

## 101 Ways to Live Catholic Social Teaching

### 1) Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- § Volunteer at an adult day care center.
- § Teach your child about the dignity of each person.
- § Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper on a life issue.
- § Become a Prison/Jail Ministry Volunteer.
- § Visit elderly, lonely.
- § Frame all Respect Life (Pro-Life) issues in the light of Catholic Social Teaching.
- § Support and volunteer in a program that assists pregnant women.
- § Respect each other, i.e. differences, diversity, racial, ethnic, religious.
- § Teach and practice respect for the elderly, developmentally disabled, mentally ill, physically disabled. Include these people in activities.
- § Stop conversations that are prejudicial.
- § Pray regularly for the unborn, pregnant women, the poor, the sick, and those who are dying.
- § Live daily in your family life and friendships aware of the dignity of all persons.
- § Advocate for public policies that respect human life from conception until natural death.
- § Study issues like the death penalty and violence with an emphasis on the fundamental dignity of the human person. Advocate for appropriate legislation.
- § Be an active member of a Pro-Life group ([www.usccb.org/prolife](http://www.usccb.org/prolife)), Right to Life of Michigan ([www.rtl.org](http://www.rtl.org)).

### 2) Call to Family, Community, and Participation

- § Keep in regular contact with an aging relative. Take that person to appointments, shopping, and on outings.
- § Attend municipal council meetings, township meetings, or neighborhood meetings.
- § Write a thank you note to a civil servant, legislator, or judge whose work you admire.
- § Organize a neighborhood block party.
- § Volunteer in your community. Be part of a community organization.
- § Be a member of a decision-making group, e.g. Parish Pastoral Council, Parish Pastoral Council Committees, local School Board, Neighborhood Group, non-profit Board, etc
- § Pray regularly as a family or in a faith sharing community. Include prayers for your community, state, nation, and world.
- § Read the local newspaper carefully and discuss issues with your family.
- § Serve as a role model for your children by making time for family events and participating with enjoyment.
- § Advocate for local school board policies that provide equal educational opportunities for all children in you community.
- § Encourage your parish, school, and municipality to provide activities and learning opportunities that build a sense of the common good and welcome participation.
- § Designate one evening a week or one day a weekend for family and friendship activities.
- § Host a family reunion.

### 3) Rights and Responsibilities

- § Become a mentor for a teen or an adult.
- § Speak up when you see a wrong being done.
- § Run for political office or support someone who is doing this.

- § Live and share Catholic Social Teaching with others.
- § Advocate for and support local education and training for good jobs.
- § Practice Stewardship – by sharing your time, talent, and treasure.
- § Be a socially conscious investor.
- § Become an active member of Groundwork for a Just World ([www.groundworkonline.org](http://www.groundworkonline.org)).
- § Find ways in your community to promote the right to life, to food, to shelter.
- § Join NETWORK, a national Catholic social justice lobby, and participate in their activities ([www.networklobby.org](http://www.networklobby.org)).
- § Vote in every election, exercising your responsibility for participation in decisions that affect the quality of our life together.
- § Join with others who are working to insure a quality education in local schools.
- § Participate in a voter registration drive.
- § Pray for our legislators, our judges, and court system as they deal with issues of rights and responsibilities.
- § Form or participate in an Amnesty International group ([www.amnestyusa.org](http://www.amnestyusa.org)) working for the rights of others.

#### 4) Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- § Give to an agency that supports and empowers the poor.
- § Volunteer at a social services agency.
- § Learn about the causes of poverty and share this information with others.
- § Work for legislation that reduces the growing gap between the rich and poor in the U.S. and overseas. Contact [www.usccb.org/sdwp](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp) or [www.catholiccharitiesusa.org](http://www.catholiccharitiesusa.org) for information.
- § Share your job knowledge and skills with another/others.
- § Support the Catholic Campaign for Human Development ([www.usccb.org/cchd](http://www.usccb.org/cchd)) and Catholic Relief Services ([www.catholicrelief.org](http://www.catholicrelief.org))
- § Help to empower and assist people with goals to help them get out of poverty.
- § Support and be a volunteer for Habitat for Humanity ([www.habitat.org](http://www.habitat.org)) projects in your community.
- § Be involved with a local Catholic Campaign for Human Development funded group.
- § Join Bread for the World ([www.bread.org](http://www.bread.org)). Participate in BFW activities.
- § Serve at a soup kitchen.
- § Participate in your diocesan ministry to the migrants.
- § Support Doctors without Borders ([www.dwb.org](http://www.dwb.org)).
- § Participate in planning a local CROP Walk ([www.churchworldservice.org](http://www.churchworldservice.org)) and walk.

#### 5) The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

- § Support the maintenance and expansion of public transportation.
- § Support appropriations to subsidize quality day care.
- § Support ordinances establishing a living wage.
- § Praise someone for a job well done.
- § Help someone recognize and appreciate his or her gifts and talents.
- § Support a union. Join a union.
- § Advocate for just wages and benefits at local, state, and federal levels.
- § Work for legislation that insists on safe working conditions.
- § Respect and show appreciation for all occupations.
- § Share your job knowledge and skills with another/others.
- § Lobby for employees' participation in the decision making process at your place of employment.

- § Sponsor a Catholic Relief Services' Work of Human Hands sale ([www.catholicrelief.org](http://www.catholicrelief.org)) at your parish.
- § Shop and buy at local businesses.
- § Join and participate in National Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice ([www.nicwj.org](http://www.nicwj.org))

## 6) Solidarity

- § Participate in ecumenical gatherings.
- § Participate in events sponsored by minority groups.
- § Support and promote Catholic Relief Services' Operation Rice Bowl ([www.catholicrelief.org](http://www.catholicrelief.org)) in your parish.
- § Seek out opportunities to know people of other races, cultures, and religions.
- § Encourage inner city parish partnership.
- § Promote parish twinning with an overseas parish or project.
- § Attend ethnic festivals, fiestas, celebrations, parades, etc.
- § Learn a second language.
- § Be a pen pal with someone overseas.
- § Purchase locally grown food.
- § Participate in a program of racial healing.
- § Give generously of your time and treasure to programs that accompany people, such as Big Brother/Big Sister, Boys/Girls Club.
- § Subscribe to Maryknoll Magazine ([www.maryknoll.org](http://www.maryknoll.org)) and participate in World Watch suggestions in there.
- § Learn about refugee camps in the world and what you can do through United Nations ([www.un.org](http://www.un.org)) and Catholic Relief Services ([www.catholicrelief.org](http://www.catholicrelief.org)).
- § Join Pax Christi ([www.paxchristiusa.org](http://www.paxchristiusa.org)). Participate in their activities.

## 7) Care for God's Creation

- § Plant a garden.
- § Support planning efforts of local municipalities to establish zoned areas that are maintained in a natural state.
- § Eat vegetarian: half the land use, twice the food for humans.
- § Organize a park clean up.
- § Buy organically grown food.
- § Do not purchase or use products that harm the environment.
- § Contact National Catholic Rural Conference ([www.ncrlc.com](http://www.ncrlc.com)) for information on rural life, agricultural, and environmental issues.
- § Participate in a neighborhood beautification project.
- § Walk. Ride a bike.
- § Buy a fuel-efficient vehicle.
- § Encourage and support legislation that protects the land and environment.
- § Plant a tree.
- § Clean up trash.
- § Practice the 3 R's – Reduce, Recycle, Reuse.
- § Join and participate in the Sierra Club ([www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)) or a similar environmental organization.

*List compiled by Sr. Susan Ridley, OP, with input from Michigan Catholic Conference Social Services Committee members.*