

# DIOCESE OF BOISE

## OFFICE OF CATECHESIS



The Office of Catechesis supports the mission of the Diocese of Boise by assisting the Bishop in carrying out his role as the chief catechist of the diocese.



### Catechist Certification

### Christian Morality

Kathy Barkdull, Presenter

# Opening Prayer

Lord, make me an instrument of your peace.

Where there is hatred, let me sow love, where there is injury, pardon; where there is doubt, faith, where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; and where there is sadness, joy.

Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console, to be understood as to understand, to be loved as to love; for it is in giving that we receive, it is in pardoning that we are pardoned, and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life.

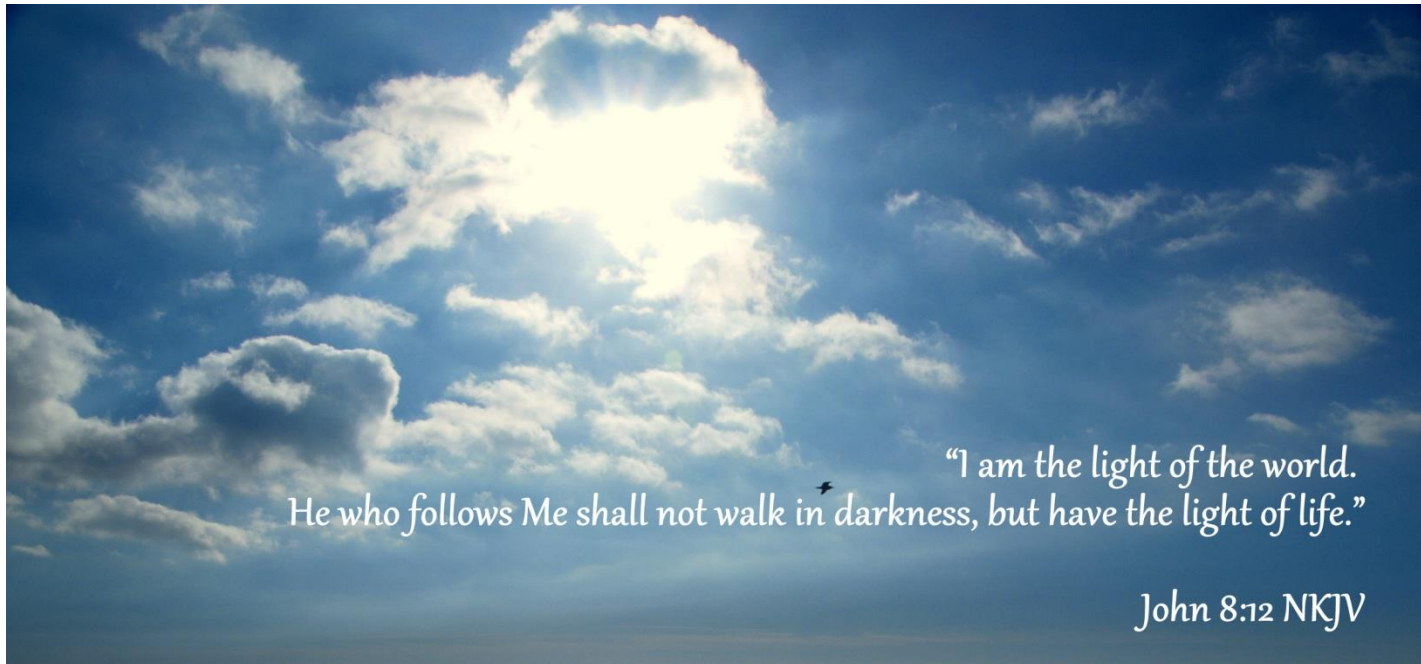
Amen.

# Introductions

What does the word *Conscience* mean to you?

# What is the Christian Moral Life?

The recognition of the amazing gift of God's loving presence in our lives and our continuing effort to respond to that love.



# God is Love

The overriding conviction of both the Old and the New Testament.





## God's Gracious Love

But God, who is rich in mercy, out of great love with which he loved us even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ – by grace you have been saved – and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the ages to come he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God – not the result of works, so that one may boast.

Eph 2:4-9



- God's love is unconditional independent of our goodness or badness, rightness or wrongness.
- God's love is given freely, just because that is the way God is.

*The Power of God's Grace*



# Powerful and Transformative Love

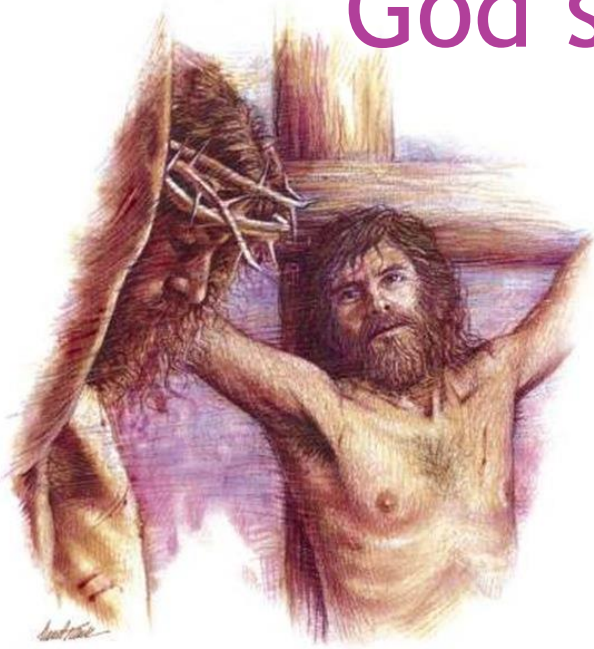


I have observed the misery of my people who are in Egypt; I have heard their cry on account of their taskmasters. Indeed, I know their sufferings, and I have come down to deliver them from the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of the land to a good and broad land.

Exodus 3:7-8



# God's Love is a Verb



God's love is made manifest in powerful deeds – deeds of compassion, healing, and justice.

Christian living begins with an appreciation of the gift of God's life and love. We are then moved to a response that is nothing less than loving one another with that same love.

# Man's Vocation: Life in the Spirit

The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God; it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude. It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment. By his deliberate actions, the human person does, or does not, conform to the good promised by God and attested by moral conscience. Human beings make their own contribution to their interior growth; they make their whole sentient and spiritual lives into means of this growth. With the help of grace they grow in virtue, avoid sin, and if they sin they entrust themselves as did the prodigal son to the mercy of our Father in heaven. In this way they attain to the perfection of charity.

CCC 1700

# Created in the Image of God



The divine image is present in every man. It shines forth in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the union of the divine persons among themselves.

CCC 1702

# Light and Power of the Spirit of God

The human person participates in the light and power of the diving Spirit. By his reason, he is capable of understanding the order of things established by the Creator. By free will, he is capable of directing himself toward his true good. He finds his perfection “in seeking and loving what is true and good.”

CCC 1704



**I KNOW I'M  
SOMEBODY**

**CAUSE GOD  
DONT MAKE  
NO JUNK!!**

- We are made in the image of God.
- We participate in the light and power of the divine Spirit.
- We are called to be holy even at our darkest hour of failure and sinfulness.
- If we take seriously that everyone is created in God's Spirit, we care if there is even one person anywhere on the earth who is hungry, poor, abandoned or abused.

# The Power of Life in the Spirit

- We are called and empowered to continue the mission and ministry of Jesus Christ of reconciliation, healing, forgiveness, and love in today's world.
- Through the Spirit of God, we are joined in Christ's victory over trial and temptation, sickness and suffering, damnation and death.





“...when we are “plunged” into the water we are  
“plunged” into Christ’s death, so that we can rise  
with him as new creatures”.

(from #1214 CCC)

The Most Holy Trinity gives the baptized  
sanctifying grace, the grace of *justification*:

- enabling them to believe in God, to hope in him,  
and to love him through the theological virtues;
- giving them the power to live and act under the  
prompting of the Holy Spirit through the gifts of  
the Holy Spirit;
- allowing them to grow in goodness through the  
moral virtues.

Thus the whole organism of the Christian's  
supernatural life has its roots in Baptism.

CCC 1266



Christian life has a horizontal dimension concerning our relationships with others.

Incorporation into the Body of Christ is an invitation – a challenge – to recognize our essential unity with one another, a unity that is meant to overcome any of the divisions of nationality, culture, race, or gender.

# Christian Moral Life and Participation in Building the Reign of God

- Our role in the Reign of God is active participation.
- This calls for a sense of genuine humility.
- Genuine, humble Christians know that because of their origin in God and because of their destiny in God, they are creatures of enormous value, of inestimable worth.
- It requires a sense of urgency – the ability to see the opportunities that are at hand – at our hands.
- This may mean acting in dramatic ways for the sake of justice, love and peace.



## Forming the Christian Conscience

- *Conscience* refers to not something we do, but something we are.
- We have the capacity for goodness and rightness – of being good and of doing what is right.
- Catholicism insists that human nature is fundamentally good – “*Catholic optimism*.”
- It is only rare instances that someone has no regard at all for goodness and rightness – a *sociopath*.

# The Capacity of Conscience

- Conscience is developmental in nature – a kind of moral muscle that needs to be exercised and developed.
- This is a development that is a lifelong project – the most important we will undertake.
- Everyone has their own moral history and experiences that contribute to who they are – for good or bad.
- This history and experience influence how we face the moral questions we encounter.



When you go  
through deep waters,  
I will be with you.

Isaiah 43:2



# Moral Decision Making

Man is sometimes confronted by situations that make moral judgments less assured and decision difficult. But he must always seriously seek what is right and good and discern the will of God expressed in divine law.

To this purpose, man strives to interpret the data of experience and the signs of the times assisted by the virtue of prudence, by the advice of competent people, and by the help of the Holy Spirit and his gifts.

CCC 1787 & 1788

# Homework

- Identify the moral judgment to be made.
- Gather relevant information.
- Seek counsel.
- Evaluate alternatives.
- Reflect and pray

Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment....For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God.....His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths.

CCC 1776 (from *Gaudium et Spes*)

Our Conscience is our secret core and  
sanctuary.



# Conscience: Taking Responsibility

- An informed conscience is a call for a high degree of maturity and responsibility.
- More than just “following the rules” but taking responsibility for one’s actions, for one’s life.
- Freedom of conscience presumes that responsible and mature persons are attentive to both the personal aspect of a moral life but one that has been enlightened by the wisdom of others.
- Our conscience is sacred but that doesn’t mean our judgments will always be right.
- A certain degree of humility in regard to our moral judgments and convictions.



# Christian Morality and the Dynamics of Sin and Conversion



Sin is an offense against God... Sin sets itself against God's love for us and turns our hearts away from it. Like the first sin, it is disobedience, a revolt against God through the will to become "like gods," knowing and determining good and evil. Sin is thus "love of oneself even to contempt of God." In this proud self-exaltation, sin is diametrically opposed to the obedience of Jesus, which achieves our salvation.

CCC 1850

Sins can be distinguished according to their objects, as can every human act; or according to the virtues they oppose, by excess or defect or according to the commandments they violate. They can also be classed according to whether they concern God, neighbor, or oneself; they can be divided into spiritual and carnal sins, or again as sins in thought, word, deed, or omission. The root of sin is in the heart of man, in his free will, according to the teaching of the Lord: “For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a man.” but in the heart also resides charity, the source of the good and pure works, which sin wounds.

CCC 1853

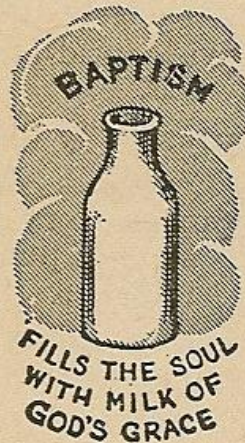
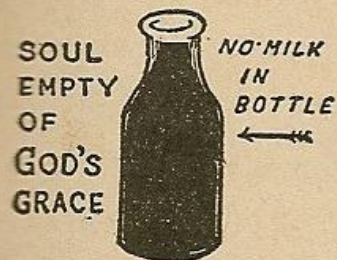
# SIN

## *Actual Sin*

### SIN IS ANY ACT FORBIDDEN BY GOD

I

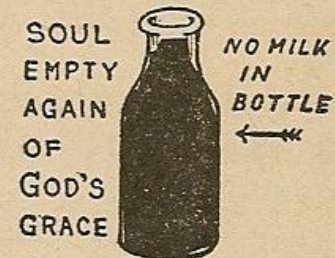
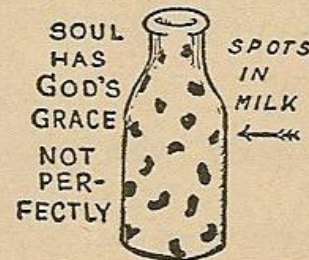
#### ORIGINAL SIN (WE ALL INHERIT)



II

#### ACTUAL SINS (WE OURSELVES COMMIT)

VENIAL                      MORTAL



"Take Heed Thou Never Consent to Sin."—*Tobias 4: 6.*



# Original Sin



- The rebellion of humankind against God has been going on since the beginning of time, and is passed down from one generation to the next.
- Through the Fall of Adam and Eve, the harmony of creation was also destroyed.
- Original sin is a loss of the original holiness and righteousness with which our first parents were created – a state and not an act.
- Concupiscence – the inclination to sin.
- We inherit the “fallout” from the sinful, rebellious deeds of those who have gone before us.
- The waters of Baptism “wash” away the effects of original sin.



# Actual Sin: Mortal and Venial

## MORTAL



For a *sin* to be *mortal*, three conditions must together be met: “Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.”

CCC 1837

## VENIAL



One commits *venial sin* when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.

CCC 1862



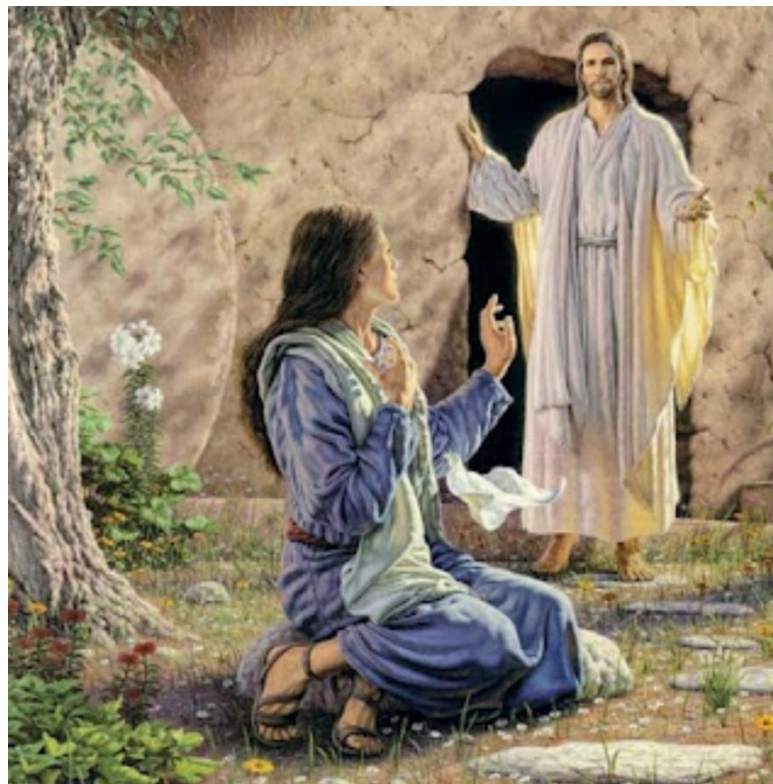
# Conversion as Command and Possibility

Jesus calls to conversion. This call is an essential part of the proclamation of the kingdom: “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent, and believe in the gospel.”....

CCC1427

Christ’s transforming grace is operative and at work in our lives, enabling us to have hope in dark moments, to begin again.

# Resurrection Faith and Christian Hope



*And if Christ has not been raised, then empty too is our preaching; empty, too, your faith. 1Cor 15:14*

*For as all die in Adam, so all will be made  
alive in Christ. 1Cor 15:22*

An Easter faith is not only about the empty  
tomb of Jesus; it is about our empty tombs  
as well.

Death was not the final word for Jesus, and  
it does not have the final say for us either.

# Christian Virtues

A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions.

CCC 1803

# Theological Virtues

- Faith – Our belief in God.
  - Hope – Our desire for the Kingdom of Heaven and eternal life.
  - Charity – Our love of God above all things and love of neighbor as ourselves.
- 
- Those virtues that relate directly to God.
  - Not acquired through human effort or Baptism, but infused within us as gifts from God.

# Cardinal Virtues

- Prudence – Right reason in action
- Justice – To give our due to God and neighbor.
- Fortitude – Firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of good.
- Temperance – Moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods.
  
- From the Latin word *cardo* meaning “hinge”.
- All virtues are related to or hinged to one of the Cardinal virtues.



# Our Vocation to Beatitude

The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus' preaching. They take up the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham. The Beatitudes fulfill the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven...

The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and portray his charity. They express the vocation of the faithful associated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection; they shed light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life; they are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of tribulations; they proclaim the blessings and rewards already secured, however dimly, for Christ's disciples; they have begun in the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints.



# The Beatitudes.....

- Reveal the goal of human existence which is a state of deep happiness or joy.
- Address to each individual personally as well as the Church as a whole.
- Confront us with decisive moral choices and a life of authentic Christian discipleship.
- Invite us to purity of heart and to seek the love of God above all else.
- Teaches that true happiness is not riches, power, or any human achievement but in God alone.
- Describe the path for us to the Kingdom of Heaven.



## “Teacher, what must I do...”

“Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?” To the young man who asked this question, Jesus answers first by invoking the necessity to recognize God as the “One there is who is good,” as the supreme Good and source of all good. Then Jesus tells him: “If you would enter life, keep the commandments.” And he cites for his questioner the precepts that concern love of neighbor: “You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother.” Finally Jesus sums up these commandments positively: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”

# The Ten Commandments

- To enter into eternal life, keep the Commandments.
- Jesus confirmed the permanent validity of the Commandments by his life and preaching.
- The Commandments are the gift of the covenant of God with his people.
- Scripture, Jesus' example and the tradition of the Church acknowledge the ancient importance and significance of the Commandments.
- The Ten Commandments state grave obligations.
- What God commands he makes possible by his grace.

# Respect for Human Life

*Human Life is sacred* because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.

*CCC 2258*



*Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good.*

*Concern for the health of its citizens requires that society help in the attainment of living-conditions that allow them to grow and reach maturity: food and clothing, housing, health care, basic education, employment, and social assistance.*

# Direct and “Indirect” Killing

- Direct killing – when one does something (or refrains from doing something) that is inevitably directed toward the death of a human being – abortion, assisted suicide, suicide, euthanasia, murder.
- Indirect killing – do something (or refrain from doing something) that has both a primary, or “direct” effect and at the same time a secondary, or “indirect” effect (one that is regrettable and that would be avoided if it were possible to do so).

# Ordinary vs. Extraordinary Means of Medical Treatment

- **Ordinary** means are all medicines, treatments, and operations which offer a reasonable hope of benefit and which can be obtained and used without excessive expense, pain, or other inconvenience.
- **Extraordinary** means are all medicines; treatments, and operations which cannot be obtained or used without excessive expense; pain, or other inconvenience, or which is used, would not offer a reasonable hope of benefit.





## Christian Morality and Human Sexuality

“God created man in his own image...male and female he created them”; He blessed them and said, “Be fruitful and multiply”; “When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created.”

CCC 2331

# Theology of Creation

- We are created with and for others – to make our way with one another.
- The relationship between men and women should be marked by cooperation, harmony, equality, and mutuality.
- Patriarchy and sexism is nothing more than a manifestation of human sinfulness.

# The Vocation to Chastity

- Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man's belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in the complete and lifelong mutual gift of a man and a woman.

CCC 2337

- The chaste person maintains the integrity of the powers of life and love placed in him. This integrity ensures the unity of the person; it is opposed to any behavior that would impair it. It tolerates neither a double life nor duplicity in speech.

CCC 2338

# Chastity

- Chastity is not some ill-fated or self-destructive attempt to deny or repress our sexual energies, our need and longing for communion, intimacy, affection, and love.
- Chastity is integration – when we live life in a way that the different aspects of life fit together in a coherent and honest way.
- Chaste persons are able to express themselves in their relationships in loving and affectionate ways that are consistent with their commitments and state in life.

# The Laws of Growth

Chastity has *laws of growth* which progress through stages marked by imperfection and too often by sin. “Man...day by day builds himself up through his many free decisions; and so he knows, loves, and accomplishes moral good by stages of growth.”  
CCC2343

Chastity represents an eminently personal task; it also involves a *cultural effort*, for there is “an interdependence between personal betterment and the improvement of society.”  
CCC2344

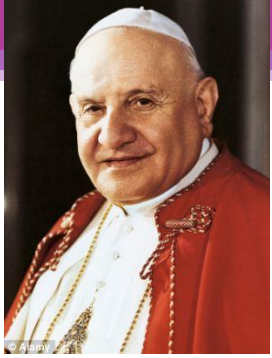
*We are called to be and to  
do the best we can – no  
more, no less*



# Christian Morality and Social Responsibility

- Modern Catholic social teaching began with the encyclical letter, *Rerum Novarum* (*On the Condition of Workers*), Pope Leo XIII, 1891 in response to the conditions of workers in what had become industrialized and urbanized Europe.
- Catholic tradition calls for the recognition of an respect for fundamental human rights.
- Society exists to protect and promote the dignity and rights of people, not the other way around.





## Pacem in Terris (Peace on Earth), Pope John XXIII, 1963

- The right to life and worthy standard of living: the right to food, clothing, shelter, healthcare and necessary social services.
- The right to moral and cultural values.
- The right to worship God according to one's conscience.
- The right to choose one's state in life.
- The right to work, in a safe environment, to receive a just wage and to own property.
- The right to meet and associate with others.
- The right to emigrate and immigrate.
- The right to take an active part in the civil and political life of one's community.



## The Common Good

- If emphasis on human rights is the right hand of Catholic social teaching, emphasis on the common good is the left hand.
- By common good is to be understood “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.” The common good concerns the life of all. It calls for prudence from each, and even more from those who exercise the office of authority. CCC 1906

# Three Essential Elements of The Common Good

1. The Common Good presupposes ***respect for the person.***
2. The Common Good requires the ***social well-being and development*** of the group itself.
3. The Common Good requires ***peace***, the stability and security of a just order.

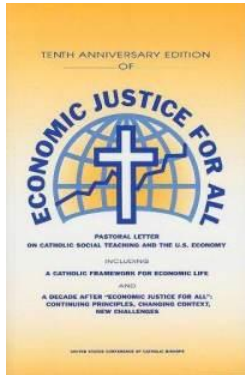


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## Economic Justice

The development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community.

CCC 2426



Although all members of the Church are economic actors every day in their individual lives, they also play an economic role united together as Church. On the parish and diocesan level, through its agencies and institutions, the Church employs many people; it has investments; it has extensive properties for worship and mission. All the moral principles that govern the just operation of any economic endeavor apply to the Church and its agencies and institutions; indeed the Church should be exemplary. The Synod of Bishops in 1971 worded this challenge most aptly: “While the Church is bound to give witness to justice, she recognizes that anyone who ventures to speak to people about justice must first be just in their eyes. Hence, we must undertake an examination of the modes of acting and of the possessions and lifestyle found within the Church herself.”

Economic Justice for All #347

# Responsibilities of the State and Business Enterprises for Economic Justice

- *Access to employment* without unjust discrimination.
- *A just wage.*
- Recourse to *strike*.
- The right to *social security* contributions.

CCC 2431 - 2436



# Preferential Option for the Poor

- A particular love and concern for those who are in need.
- *“The Church’s love for the poor...is a part of her constant tradition.”* CCC2444
- *St John Chrysostom vigorously recalls this: “Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs.” “The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity”. When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice.* CCC 2446

# Conclusion

Living a Christian Moral Life may be difficult but it is not “the dark side of the Good News.”

Christian morality is, at its heart, living “in the breath of God.”

*“As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit.”*

*John 20:21-22*



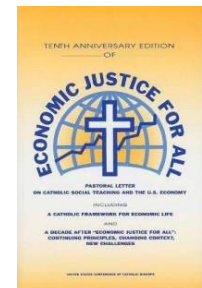
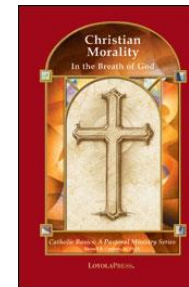
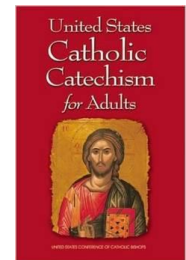
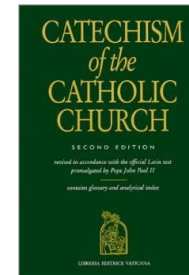
**We have been created by the gift of the breath of God. God continues to breathe in us and in all creation.**

**Moral life is an invitation to recognize and reverence the gift of God's life, God's breath, in ourselves and in all we meet.**

**Just as the breath of God transformed the disciples, it also energizes us for proclamation, healing, reconciling, peace makers and justice builders.**

# Christian Morality Resources

- ❖ 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition of Catholic Catechism, 2000
- ❖ United States Catechism for Adults, 2006
- ❖ Christian Morality: In the Breath of God, Loyola Press, 2002
- ❖ Economic Justice for All: Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy, USCCB, 1986



# DIOCESE OF BOISE OFFICE OF CATECHESIS



Bottom row l-r: Sr. Chela Gonzalez, Director of the Office of Catechesis; Cathy Wheaton, Administrative Assistant & Resource Center Coordinator

Top row l-r: Santiago Robles, Coordinator of Adult & Family Catechesis; Jackie Hopper, Coordinator of Children's Catechesis; Chris Kreslins, Coordinator of Youth & Young Adult Catechesis

*We're here to serve – and only a phone call or email away!*

# Basic Catechist Certification

9<sup>th</sup> Session Webinar

Scripture

Thursday, March 5  
6 pm PST, 7 pm MST

# Reflection Questions

- What is the first thing that comes to your mind when you hear the word “sin”?
- What is your reaction to hearing that *conversion* is not only a command but a possibility?
- What does “preferential love for the poor” mean to you?



# Closing Prayer

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
fill me with life anew,  
that I may love the things You love,  
and do what You would do.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
until my heart is pure,  
until with You I have one will,  
to live and to endure.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
my soul with grace refine,  
until this earthly part of me,  
glows with Your fire divine.

Breathe on me, breath of God,  
so I shall never die,  
but live with You the perfect life  
in Your eternity.

Amen.