

*St. Michael the Archangel
Family Faith Formation*

Home Kit



Session #5: Making a Difference in the World

February 12, 2017

Making a Difference in the World Activities

Serve the Poor

Through **CRS Rice Bowl**, we hear stories from our brothers and sisters in need worldwide, and devote our Lenten prayers, fasting and gifts to change the lives of the poor. **Each day of Lent, you are invited to use the Lenten Calendar— included with every CRS Rice Bowl—to guide your Lenten almsgiving.** These daily almsgiving activities—for example, give 25 cents for every faucet found in your home—help you reflect on the realities of our brothers and sisters around the world and how they can be in solidarity during the Lenten season.

Pledge of Nonviolence

Institute for Peace and Justice

Making peace must start within ourselves, in our family, and in our relationships with people and the world. We commit ourselves as best we can to become nonviolent and peaceable people.

Respect Self and Others.

To respect myself, to affirm others and to avoid uncaring criticism, hateful words, physical attacks and self-destructive behavior.

I/we commit to...

Communicate Better.

To share my feelings honestly, to look for safe ways to express my anger, and to work at solving problems peacefully.

I/we commit to...

Listen Carefully.

To listen carefully to one another, especially those who disagree with me, and to consider others' feelings and needs rather than insist on having my own way.

I/we commit to...

Forgive.

To apologize and make amends when I have hurt another, to forgive others, and to keep from holding grudges.

I/we commit to...

Respect Nature.

To treat the environment and all living things, including our pets, with respect and care.

I/we commit to...

Play Creatively.

To select entertainment and toys that support our family's values and to avoid entertainment that makes violence look exciting, funny or acceptable.

I/we commit to...

Be Courageous,

To challenge violence in all its forms whenever I encounter it, whether at home, at school, at work, or in the

community, and to stand with others who are treated unfairly.

I/we commit to...

How Environmentally-Friendly Are You?

How environmentally-friendly are you today? Use the following nineteen items to determine several of the ways you and your home have an impact on the environment. Place a check-mark next to each item that is true about your practices or about your home.

- I recycle cans.
- I recycle bottles.
- I recycle magazines and newspapers.
- My car averages at least 27.5 miles per gallon (federal car fuel economy average) or at least 22.2 for SUVs and light trucks.
- I use public transportation, walk, bicycle, or carpool to work or school.
- I take short showers.
- I have installed water saving devices in my home, e.g., a low-flow shower head or a low-flow toilet (or toilet dam to reduce the amount of water in every flush).
- I have purchased energy-efficient appliances.
- I have replaced standard light bulbs with energy-efficient compact fluorescent lights (CFLs).
- I eat meat at dinner time less than three times per week.
- I have insulated our house to conserve energy.
- I turn down the thermostat in winter (68 degrees or lower) in the winter time (heating).
- I set the air conditioner to use less energy in the summer (setting the thermostat above 76 degrees).
- I turn off the lights and other appliances when out of the room or house.
- I turn off water while brushing teeth, shaving, washing dishes, and so forth.
- I have reduced the amount of unwanted junk mail (e.g., catalogs) by calling the companies and re-moving our names from their mailing lists.
- I have reduced or eliminated the use of pesticides in our garden and on our lawn.
- I purchase organic grown fruits, vegetables, and other foods which do not use pesticides.
- I purchase products that are made from recycled materials and from companies that produce environment-friendly products.

How did you do?

- ✓ If you checked 16-19 items, you are in the environment-friendly hall of fame.
- ✓ If you checked 11-15 items, you are making progress in becoming environment-friendly, so identify what areas you need to improve next.
- ✓ If you checked 6-10 items, you have begun to become environment-friendly, but there are lots of improvements you can make.

- ✓ If you check under 5 items, you haven't begun to think about the environmental impact just you and your home has on the environment. There's lots of work to do.

Reflection

- How are you living environment-friendly practices? Which practices are strengths?
- What more could you do? Where do you see improvement?

Resources for Action

The Busy Family's Guide to Volunteering. Jenny Friedman. Beltsville, MD: Robins Lane Press, 2003.

Volunteering is an important way to cultivate compassion, gratitude, and empathy in children and to bring families together in meaningful ways. For busy parents who want to spend time with their kids while still contributing to their community, family volunteering is an opportunity to combine two commitments into one. This book is -perfect for every family because it offers flexibility—volunteer for long-term projects or one-time events. Whether you have a two-year-old or an eighteen-year-old, you'll find everything you need to know to have a fulfilling and fun volunteer experience, from finding the right opportunity for your family to answering hesitations you may have. The perfect book for families who want to do good things

for their community, spend quality time together, and have fun!

Everybody Wants to Change the World: Practical Ideas for Social Justice. Tony Campolo and Gordon Aeschliman. Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006,

All over the world—and in your community—people are lonely, hungry, sick, struggling to make ends meet, bitter, imprisoned, dying. Do you feel powerless to make a difference? You don't have to be helpless! From the simplest acts of kindness to more complex works of mercy, you'll find more than 100 practical ideas for compassionately responding to the needs of others. Jesus calls us to creatively and courageously share the good news by loving our neighbor. It's time to begin!

Growing Compassionate Kids: Helping Kids See Beyond Their Backyard. Jan Johnson. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 2001.

Open a new world of possibilities for your kids, where making a difference for others becomes a way of life! *Growing Compassionate Kids* illustrates practical everyday ways for parents to help children develop empathy and seek justice in the world. As one reviewer says, "This book is a wonderful antidote to both 'compassion fatigue' and the frustrations of Christian parenting in a selfish society." Jan Johnson, a well-known author who deals with Christian spirituality, helps moms and dads and grandparents learn to incorporate

social outreach and mission into the often- hectic everyday realities of family life.

Our Day to End Poverty: 24 Ways You Can Make a Difference. Shannon Daley-Harris, Jeffrey Keenan, Karen Speerstra. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2007.

This book is organized around the typical activities of an ordinary 24-hour day and then showing how to see them as part of the path out of poverty. For example, making breakfast, taking the kids to school, and checking email are connected to addressing world hunger, making education available to all, and ensuring access to appropriate technology. The authors presents hundreds of steps we can take to combat poverty and all its attendant evils. The chapters are designed to animate our ethical action behind the eight United Nations Millennium Development Goals, which all deal with poverty-related problems. *Our Day to End Poverty* is divided into sections on morning, afternoon, and evening. Here are the topics covered in evening: Extend Hospitality and Create Community, Spread Literacy, Improve Transportation Options, Travel with a Purpose, Save the Lives of Mothers and Newborns, Improve Access to Clean Water, Increase International Development Aid, and Speak Up for Justice: More Thoughts on Advocacy.

Raising Kids Who Will Make a Difference—Helping Your Family Live with Integrity, Value Simplicity, and Care for Others. Susan V. Vogt. Chicago: Loyola Press, 2002.

Raising kids to be socially conscious and embrace strong values can be difficult in today's world. In *Raising Kids Who Will Make a Difference*, mother, counselor, and family-life educator Susan Vogt sets out to inspire, equip, and comfort parents in the awesome task of raising Catholic kids who will make positive contributions to our world. Using a delightful blend of honesty and humor, Vogt offers successful parenting strategies and straightforward discussions on important issues such as sexuality, substance abuse, materialism, racism, global awareness, and death; and insights and tips for raising children to make a positive impact in our world. A unique aspect of this book are the contributions not only of parents but also the reflections of young adults on what influenced them to make decisions to serve others.

Teaching Kids to Care and Share: 300+ Mission and Service Ideas for Children. Jolene L. Roehlkepartain. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 2000.

This volume provides over 300 inventive, hands-on activities that involve children in service to one another, their churches and local communities, and the world. Within these pages, children's workers and leaders will find short and long-

term active service/learning opportunities that encourage the youngest members of their congregation to follow Jesus' example of living their faith by caring for others. The book features: lively, age-appropriate projects and activities for 3- to 5-year-olds, 6- to 9-year-olds, and 10- to 12-year-olds; guidance for working with children of different ages and abilities; ready-to-use reproducible pages and a Scripture and topic index; and contact information for numerous national and international service organizations and programs that work with and relate to children

To Love Tenderly: Teaching Compassion and Justice Through Stories and Activities for Ages Five through Nine. New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2005.

When people reach out to others whose lives are very different from theirs, understanding and appreciation begin. This child-and-adult book is designed to begin this process. Forty-four stories of children from all over the world (Pakistan, Guatemala, Latvia, Germany, Sudan, the United States, Brazil, China, and others) help readers come to feel a bond of friendship and care with their peers in faraway places. Some are based on real-life situations, others on folk tales. But they all introduce children to realities of poverty, injustice, and abuse of natural resources to help them develop a strong sense of

identification with children all over the world.

To Walk Humbly: Teaching Compassion and Justice through Stories and Activities for Ages Ten through Thirteen. New London, CT: Twenty-Third Publications, 2007.

Anne Neuberger offers fifty-five wonderful stories from around the world to help young Catholics connect with the social, environmental, and economic problems of children around the globe. It encourages them to accept and think of these children as family, as sisters and brothers. Story topics include school life, child labor, cultural and religious celebrations, hunger, racism, poverty, sharing, generosity, and lifestyles.