

Grade 11 Safe Environment Lesson Plan

Grade 11 Theological Concept – Catholic Social Teaching, Examination of Conscience

Objective: Catholic Social Teaching is not just about the poor or other people, but about how *we* treat those around us.

Resources: examination of conscience. This could be used as part of a lesson on Catholic Social Teaching, or as part of a retreat, or as a meditation to begin or close a Youth Group session. If necessary, include a review of virtues.

Estimated Time: 20 minutes

INTRODUCTION:

[If Catholic Social Teaching has been introduced: We've been talking a lot in Catholic Social teaching about the people in society, and how they should be treated in general.]

Let's begin today with an examination of conscience, focusing especially on how *we* treat the people around us, our society." (This is taken from Religion Curriculum, Appendix C; use only some questions if time is limited.)

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE:

I examine my relationships with my family.

Have I disobeyed my parents, talked back, been disrespectful, given them the silent treatment? Have I pouted and been unpleasant when I didn't get my way?

Have I truly recognized the love my parents provide? Have I lately acknowledged with gratitude all they do for me? Have I helped out around the house, or do I wait until I'm ordered or threatened?

Have I lied to my parents? Have I bad-mouthed them to others? Have I acted ashamed of them? Have I fought with my brothers and sisters? Have I blamed them for something for which I was responsible, tried to get them in trouble?

Have I borrowed their things without asking, refused to share my things? Have I broken their confidences and promises made to them?

Have I allowed them to do what I knew was wrong? Have I exposed them to danger? Have I let others pick on them or made fun of them without coming to their defense?

I examine my relationship with others.

Have I picked on people, ridiculed them, purposely gotten them in trouble? Have I excluded them from groups, talked behind their backs, lied about things?

Have I stolen from others, copied their work, damaged their property, been envious of their possessions? Have I been selfish with others, insisting on my own way, refusing to admit when I am wrong or apologize?

Have I used others, manipulated them, used their body for my pleasure?

Have I held a grudge, tried to get even, been glad when bad things happen to them?

Have I shared my money with my Church, with the poor? Have I given my time to help others in need? Have I used my talents for the good of others?

LESSON:

Today, we're focusing on how our choices, our behaviors, really are part of Catholic Social teaching. This is really more of a meditation than a lesson, so you don't have to necessarily answer these questions out loud. Use the quiet as a time to examine your behavior, your beliefs.

- ? St. Augustine once said, 'Lord, make me chaste, but not yet.' And yet, this same man who lived with a woman for many years without marrying her, had a son with her, and lived a life of self-pleasure, became one of the greatest saints of the Church. How is that possible?
- ? Well, he didn't wake up one day and decide to be a saint. It really took a long time to break those bad habits and start building good habits. Tell me, what are some ways that he could break his bad habits and form good ones?
If time, go on to ask which ones would be easiest to implement in their lives, which ways are the most practical for overcoming vice and moving toward virtue.
- ? But maybe, you say to yourself, 'I live a pretty good life. I don't drink, don't smoke, do my homework on time...' Then ask yourself, when you are stressed, what do you do? How do you treat the people around you? How do you treat yourself? How do you allow others to treat you? Do you choose these moments for behavior you wouldn't practice otherwise? How do these inappropriate behaviors hurt the people around you? How do they hurt you? What are some examples of inappropriate ways to cope with stress and hard times in our lives? ... What could we do instead? How do we tell which ways are hurting us and those around us?
- ? Why do we even have to include the lives of people around us? Catholic Social Teaching is rooted in the fundamental principle of respect for all human life and dignity. Jesus calls us not just to unity with him, but to unity with our community as well. Our actions don't just affect our relationship with God, but also affect our relationship with each other. How do I recognize situations that do not reflect that respect? In those situations what choices do I make to show that respect?

- ? Take a couple moments to close your eyes, slow your breathing, and focus first of all on those areas of your life where God tells you that you're doing well, where you're treating people with respect and building the Kingdom of God on earth.

- ? Now, take a couple moments to ask for God's help in those areas of your life that you could improve in your treatment of others or in how you reflect God's light in your life. Select one area that needs help, and in a few moments I'll ask you to say out loud the virtue you feel will most help you grow in this area."

CONCLUSION: *End with virtue sharing exercise and close with prayer for strength to do God's will.*