrimination. But here the discrimination is gender discrimination.

Sexism is the attitude that one sex (male or female) is in some way better than the other, usually that men are better than women. This has its roots in sexual stereotyping, which means that one sex is considered only to be useful for one type of occupation. So women are seen solely as mothers and as the object of male sexual desire.

The fact that women are able to be mothers leads many people to think that some jobs are more natural to women than to men, for example nursing or primary school teaching, and women should stick to these.

This kind of thinking denies women the power to choose what to do with their own lives. It also makes it difficult for men who want to do these jobs. If society as a whole looks on women merely as future wives and mothers, then those women who want some other role will find it difficult. Obstacles will be put in their way and women will find it difficult to get on.

The movement to improve conditions for women in society and in the work place is called the feminist movement. In order to achieve changes, feminists say that people's attitudes towards women need to change, and that means in particular, men's attitudes towards women.

There are still countries where a woman cannot vote, own property, make decisions about her children and so on.

In many places there is also increasing violence against women and children. This has become a serious social problem, sometimes made worse by the mistaken belief that it is a 'private' matter.

**Violence against women and children is certainly not a private matter. It is also an offence against God as well as the victim or victims.**

The family and the home are meant to be centres of love and security. Yet often the family home is a very dangerous place for women and children. Whether the violence against them is psychological, physical or sexual, it is a grave injustice which cannot be accepted as normal in any community.

There is never any excuse for male violence against women, or the violence of adults against children.

It is part of our shared responsibility as citizens of our country to work for government legislation which enhances the dignity of persons and opposes everything which contributes to violence.

As Christians we are called in a special way to help create an environment in which healthy relationships are encouraged and able to flourish. We need to ensure that the dignity and fundamental equality of men, women and children is clearly taught, that sexual stereotyping is avoided and that non-violent methods of communication and conflict resolution are understood.





**Read the following true stories and then answer the questions below:**

*Theresa:* I was always being belted by my husband. My eyes were permanently swollen as for some reason my husband always hit my face first. In the end I decided to leave him and I went back to my family, even though it made me feel very ashamed.

My husband was cross because I left him and he brought my case to the magistrate. Instead of hearing my story, the magistrate came to our house and accused the whole family.

The magistrate said that I had to return to my husband or pay K1000 fine for leaving him.

The Sister at the mission managed to get the fine reduced to K500 after a long battle with the magistrate, but that was still too much money for me.

I returned to my husband because he said he would kill me unless I came back or gave K500, and I had no money and was afraid for my life.

My husband still abuses me and I am no longer allowed to go to the mission or walk around. As well, my husband's family say unkind things about me and I am really miserable.

*Francesca:* My name is Francesca and I am a nurse. In my area, the custom of brideprice is still very strong. I married a man from our village, but my husband's people made no effort to pay any bride price and this was a cause of shame for me and my clan.

After some time I moved to a bush clinic and my husband and I had a peaceful and happy marriage because we loved each other. We never got any help or support from my husband's people. While my four children were still young, my husband died. I was very sad and lonely, but I struggled on, raising my children and paying their school fees. I did everything myself.

After quite a few years had passed, I met and married another man who had lost his wife. My husband's family heard about it. One night they came. My in-laws belted me badly, burnt my things and they took ALL my children away from me. I was told never to talk to my children again.

My children are now treated like slaves in their uncles' place. Their school fees are not paid. They carry the water, cook and serve the food, and mind the babies, while their cousins walk around free.

Do you think the husband should get a fine for beating his wife?

The husband seems willing to swap his wife for K1000 or even K500. Do you think that the husband really loves his wife?

There are certain rights that every person should have, whether they are rich or poor, married or single, old or young, male or female. Some of these are being denied to the woman in the story. Can you name them?

Do you think there was any part of this story that was unfair to the woman? Describe it.

Do you think there was any part of the story that was unfair to the children? Describe it.

What attitude are the cousins learning about people?

The man who died loved his wife. Why didn't his clan support him by paying brideprice?

What do you think the man would have wanted for his children?



# Topic Five

## Being a peace-person

When a country is involved in war, all kinds of human rights abuses occur. War results in physical and mental suffering, poverty, refugees, and the loss of human dignity on the part of soldiers and civilians alike.

The Church does not promote war as a way of solving problems and conflicts and urges countries to try other methods rather than force, to achieve their aims.

As students, it is not likely that we can do very much about the serious wars that are occurring all over our world.

However, what we can do, we ought to do. We can pray for people. We can contribute towards relief efforts when we hear of people in need. We may be able to do some voluntary relief work at some time in our lives, for example with the Red Cross. We may be able to write letters, and if our own country is involved in a war, we can influence those in leadership positions by speaking up, and letting them know how we feel.

### Everyday War.

While most of us may not have known the experience of war, we have all experienced violence and we know the damaging effect of 'everyday wars'. There is a lot we can do to promote human dignity and break the cycle of violence that exists in families, villages and towns in our country. Becoming a peace-person is a very real way of promoting human dignity in our world.

*What is a problem in your school at the moment? How can you be a peace-person in regard to this situation in your school?*

### Controlling our anger

Anger is something we all feel at times. It is not wrong to get angry or to feel angry. *It is wrong to let our anger erupt like a volcano.* There is no harm in showing that we feel angry about something, as long as we CONTROL our anger. Try to find a way of expressing your anger so that you let people know how you feel without losing control. To use our anger effectively, it is very important that we let people know *why* we are angry.

*Below are situations which might make you angry. What is the best way of dealing with each of them?*

**1. Your elder brother or sister starts teasing you about your personal appearance. What do you do?**

- a) Treat it as a joke and start teasing them back about something
- b) Just ignore it or calmly tell them that you don't find it funny.
- c) Get so upset that you end up shouting at them.

**2. You are playing in an important sports game. Someone attacks a member of your side leaving the person lying on the ground in agony. What do you do?**

- a) Just let the referee sort out the situation
- b) Try to stop anyone on your side from making the situation worse.
- c) Payback by rushing across and getting into a fight with the person responsible.



**3. You are outside a shop when some young people come rushing out, chased by an angry shopkeeper. They run off, but the shopkeeper mistakes you for one of them, grabs you, and starts shouting at you. What do you do?**

- a) Wait for the shopkeeper to calm down and then tell him he's making a mistake.
- b) Start shouting at the shopkeeper because you're not a rascal
- c) Struggle free, then go off shouting insults.

**4. A group of you are messing about in class. You think you are all equally to blame but the teacher picks you out and punishes you. What do you do?**

- a) Get so cross that you start arguing with the teacher and into even more trouble
- b) Regard it as bad luck and just accept it and get on with your work.
- c) Control your anger and decide to talk to the teacher at the end of the lesson.

**5. You are walking across the oval when someone starts insulting you. What do you do?**

- a) Start insulting them back.
- b) Keep on walking and ignore them
- c) Lose your temper and threaten them.

**6. A relative starts criticizing your behaviour to one of your parents. What do you do?**

- a) Tell them to mind their own business.
- b) Calmly let them have their say, and then politely but firmly defend yourself.
- c) Get up and leave the room without talking.

**7. You are watching your favourite TV program when your mother brings a visitor in and asks you to turn off the TV. What do you do?**

- a) Complain loudly and storm out.
- b) Refuse to switch the set off and have an argument with your mum in front of the visitor.
- c) Get up politely, and do as your mum asks.

**8. The classroom has been vandalized. You are being questioned about it and you feel that the deputy thinks you are involved. What do you do?**

- a) Start defending yourself in an angry manner and threaten to get your dad.
- b) Start being unco-operative because you can see you are not being believed.
- c) Patiently go on explaining what you were doing to prove that it wasn't you.

**9. You find that someone has been telling lies about you. What do you do?**

- a) Check that it is true then see them and ask them to stop.
- b) Go off to find them and tell them that unless they stop you'll beat them up.
- c) Decide just to ignore it.

**10. Your next door neighbour comes around while your parents are out and starts complaining about the noise of your tape recorder. What do you do?**

- a) Listen to their point of view and try to reach an agreement about an acceptable level for your music.
- b) Apologize to them and say you will stop playing your tape so loudly.
- c) Start arguing and screaming at the person.



These situations remind us there are many chances in daily life of learning to control our temper, or of erupting like a volcano. What kind of person do you want to be?

If you want to control your temper, you can, but practice often, and ask God to help you.



## Growing in Self Esteem.

After we have learnt to control our temper, the next best thing we can do to grow as peaceful people is to grow in self esteem and build up the self-esteem of others.

*Look up the word 'esteem' in the dictionary. What does it mean?*

To have self-esteem does not mean to be a big head! It is quite the opposite.

People with self esteem are humble. They value themselves as children loved by God, so they do not have to put other people down in order to make themselves big.

## Advantages of good self-esteem.

The people who cope best under stressful conditions are usually those whose self-esteem is high. Self-esteem means feeling confident and having a positive outlook on life. One way to develop a sense of self-esteem is to learn to be assertive in your dealings with others. People who are assertive express their feelings firmly, but in a way that is appropriate to the situation. They are able to be honest about their own needs and rights **while respecting the feelings, needs and rights of other people.**

There is a big difference between being assertive and being aggressive. Aggressive people argue for their rights **regardless of what anyone else may think or feel.**

Read this story:

Pete bumped into Joe in the hall. Joe was cross and shoved Pete. That annoyed Pete so he took a swing at Joe. Joe ducked and punched Pete.

Pete's friend and Joe's friend joined the fight. Then the headmaster came by. Things stopped, but for a short time only. Pete gathered a few of his friends and waited for Joe after school.

Joe left the school with a group of his friends.

*What do you think will happen next in the story about Joe and Pete?*

*What was the difficult or stressful situation?*

*What could have made Joe cross?*

*Did Pete have to be annoyed?*

*Why did Pete gather his friends and wait for Joe after school?*

*Write a few more sentences in the story and give it a happy ending.*

The story described involving Joe and Pete is often referred to as a **cycle of violence.**

Suppose Joe had simply ignored Pete's bump and turned the other cheek at the very start. Or suppose instead of joining the fight, Pete's friend had grabbed Pete and made him calm down. Or suppose Joe had laughed when Pete bumped him instead of being cross.

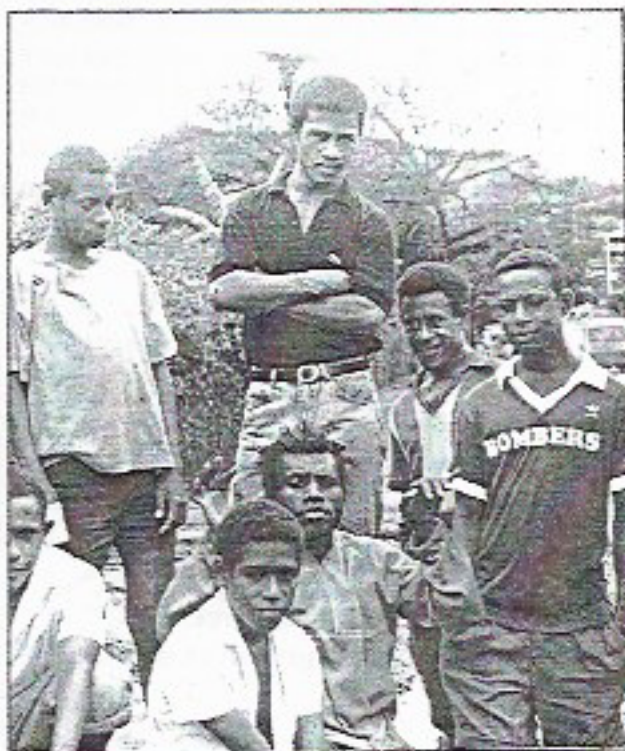
That is what **breaking** the cycle of violence means. There is nothing weak or cowardly about it. It takes more courage to break the cycle than to strike back.

Only weak people need to get even.

Only strong people can forgive and then forget.

*What kind of person are you?*

Can you write down a time when you have managed to break a cycle of violence?





## **VIOLENCE**

*Name 3 violent shows on TV*

*Name a violent film you have seen lately.*

*Do you think violent shows and films contribute to the violence in the world?*

*List five harmless ways to 'blow off steam' so you don't turn your anger on others.*

**Violence of any kind, whether personal or institutional has no place in God's kingdom.**

There are many reasons why people turn to violence. Sometimes it is for the sake of power. Often it is because of anger, revenge, even thrill seeking. But whatever the cause, with violence we lose sight of the dignity of human persons and the value of human life.

Perhaps we do not realize it, but sometimes we escalate conflicts and encourage violent behaviour.

(What is an *escalator*? What do you think it means to escalate a conflict?)

**Ways we ESCALATE conflicts are:**

1. Raising our voices
2. Using physical force
3. Getting others involved
4. Threatening others
5. Ridiculing others
6. Name calling

**Ways we REDUCE conflicts and make them less severe:**

1. Keeping a calm voice
2. Keeping our temper in control
3. Keeping others out of the conflict
4. Avoiding gossip
5. Avoiding name calling and threats
6. Sticking to the topic at hand
7. Focusing on the problem and not on the person
8. Avoiding physical force
9. Using another person to mediate

If we are always used to yelling when someone disagrees with us, then it is very hard for us to stop. If we want to develop good habits of peacemaking, then we must practice not yelling, and also, congratulate ourselves when we sometimes succeed!

If we keep on practicing then the good thing will become a good habit for us, and it will be automatic to react in this good way.

**Try it,** it is really worth the effort. All bad habits can be broken and all of us can make good patterns of behaviour, into the normal way we react when we are faced with stress.

**Conflicts have three types of results, sometimes called, the Good, the Bad and the Ugly.**

### **Type 1. A Good Result.**

This is often called a **Win-Win Conflict**, because both sides achieve something. In this result the potential hurt is greatly reduced. The results are that the disagreement gets settled through compromise. Each party leaves with respect for the other and with respect for themselves. Conflict becomes a learning situation.

### **Type 2. The Win-Lose Conflict.**

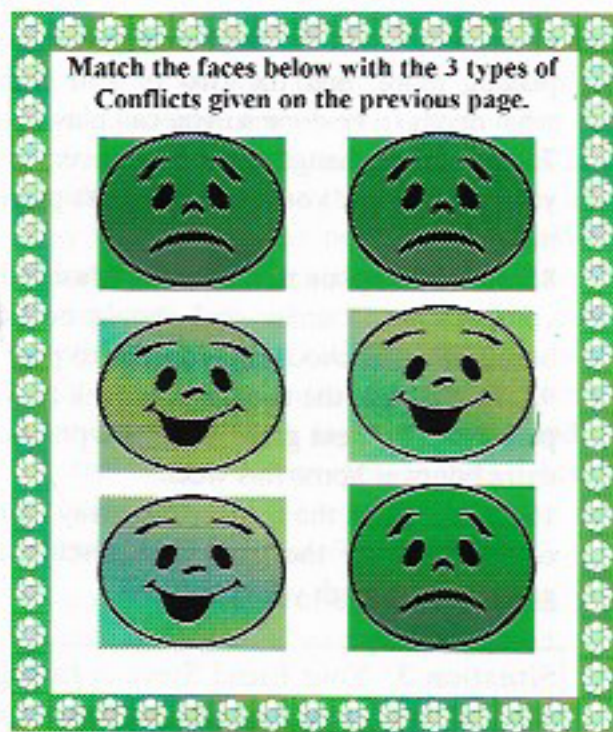
It is easy to guess what happens here. One person gets hurt and the other person gets his or her own way. The result is bad. The conflict gets settled but both parties still disrespect themselves and each other. These bad feelings mean that little has been learnt from the situation.

### **Type 3: The Ugly Result.**

This is the Lose-Lose Conflict. It gets its name from the fact that both parties lose. The result of the conflict is that things are worse than when the conflict started.

At the end people have no respect for each other and no respect for themselves either. This is often the case from a fight at school. Both parties are losers.





Match the faces below with the 3 types of Conflicts given on the previous page.

Here are some common conflict situations. Think of what you could do to make each one a **Win-Win situation**.

**Peter Pain-in-the-neck has pushed ahead of you in the line at the canteen. It is not the first time he has acted like this. What are you most likely to think?**

*I'm going to punish him some day*

*I'm not going to lower myself to his level*

*I'm going to just ignore this again*

What can you **do** to turn this situation into a **Win-Win situation**?

**Brenda Bigmouth has just made a joke about your new T-Shirt in front of your friends. What do you think?**

*I'm going to find a time to humiliate her*

*I know something about her I can tell others*

*I'm not going to show her I care*

**Billy Guilt-man has publicly accused you of telling lies about him stealing. What do you think?**

*You tell him to get lost*

*You say nothing and walk away*

*You say, Billy, I didn't say that! I know you don't steal!*

What can you do to turn this situation into a **Win-Win situation**?

**Your friend Christine Cuscus invited two of your friends to stay at her house for the weekend, but she didn't invite you. What do you think?**

*You just avoid Christine and never talk to her*  
*In your mind you scream at her without giving her a chance to explain.*

*You tell your other friends how mean she is*

What can you **do** to turn this situation into a **Win-Win situation**?

### Conflict Styles:

Most people's behaviour in a conflict falls into one of the five styles described below:

**1. Avoiding.** This occurs when one or both parties withdraw from the conflict situation. They either don't acknowledge the existence of the conflict or they refuse to deal with it.

**2. Smoothing** is a style in which the person aims at preserving the relationship by stressing the common interests and failing to face areas of disagreement.

**3. Compromising** occurs when the people bargain so that each side obtains part of what it wants and gives up part of what it wants. Sometimes compromising is the best solution, but often people compromise without really examining all of the alternatives, because they assume that splitting the difference is the only way.

**4. Forcing** happens when one side makes the other give in and therefore get what he or she wants at the other's expense.

**5. Problem-solving** involves agreement to cooperate to find a solution that will meet the needs of both sides at a level sufficient to avoid feelings of losing. It is a difficult but rewarding style, based on the belief that cooperation brings the greatest rewards.



*Note:* No one style of conflict resolution is always good or always bad.

### Discover your usual conflict style!

1. The following questionnaire will give you a chance to learn how you usually react in a conflict situation.

*Directions:* Write the numbers 1 to 15 on a piece of scrap paper. Read the following situations and decide which way you would choose to react in the conflict by placing a '5' next to your first choice, then '4' next to the way you would react next and so on down to 1 for your last choice. There are no right or wrong answers. Be sure to mark each situation according to what **you** would really do.

**Situation 1:** Melinda has been spreading gossip around the school about you. You have been good friends for years and you are very hurt that she is telling lies about you.

1. .... You ignore Melinda and decide not to bring up the topic when she talks to you
2. .... You sit down with Melinda and ask her why she's spreading gossip. She tells you it is because of something you did. Although you don't agree with her, you both try to mend the hard feelings.
3. .... You groan and complain about how mean Melinda is to you until Melinda comes over to you and apologizes.
4. .... You decide that next time you see Melinda you will be extra nice to her and invite her over to your house so that she will be nice to you.
5. .... You and Melinda talk about what caused the hard feelings, and set down several things that you both are going to do next time so misunderstandings like this don't happen again.

**Situation 2** You have played volleyball since Year 7 and think that you are pretty good. But the PE teacher is making you sit out for most of the games.

6. .... You ask the teacher why you aren't playing more, and the two of you decide what needs to be done so you can play more.
7. .... You change the subject every time your parents ask you why you aren't playing more.
8. ... You complain to the Sports Master that your teacher is unfair and should be fired because he/she chooses favourites to play
9. ... You ask the teacher if he will let you play more the next game since you practiced extra hours at home this week.
10. ... You help the teacher put away all the equipment after the game and discuss the game even though you didn't play.

**Situation 3** Your friend Steve is having a party at his house because his parents are gone. He is angry with you because you say you won't be coming. You are angry at him for drinking and lying to his parents.

11. ... You explain to Steve that you don't want to drink alcohol but that you'll come for a little while and just drink Coke.
12. ... You and Steve try to think of activities that are fun without alcohol.
13. ... You tell Steve you have to go to the beach for the weekend with your family.
14. ... You have your own party and invite all the friends who would go to Steve's party.
15. ... You go to the party and pretend to drink to make Steve happy.

*Now copy the table on the next page into your book. Place your scores in the middle of the columns, matching your scores with the question numbers given in each box in dark print. When you are finished, add up all the columns and put the totals underneath. Somewhere in the boxes should be three 5's, three 4's, three 3's, three 2's and three 1's.*

**When you add up the totals, the column with the highest total shows your usual conflict style. Are you happy with this style? Are you going to change?**



Avoiding	Smoothing	Compromising	Forcing	Problem Solving
1	4	2	3	5
7	10	9	8	6
13	15	11	14	12
Total	Total	Total	Total	Total

*Would you like to act differently to a conflict situation?*

*How can you change if that is what you really want to do?*

*Talk with your friend during the next day or so and see if he or she has any suggestions for you.*

Many people almost automatically use many creative ways of dealing with conflict. They negotiate, compromise, take turns, flip coins, avoid, suppress, ignore, confront and so on. Unfortunately we often seem to use the negative or destructive ways of dealing with conflict. Most people need lots of help to develop more positive experiences and to find new ways to deal with conflict.



We have mentioned some conflict styles which do not solve the conflict e.g. 'avoiding'. Below are listed some successful ways of solving conflicts. These are often used in combination.

**Negotiating:** People talk about their position in the conflict and discuss what might be done about it.

**Compromising:** Both parties give up something to resolve the conflict.

**Taking turns:** One individual goes first and the other second.

**Apologizing:** Saying sorry

Write an example from your life where you shared something with someone and as a result, the conflict was settled

Give an example of when you flipped a coin or used some method of chance to settle a problem.

Describe a situation where a sense of humour helped you in a tense situation



Write about a friendship or relationship that you ended or let slip away. What were your reasons?

Describe a situation where you wished you had waited instead of talking when you were angry.

Describe a situation where you had a conflict because someone refused to take turns.

Describe a situation where if there had been compromise, things could have been worked out.

Describe a trade you made with a friend. What did you give? What did you receive?

Write about a situation you've been in when you apologized. What was the result.

Write about a time you offended someone and needed to ask forgiveness. What effect did this have?

What are some situations where a person *should* ask for forgiveness?

Get into small groups of two or three. Read the following conflict situations and discuss how we would and should react. Identify the differences between the two columns. What does that say about us?

Conflict Situation	How do I usually react?	How should I react?
You are walking along the verandah at school and someone starts to call you names.		
A friend is really angry at you		
Someone borrows your tape and returns it damaged.		
You are doing an exam and a student says: "let me see your answer".		

Make a copy of these Rules, to display in the classroom, at home, or to give to a friend.



★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

★ **The Anger Rules** ★

★ It is OK to feel angry ★

★ BUT ★

★ Don't hurt others ★

★ Don't hurt yourself ★

★ Don't hurt property ★

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★



Another very useful way to deal with anger or with problems with another person, is to use what is called the 'I' message.

**What is an 'I' message?**

When a person expresses a problem in an 'I' message, the person receiving the message is likely to be more responsive. A 'you' message makes others feel defensive.

When you admit to a problem, then you send an 'I' message.

**Examples** *I feel angry* when I see you hitting someone smaller than you.

(Here, you are admitting that *you* have a problem, that *you* are feeling angry. The thing we usually say is 'Leave that child alone you (meaning the other person) great big lump of .....'

Can you see the difference? In the second case we are labelling the person we are talking to. In the first case we are saying something about ourselves.

Change the following statements to 'I' messages. First, identify the feeling. Second, send the message in a way that shows you accept responsibility for your feelings.

1. You make me upset when you do that.
2. You never give me a compliment.
3. You never get things done on time.
4. You just try to do things that annoy me.
5. Why don't you ever listen to me.



## Learn this by heart. It is MAGIC

**I feel** ..... (angry , annoyed, hurt)

**when** .....(say what happened)

**because** .....(say why it upsets you)

**and I would like** ..... (say what you want to happen or change).

Think of a recent time when you felt angry with someone, then copy the sentence below, filling in the spaces according to the pattern given in the magic formula above.

**I felt**.....  
**when**.....  
**because** .....  
**And I would like**.....

Write it again a second time!

Say it out aloud!

Do you feel better?

### See if you can use an 'I' statement today sometime.

Of course not all conflicts are big ones. When you see two little children arguing over a mango or fighting about whose turn it is to play next, we do not have to always use 'I' statements to solve the problem.

*What would you do if two young children were fighting over a mango?*

When a conflict is MAJOR, it is usually because something has gone wrong in a relationship, for example (telling lies, putting the other person down a lot)



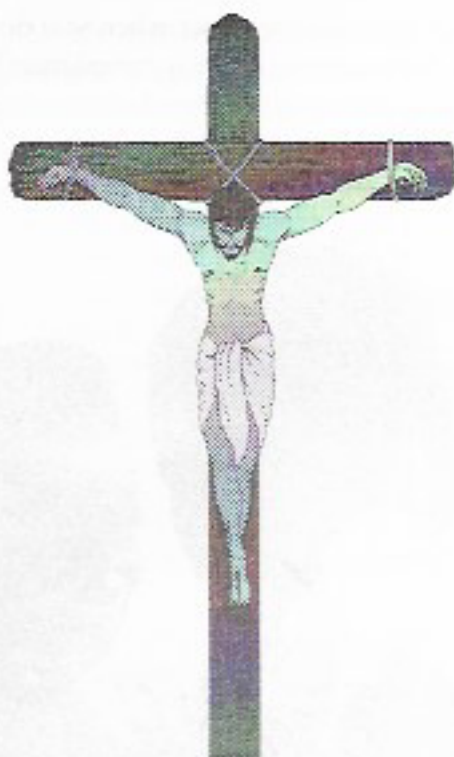
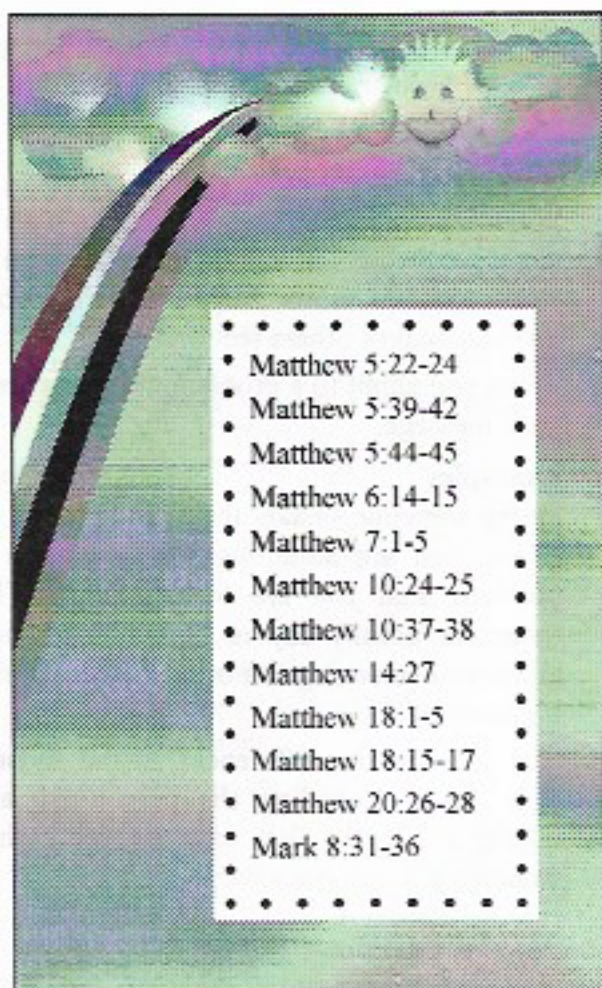
For these kind of conflicts, it is good to use the 'I' statements we have just learnt about. Minor conflicts often occur when people want to use or have the same thing.

To solve these conflicts we can often just toss a coin, draw straws, take turns or cut things in half.

### Activities:

1. Write down what you think the following sayings mean:

- a) Your luck is how you treat people.
  - b) We have two ends with a common link.  
With one we sit, with one we think.  
Success depends on what we use.  
Heads we win. Tails we lose.
  - c) Peace begins by having peace within your own heart.
2. Collect some newspaper cuttings and make a collage, showing violence and peace-making efforts.
  3. Traditionally, how do groups solve their problems?
  4. How does your own family solve problems?
  5. Find the Peace Prayer of St. Francis and write it out for your classroom.
  6. Put on some dramas about problem situations and ways of solving them.
  7. Jesus often talked about solving conflicts. On the next page are references to times he mentioned conflicts.  
Copy some of these words into your books.  
Do you think Jesus asks too much of us?  
Which words do you think are hardest?  
Which are easiest?  
Do you think Jesus would ask us to do something that was impossible?





# Topic Six

## People: our best resource

**POVERTY** Poverty is a very serious problem in the world today. There is a lot of talk about global growth and economics but until the human person is made the centre of development, the economy will not go ahead.

**How much do you know about the reasons that poverty exists?**

(Test your knowledge by trying the following quiz).

First copy the table below into your exercise book. Then, after each statement, put a tick in the 'True' column if you *think* the statement is true, a tick in the 'False' column if you *think* the statement is false, and a tick in the 'Not Sure' column if you really cannot think whether the statement is true or false.

You should have only one tick across a row. The answers to the quiz are written on the next page. Do not look at the answers until you have finished.

	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
1. There is not enough land on which to grow food to feed everyone in the world. A lot of the world is water.			
2. There is not enough food produced in the world to feed each person each day. There are too many people.			
3. The countries with the worst food shortages are those with the highest population densities.			
4. Natural disasters such as drought and flood are the main causes of people being hungry in the world.			
5. People in developing countries would not be hungry if more food was grown in their own countries.			



**Answers:**

**1. False.** There is enough land on which to grow food to feed everyone in the world. More than enough food is grown to feed each person in the world each day, and sometimes large amounts of food are grown in the same countries where people are hungry. The problem is not shortage of land, but uneven access to the food produced. Some people get plenty, others not enough.

**2. False.** More than enough food is grown to feed each person in the world each day. The problem is again uneven access to food, not overpopulation. In fact, hunger contributes to the world's growing population. Parents living in poverty have more children to make up for the children who will probably die at an early age. The parents also need children to support them in their old age. Where parents have a better lifestyle, they have fewer children. When girls are educated they have fewer children.

**3. False.** Developed countries such as the UK, the Netherlands and Belgium have high population densities, yet most residents are well fed and often eat more than they need. Although many hungry people live in developing countries with high population densities, for example India, the real problem is uneven access to food.

**4. False.** Although natural disasters can create food emergencies, they are not the main causes of hunger. Australia has many droughts and floods, but Australians can afford to buy extra food from other countries during such times. So poverty is a greater cause of hunger than natural disasters.

**5. False.** In recent decades, more food per head of population has been grown in developing countries than ever before. The problem is still uneven access to the food produced and often unfair trade policies. This means that farmers do not receive a fair profit from their production which would enable them to purchase the food they need.

Learn these definitions. It is important to understand them. Many children in the city suffer from malnutrition. They eat enough but it is the wrong kind of food e.g. twisties, coke, fried food.

**Undernutrition** is a serious state of hunger caused by not eating enough food over a lengthy period.

**Malnutrition** is a state of bad health caused by eating too many non-nutritious foods, or eating too little nutritious foods. A malnourished person may not show signs of sickness but they suffer from low energy, poor concentration and they are unable to recover from small illnesses. Undernutrition and malnutrition are the main causes of death for more than half of the 12 million children who die under the age of five in developing countries each year.

**Here is another small Quiz for you. Write the answers on a piece of scrap paper.**

**1.** How many people in the world are slowly starving to death?

- |              |             |
|--------------|-------------|
| A. 1 in 5    | B. 1 in 25  |
| C. 1 in 50   | D. 1 in 100 |
| E. 1 in 1000 |             |

**2.** How many people die each year of starvation?

- |               |              |
|---------------|--------------|
| A. 10 000     | B. 50 000    |
| C. 1 000 000  | D. 5 000 000 |
| E. 15 000 000 |              |

**3.** How many people are born in the world's poorest countries each year?

- |               |               |
|---------------|---------------|
| A. 1 000 000  | B. 5 000 000  |
| C. 25 000 000 | D. 50 000 000 |
| E. 75 000 000 |               |

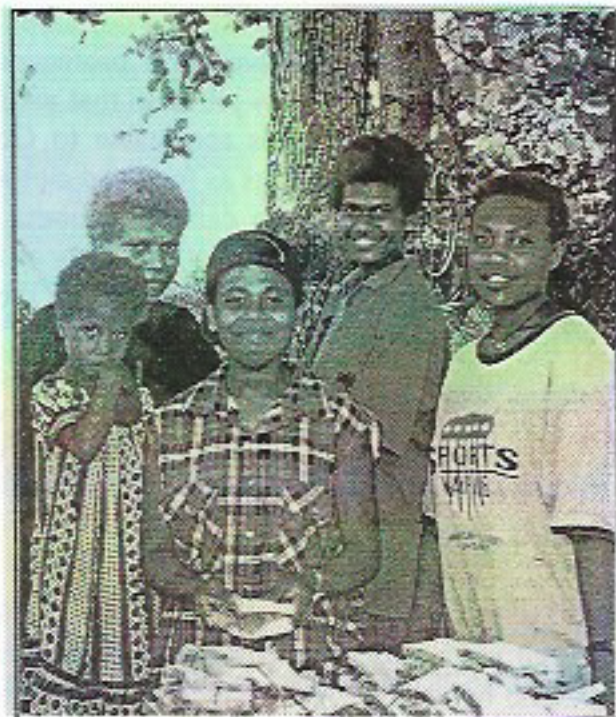
**4.** About how many people in the world will die of hunger related causes in the next hour?

- |         |        |
|---------|--------|
| A. 10   | B. 50  |
| C. 100  | D. 500 |
| E. 1000 |        |



**Answers:**

The answer to question 1 is A. The answer to all the other questions is E.



How many times do you eat in one day?

Do you have anything else in between your meals, for example a snack or bit of fruit or sugar cane?

Consider yourself very lucky, if you do, because one in every five people are not so lucky. At the most they will have one meal per day and not much of a meal at that, maybe a bowl of rice, no protein, no fresh fruit, or potatoes or greens, and most have no guarantee of food for the next day.

In addition to being hungry, these people often lack a place to live, especially one that is safe and clean. Because of their poverty, these one billion people often experience tiredness and most suffer from one of the many illnesses relating from being malnourished. Every hour over 1000 people, mostly infants and small children die from hunger or one of these hunger related illnesses.

**What is your own experience of poverty?**  
**Write your story down.**

**How should our money be used?**

**Money** is also a resource. Many people lack the basic essentials which can be bought and which would improve their lives a lot. Unfortunately money is often considered by many as something to be used for extra items e.g. cameras, beer, soft drink, or for gambling, instead of first being used to make sure that family members do not have to work too hard, that they have access to health services, that children have their school fees paid and so on. Another resource that we have to share with others are the **gifts** we have. People with special talents, are to use them to serve those with needs, not to separate themselves from others.

In this, Jesus shows us the way. He was the son of God but only used his divine powers to help others, not himself. He thought little of his own comfort, his need for food or for rest. He did not spend his lifetime paying back his mother.

Today, some members of our society, especially those regarded as big men, chiefs, and politicians, have little concern for the very poor, although this is one reason for their position. We need to be educated about the duties of politicians. Politicians have a vocation to serve, not to make themselves rich. They exist in order to serve the common good.

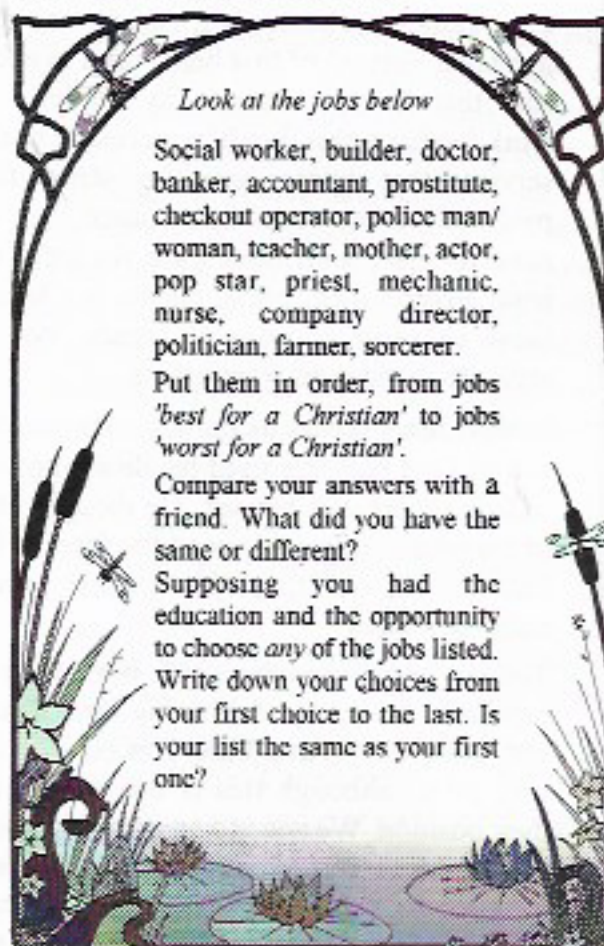
**What does the 'common good' mean?**





## Christians and Work

Work is also another resource. Whether we are raising a family, studying in school, doing work parade, teaching or driving, we are helping our country develop its resources and improve its quality of life.



What makes a job good or bad? The size of the pay packet? How satisfying the job is? How useful it is? Where it is? What things about a job are important to you?

Have you heard your brothers or sisters talk about their jobs? What do they complain about?

One of the best ways of living out our call to promote human dignity is to be involved in a 'caring' profession. The caring professions are those in which people can most obviously care for and serve others.

Doctors, nurses, teachers, catechists and social workers are all classed as caring professions. Many others can be added to this list. (Write down 3 more yourself)

For many people with a good education, *personal satisfaction* and *doing good* are becoming more important than just making money.

There are many people who do not have the education to be involved in a professional caring occupation. Any job at all that we do, which serves others is acceptable to God. People need such things as food and clothes, so working in a shop can be a means of loving God by serving others. Places of work, and streets need cleaning, so these jobs certainly help people to live in an environment that suits their dignity as God's children. At the beginning of each day, we can always offer whatever kind of work we are doing to God.

### Does work help our dignity?

Some work can be boring, hard, and painful, but work, including hard physical work, can also be very enjoyable and fulfilling. Before Jesus began his public work, he was the son of Joseph, the carpenter, and surely worked as a carpenter for many years.

Employers and employees have rights (things they are entitled to) and responsibilities (duties to each other). In the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights it says that everyone who works has the right to a just pay which ensures an existence worthy of human dignity.

That does not mean being able to buy a lot of luxury goods, such as stereos, computers and other things. But a person's wage should enable them to buy the food they need for themselves and their families, and other things like clothing, soap and cooking equipment, and enough to pay for educational and health requirements.

Very often wages are spent on cartons of beer, on gambling, and these people complain about not enough pay. On the other hand, some employers expect their employees to work for long hours, without proper holidays and break times, and they do not receive fair pay for the work they do.



*Give an example of someone you know who works very hard for a small amount of pay. What organization is supposed to help workers?*

Jesus spoke to us very clearly about money and possessions. There is the parable of the rich fool in Luke, (Luke 12:13-21) his words to the rich man in Mark, (10:17-31) the advice given in the first letter to Timothy (1 Tim 6:6-10) to show all this.

Jesus said to the rich man, 'Go and sell all you have and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven; then come and follow me'. There is nothing evil in having money; the important thing is to use it in the right way. Greed is totally unacceptable. Loving money for its own sake can lead people to ignore the needs of others and to ignore God. As the letter to Timothy says: 'the love of money is the root of all kinds of evil'.

#### **To Think About:**

The right to ownership of private property has *social obligations*.

For example if a clan has plenty of property and there is a need for a road, or a school, or a sports ground, then that clan has an obligation to be helpful and of service to the community **EVEN** when those using the facility are not from their own clan.

Social obligations are not wantok obligations. They are obligations (duties) to other human beings.

*Why do you think we have duties to other human beings?*

**Activities:** Look at the following 5 values.

**FAMILY  
LAND  
FRIENDS  
MONEY  
HEALTH  
FAITH IN GOD**

Write down these 5 values in order of the most valuable to you on top and least valuable on the bottom.

*What comes out on top? For yourself? For the class?*

*Are you happy with this answer?*

*Rewrite the list according to how you think Jesus would write it.*

How do you think people feel who are unemployed?

Do you think they would like to be employed only because of the money, or is there some other reason as well?

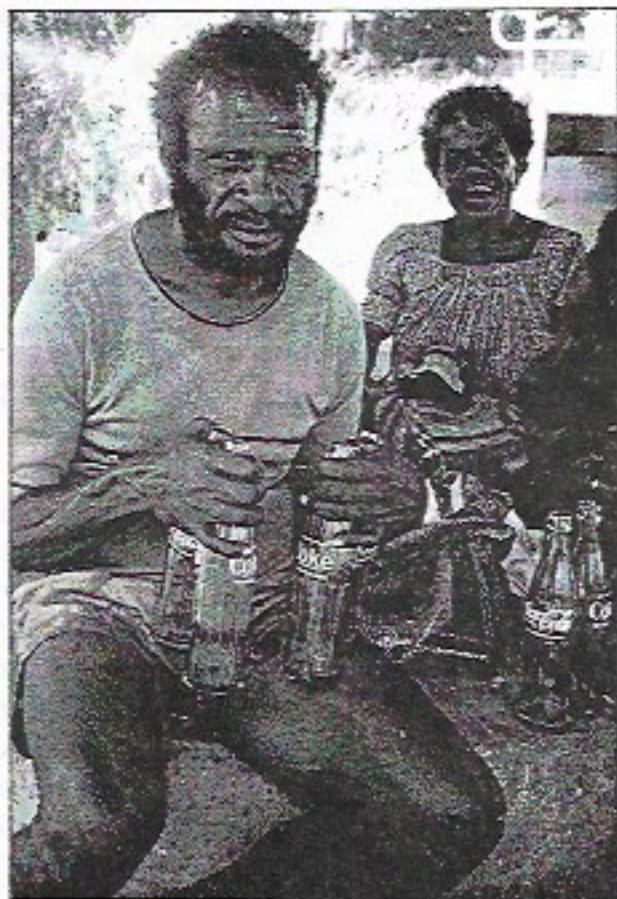
What is another reason?

We see many unemployed youths around the villages and the towns.

Do you think our country does enough to try to find employment for our young people?

What kinds of things result when young people have no work?

Do you think our politicians have a deep concern for the poor and work for them?





## Drugs

One very obvious way in which people lose the dignity they possess as a child of God is by taking drugs. The number of people on drugs in Papua New Guinea is also a great waste of our country's best resource - its people.

There are many reasons why people take drugs. Some of these are:

- for use as an escape. Drugs can help people to forget that they are lonely, unhappy, unemployed or poor.
- because of peer pressure. If your friends take drugs, drugs are difficult to resist. People want to be like their friends.
- because it is wrong. Some people are attracted to drug taking just because it is illegal. Perhaps they think it makes them 'superior' to everyone else and they like to be different.
- Because they want to. Even though they know it is dangerous, people are attracted to danger.
- Because they are addicted. Some people are unable to stop taking the drug because even though they want to stop they have become physically or psychologically dependent on it. Many who take drugs regularly want to stop but cannot.

*What do you think are the main reasons for people taking drugs in your area?*

Drug addiction causes great human sorrow and pain. The illegal production and distribution of drugs has also resulted in worldwide waves of crime and violence. Countries in Oceania are increasingly being used as transit points for illegal drugs and centres for laundering profits from illicit drug trafficking. Cannabis is deliberately cultivated in Papua New Guinea and sold for a high price on illicit markets overseas. In

In Australia, about 65 people die every single day from tobacco, alcohol or drug abuse. There are no figures available for Papua New Guinea, but we know that many of our people smoke, drink and use strong drugs. Some people say that cannabis (marijuana) is not really harmful to us.

Well, cannabis use has many effects on health.

It can spoil our short term memory, logical thinking, coordination and the ability to do complex tasks. Perception, judgement, balance and reaction times are all negatively affected for up to 10 hours after the use of cannabis.

Within this period it is dangerous to drive, operate machinery, swim, and it would be very foolish for students to attempt to do tests or exams. You might feel high, but your marks won't be high because your ability to think logically and remember is badly affected.

Large doses of cannabis can produce feelings of pain, and hallucinations.

Regular use of cannabis has a number of long term effects. Some are similar to those of tobacco, because cannabis is generally smoked, often with tobacco. Marijuana cigarettes have 50 to 100% more tar than tobacco cigarettes, and marijuana smokers tend to inhale more deeply.

This means that cannabis smoking is associated with the risk of bronchitis, lung cancer and respiratory disease. Many regular users of cannabis find they lose energy and drive and interest in other activities. Their schoolwork suffers.

**Have mercy on me, your lungs and stay away from tobacco and drugs.**





## Alcohol

**Thomas:** *When I see someone drunk I laugh because they look like they might fall over*

**Mary:** *When I see my father drunk I feel ashamed*

*What are your experiences of seeing drunk people? What do you think of them?*

The reasons people drink alcohol are much the same as for drug taking

- I like the feeling
- it is easy to buy or make
- it fills in our time
- it blocks out bad feelings
- it covers up my problems

### Did you know?

1 out of 3 male deaths in PNG is caused by alcohol or drug abuse.

1 out of 7 female deaths in PNG is caused by alcohol or drug abuse.

Alcohol and drug abuse cause family troubles, crime, accidents, money problems and sickness

Beer Sales reach millions of kina each year in Papua New Guinea

80% of people in jail have alcohol or drug problems.

The Catholic Catechism says that everyone is responsible for their life before God who has given life to them. We are stewards, not owners of the life the holy and living God has entrusted to us.

The Catechism also says that we are seriously guilty if by drunkenness we risk our own safety or the safety of others or if we give scandal by our own behaviour. (Scandal is leading others to do wrong).

Read Lk. 17:1-3

What does Jesus say about giving scandal?

### Effects of alcohol on the body:

We kill the nerves which send messages to the brain whenever we drink alcohol.

Alcohol can burn the inside of our oesophagus and cause it to bleed.

Drinking alcohol can cause our lungs to fill with water, mucus and germs, bringing fever, chest pain and sometimes death.

Alcohol can cause swelling and bleeding in the pancreas and tremendous pain.

Alcohol damages our liver and there is no medicine to help the liver to recover.

Alcohol can cause ulcers in the stomach and in the intestines.

#### Note to boys:

Alcohol can destroy the part of the testes that produce sperm. You can lose your sexual ability and the ability to father children.

#### Note to girls:

There are special dangers for you in drinking alcohol. Your bodies have less water and are not as big as your brothers, so less alcohol affects you more.

When babies are born of alcoholic mothers they never grow as they should. They often have small heads, deformed faces, arms, hands, legs and feet, heart problems and problems with coordination. Most are mentally retarded, hyperactive (always moving around) and have a short attention span.

A baby growing inside the mother needs good food to grow properly. When a pregnant mother drinks she often loses her appetite and does not eat well, so the baby does not get proper nourishment either.

Do you think using alcohol and drugs improve our relationships or spoil our relationships?

According to the St. John of God brothers, who have worked and studied a lot in these areas, alcohol and drugs do affect our relationships, with God, with friends and with our family. Heavy drinkers and drug users will end up spoiling these relationships.



**God:** People who once had a strong friendship with God will find that their friendship starts to weaken. They may still go to Church but somehow their hearts are not there. Personal prayer begins to stop.

**Friends:** The actions of heavy drinkers and drug users are an embarrassment to their friends. Fights start for no reason. Friends usually feel ashamed. Some may stay while there is money, but these are not real friends.

**Families:** Families suffer the most. Often there is no money, there are fights with loud shouting, often people hurt each other physically or with hard words. Children who grow up in such homes suffer too.

Perhaps we might say *'Well I don't take drugs or drink alcohol, so it is nothing to do with me'*.

Over and over again then we must keep in mind that all people are made in the image of God and are **infinitely valuable**.

If they are suffering because a family member is a drug addict, or because they have been attacked by someone on drugs, we cannot say *'It is nothing to do with me.'*

It is wrong for people to be indifferent to one another. The suffering of one person, no matter how far away or how unimportant they seem, should affect us all. If we don't care about others, we are failing God and failing to be truly human. In that case we certainly can be blamed as individuals. St. Luke's Gospel, Jesus tells a terrifying story about this.

*Read: Luke 16:19-31.*

## Suicide

It is important for us to learn about suicide because studies have shown that nearly all teenagers prefer to tell a friend when they are feeling suicidal, rather than anyone else.

Papua New Guinea has the highest rate of female suicide in the world. This is a huge loss to our country. Many kinds of people commit suicide, rich as well as poor, old as

well as young. We can help by being a good friend, listening, and getting adult help.

It is a fact that most people who think or plan to commit suicide talk about it or give signs of their intentions. It is wrong to think that talking openly about suicide may cause a suicidal person to end their life. The opposite is true. By talking in a kind and friendly way, you are helping the person to see that you care about them.

This is a very important message to give to someone who feels lonely, isolated, abandoned, hopeless or worthless. When you talk to a person feeling like this, you are changing their idea that no one cares.

It is also wrong to think that all suicidal people are mental. Most of the people who commit suicide are people just like you and me, who at a particular time, are feeling desperately unhappy and alone.

Christians believe that human beings are of infinite value because they have been created by God. Even the strongest human love is a lot less than God's love for each one of us. People in distress need help and deserve compassion.

Christian thinkers and theologians have made the following points over the centuries. Do you have any more thoughts to add to these?

- \* God created us and Jesus' death saved us. Suicide is a rejection of God's gift of life and of all God has done for us.
- \* We are not given complete charge over our own lives. God loves us and cares for us and God is in charge at the end.
- \* One of the Ten Commandments is: Thou shalt not kill. This applies to suicide as well.
- \* We do not judge those who have taken their own lives but pray for them and for all who have died.
- \* As well, I think .....



### Suicide warning signs:

*Some signs are:* being withdrawn from the family, hinting about suicide, loss of interest in usual activities, signs of sadness, changes in behaviour, loss of energy, making negative comments about themselves, finding it hard to concentrate, giving away their things.

A person usually shows *several* warning signs. If you think that a person has only one of the signs, then you need not worry too much. It is probably the normal loneliness that all people feel at some time or other.

All of us are lonely, unhappy or depressed at one time or another. Suicide seems to offer a way out. If you are feeling like this, talk to someone. You may also like to think about some of the things written below.

- Suicide is selfish because it causes a great deal of unhappiness to the people left behind. The grief that people suffer when someone they love commits suicide is much greater than death from sickness or an accident.
- Things might get better however bad they seem to look at the time. Holding on might be very hard and painful, but it is better in the long run. Suicide takes some courage, but it takes more courage to go on living.
- People who are very sad and depressed are not in a position to make a sensible decision. If they could see things clearly, they would not want to die.

### Abortion

*What is abortion?*

*Spend a few minutes thinking about your life, then write down one experience you have had, which makes you really glad that your mother did not abort you when she discovered she was pregnant.*

*What do you enjoy most about life?*

*Share an experience when you were walking through the bush or sitting by the beach and you felt strongly the gift of life in you.*

### To discuss:

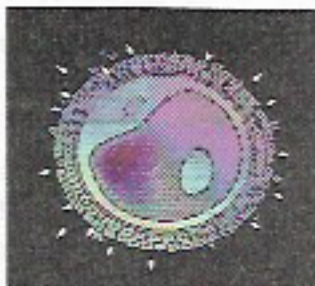
Have you read any stories in the newspaper about parents having to make a decision about children in the womb? For example - too many babies and the doctor might want to remove some. Or Siamese twins? Or in some countries where girls are not wanted and there is a strict policy on birth control, the mother has an ultra-sound and if the baby is a girl, then it is aborted.

What is it like to be a girl baby? Is this a good use of ultrasound? Have you read anything about cloning? What is it?

All the concerns we have been talking about are efforts to protect the rights and dignities of people who are made in the image of God and share in God's life. *The most fundamental of these rights is the right to life itself.*

The obligation to protect someone's right to life begins *when that person's life begins* at conception. We can find many instances in Scripture that refer to a person's right and destiny while still in its mother's womb. For example we find this passage in Jeremiah

*'Before I formed you in the womb, I knew you, before you came to birth, I consecrated you; I have appointed you as prophet to the nations. Jer 1:5*



When the DNA from the father's sperm, unites with the DNA from the mother's egg, all the qualities of a new unique human person are present.

These include hair, eye and skin colour, gender, facial features, even intelligence and some family traits.





In just 8 weeks after conception, the developing baby possesses the following qualities and abilities.

- Brain waves can be recorded
- Muscles have formed and the baby experiences reflexes
- All facial features are present and inherited family traits can be recognized
- Arms and legs, hands and feet, toes and fingers, including finger prints are formed
- All organs are present and working
- The baby can swim and do flips
- The baby can feel and will react to touch.
- The veins and arteries are functioning.
- The baby's heart has been beating for over a month already.
- The baby can feel pain. It begins to sleep and awaken, it can hear, taste sweet and sour, drink, digest, and excrete. It exercises its lungs by inhaling and exhaling fluid. Yet this tiny wonder is still less than three inches long, about the size of one of your fingers

*How many days in eight weeks? Is this a long time? It is less than one term!*

Science gives us all that information above about a baby's life during its first weeks in the womb. So both science and faith give us the same message. From conception onwards,

**we are dealing with a human being in the mother's womb.** An unborn human deserves all the dignity and all the rights to life proper to every child of God. Abortion at any point during pregnancy destroys a human life.

At the beginning of this book, we decided we wanted to be people who 'do' justice. Sometimes people give up because they think their effort does not make any difference. We must recognize the power we have as individuals to create a different life for ourselves and for others.

All the teaching and great images used by Jesus point to the incredible dignity of the human person *and the power of people to act.*

**We can act and make a difference in our world.**

### IT MAKES A DIFFERENCE

As an old woman walked along the beach at daybreak, she noticed a young man ahead of her, picking up starfish and throwing them into the sea. She hurried along and caught up with the young man. She asked: 'Why are you returning the starfish to the sea?'

He replied: 'The tide has left them on the sand. They will die if they are left to the morning sun.'

'But the beach goes on and on,' the old woman said. 'How can your effort make any difference?'

The youth looked at the starfish in his hand, and threw it into the safety of the sea. 'It makes a difference to this one', he said.

*Name a person who has made a difference to your life. Many people are going to come into our lives. We can help them to the safety of the sea, or leave them to die on the sand.*

### Activities:

Find the following Scripture passages and complete each of the quotations below.

Eph 4:28, Lk 12:33, Prov 31:8-9, Job 5:11, Prov 28:6, Ex 22:22.

1. Work with your hands at ..... so that you will have something to ..... with those in need. Do not mistreat any .... or ..... If you used to rob, you must stop robbing and ..... in order to earn an ..... living for yourself and help the poor.

..... all your belongings and give the money ..... It is ..... who raises the ..... and gives joy to those ..... Better to be ..... and honest, than ..... and .....

2. Find at least three articles from the newspaper that deal with some injustice. For each article, name the injustice and try to identify the cause. Suggest one thing that might be done to correct the problem.

3. Use the letters in the word justice, to begin 7 words or phrases that describe what justice involves.

4. Many T-shirt slogans encourage violence or prejudice. Find one that promotes compassion. Draw a T-shirt and write your slogan on the back.

5. Write out Mt. 25:34-40.

What word or phrase most catches your attention in this passage? What does it mean for you?

What is Jesus saying to you in this passage?



# Topic Seven

## Catholic Social Teaching and human rights

Catholic social teaching, which exists to promote human dignity, can be summarized around some important principles. These are listed below.

**1. The principle of human dignity.** The human person is made in the image and likeness of God. Personal dignity means that a person can never be treated as an object or be used as a means to an end. All life is precious.

**2. The principle of human equality.** Each person has a basic dignity which includes human rights and responsibilities. Some of these rights are the right to life; to a worthy standard of living; to work; and to worship according to one's conscience. These rights are equal for men and women.

**3. The principle of Participation.** People have the right to participate actively in the decisions that affect their lives. The family needs to be supported, it is where people learn values and how to live in society. All people are called to live in community.

**4. The principle of Stewardship.** This involves the dignity of work and the rights of workers. Work enhances a person's self esteem and enables persons to become more fully human. The Catholic Church supports the trade union movement as well as workers in their struggle for just wages and better working conditions.

**5. The principle of preference for the poor and vulnerable.**

Jesus made poor people the centre of his attention during his time on earth. Christians

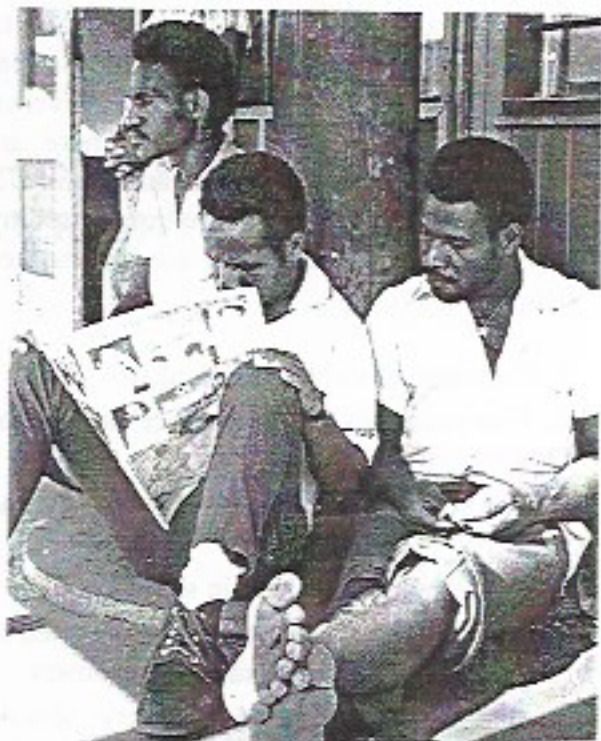
are called to reach out to those who are poor, marginalised, and to the victims of injustice. Compassion towards those in need must be matched with the need to seek changes to social and economic structures which cause injustice.

**6. The principle of Solidarity**

Solidarity is a concerted effort to work for the good of everyone. It is a recognition that we all depend on each other.

**7. The principle of the universal destination of created goods.**

The goods of the earth are meant for all, not only for a privileged few. The right to ownership of private property has social obligations.





### Activities:

#### 1. Complete the following sentences:

If I was the Prime Minister of PNG, the justice issue I would be most concerned about would be ....

Justice will be found everywhere in the world when ....

If you had a million kina to spend on any worthwhile activity in the next year, how would you spend the money?

Debate this statement: *Papua New Guinea is one of the most fair and just countries in the world.*

Collect some newspaper cuttings from the Post Courier or another newspaper that you think are related to our unit on promoting human dignity. Glue two into your exercise book. Write down one or two sentences saying why you think these stories from the newspaper are relevant to our work in RE classes.

### The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights.

In 1948, after the Second World War, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted and proclaimed its Universal Declaration of Human Rights. There are thirty articles in this Declaration. UN countries agreed that every nation should try to meet these articles. They are summarized below.

1. Everyone is born free and equal.
2. Everyone has the rights set out in the Declaration.
3. Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security.
4. No one should be held in slavery.
5. No one should be tortured or subjected to cruel, inhumane or degrading punishment.
6. The laws of every country should recognize that everyone is a person.
7. Everyone should be treated equally by the law and should be protected.
8. A country's laws should protect everyone against violation of the rights set out in the Declaration.
9. No one should be arbitrarily arrested, detained or exiled.
10. Anyone charged with a criminal offence deserves a fair and public trial.
11. Everyone is innocent until proved guilty.
12. People should have their privacy, homes and families respected.
13. People have the right to move around their countries and to go abroad.
14. People can ask another country to protect them from genuine persecution in their homeland.
15. Everyone has a right to a nationality.
16. Adults have the right to get married and to have children. No one should be forced into marriage, and the family should be protected by the state as the fundamental unit of society.
17. Everyone has the right to own property and should not have it unjustly taken away.
18. People are free to think what they like and to practice their religion, alone and in public.
19. Everyone has the right to freedom of speech.
20. People should be allowed to join associations and hold meetings, but no one should be forced to join any association.
21. Governments should be based on the will of the people. People have the right to take part in the government of their countries, either directly or by voting for their representatives.
22. People have a right to social security and to a share in their countries' material and cultural wealth.
23. Everyone has the right to work and to protection against unemployment. This includes the right to decent working conditions and pay, to equal pay for equal work, and the right to join a trade union. People should have a free choice of employment.



24. Everyone has the right to leisure time, including paid holidays.

25. People have the right to a decent standard of living for themselves and their families, which includes food, clothing, housing, medical services and social security. Mothers and children are entitled to special care and assistance. All children should be treated equally, whether or not their parents are married.

26. Everyone has the right to an education which should teach tolerance and understanding between all people. Primary education should be free. Parents have the right to choose the kind of education they want for their children.

27. People have the right to participate in the artistic and scientific life of their countries and to benefit from them.

28. Everyone has the right to live in a country where all of this is possible.

29. People have duties to the communities in which they live and must respect the legal rights of others as well as public order and morality.

30. No one should use any article of this Declaration in order to justify destroying someone else's rights.

#### ACTIVITIES:

1. Where does the phrase 'the image of God' come from? What is your image of God?

2. Why is the idea that people are made in the image of God important for Christians when they think about human rights?

3. Choose two of the articles (each number is called an 'article') from the United Nations' Declaration of Human Rights and explain how you think these might be being broken today in our own country.

4. Choose two different articles and explain how you think these are being broken in a country outside of Papua New Guinea.

5. Suppose someone sent you the letters in the next column. Write answers to them:

*Dear ..... (say your own name)*

First let us ask God's blessing on our work and on our lives. My dear sis or bro, I am getting more and more concerned about the human rights abuses I can see here in my own community. At school we have studied the UN charter about Human Rights, and also my religion classes and my own conscience tell me that some things are not fair and equal here in my own place. I feel that I would like to do something about it all. Do you think this could be God asking me to do something? And if so, what can I do?

*Love from .....*

*My dear friend,*

I had an experience lately that had a big effect on me. I went to visit my friend's place and I found out that the family had been attacked the night before by rascals.

My girlfriend was raped and her brother was killed. He was lying in the coffin. The guys that did it were on drugs. When I looked at Tom's dead body, and the family grieving and my girlfriend's bruised body, I felt crazy. I screamed out to God 'Do something about this! When are you going to do something?' Later that night when I was lying on my bed, I was still saying the same thing. Then I felt God answer me. **God said:**

*'I did do something,*

*I made you.*

*You are the one to bring about respect for life in your community.'*

My friend, do you think God is really talking to me in this experience? What shall I do?

Love from your friend .....



Here is a song for you to learn.

### Who will speak?

1. Who will speak for the poor and the broken,  
Who will speak for the peoples oppressed

#### Chorus 1:

**Who will speak so their voice will be heard**

**Oh who will speak, if you don't?**

*Who will speak if you don't,*

*Who will speak if you don't*

*Who will speak so their voice will be heard*

*Oh who will speak, if you don't?*

2. Who will speak for the ones who are voiceless,  
Speak the truth in the places of power.

3. Who will speak for the children of violence,  
Who will speak for the women abused.

4. Who will speak for the shunned and the outcast,  
Who will speak for all people with aids?

5. Who will **work** for the thousands of homeless,  
Who will work in the ghettos and streets,

#### Chorus 2:

**Who will work so their voice may be heard,**

**Oh who will work, if you don't.**

*Who will work if you don't*

6. Who will care for the plants and the creatures  
Who will care for the land and the seas

Chorus 1, Chorus 2,

**who will work if you don't?**



*There are many many more topics that could have been included in this book, that deal with justice issues and human dignity. For example:*

Globalization  
Infant mortality  
Life expectancy  
Adult Literacy  
Hospitality  
Aids  
Sorcery  
Rascals - who outnumber police and are better equipped  
Corruption in the Political Process  
Self gratification/  
Lifestyles/ Consumerism  
Refugees  
Mining  
Media / Advertising /  
Videos  
Housing  
Energy sources/  
Conservation  
Defence  
Cloning  
Sanguma  
Jealousy / Gossip  
Disease of dependence, expecting others to pay - no interest in self-help

*Since there is no book for 4th term for Gr. 10, perhaps you would like to choose one of the above to work on in 4th term or another issue that interests you which involves human dignity.*



