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*For the Director of Religious Education  
and School Principal*

# The Jubilee Pledge in Educational and Catechetical Settings

The following are suggestions for ways that you can incorporate the Jubilee Pledge for Charity, Justice, and Peace into various parish educational and catechetical settings. As you begin your planning, remember that the jubilee pledge involves the entire parish. It has educational uses for every age group in your community.

There are two key ways to use the pledge in educational settings that you will want to consider: (1) how to use the pledge itself as an educational tool on the social mission of every believer; and (2) how to respond to the commitment each pledge signer makes to learn more about Catholic social teaching.

## **Using the Pledge as an Educational Tool**

### *Family*

Encourage families in your community to keep the pledge visible in their homes and to use it as a basis for prayer and discussion throughout 1999 and 2000. Suggest that families develop concrete ways to carry out each of the eight elements of the pledge. For example, a family can discuss various aspects of Catholic social teaching in light of community needs and find ways to work together as a family on those issues. Another example would be the element of service to those who are poor and vulnerable. Families might consider becoming part of parish or community projects to feed the hungry, clothe the naked, or build housing for the homeless. They might attend a meeting with legislators or a candidates forum. It is important to involve everyone in the family in some way—both in the discussion of the pledge and in its application.

### *Adults*

The jubilee pledge is asking for more than a one-time consent to the principles it presents. Adults need multiple opportunities to explore the meaning of the eight elements of the pledge and to discern ways they can put them into practice. Parishes can use the themes of the pledge for small-group discussions, for large-group presentations, and for articles in the bulletin and newsletters. The eight themes of the pledge would make an excellent starting point for a parish retreat or mission. In general, every gathering of adults in the parish during the year 2000 could begin with a communal reading of the pledge. At least once during the year, every group should engage in a substantive discussion of the pledge's meaning. For example, beginning parish council or education meetings with the pledge would help to shape the meeting's discussion.

### *Catechists and Religion Teachers*

The themes of the great jubilee (Trinity, unity, and eucharist) and the jubilee pledge should be included in parish and diocesan in-service sessions. Catechists and religion teachers should be encouraged to use the pledge for their personal reflection and to determine ways that they can share the pledge with the groups with whom they work. Those working with children



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and youth could have the students recite the pledge at various times throughout the year. Those working with early childhood and primary-level children could simply familiarize the children with the eight themes. However, at all ages, it is not enough to stop with the words of the pledge. Children and adolescents need to have many opportunities to put the pledge into action. For example, have the children and youth identify and apply things that they can do to live justly in the family, school, and neighborhood. Involve young people in parish activities that work for justice, charity, and peace, such as participating in food and clothing drives, cleaning up graffiti and trash from neighborhood streets, making friends with new neighbors, or writing to an elected official about a public policy issue related to justice and peace. Information on two ways to act on the pledge can be found in the "Opportunities to Act" insert included in this kit.

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## **Assisting Those Who Have Pledged to Learn About Catholic Social Teaching**

Every person who signs the jubilee pledge has made a commitment to learn more about Catholic social teaching and will be looking for ways to keep that commitment. At its simplest, your response can involve putting short quotes from Catholic social teaching in the bulletin each week. You can also include notices in the bulletin about documents, periodicals, websites, and other sources of Catholic social teaching, offering information on how to obtain them or where to find them in the parish library. A good, brief, general summary of the key themes of Catholic social teaching can be found in *Excerpts from Sharing Catholic Social Teaching*, available from the United States Catholic Conference (800-235-8722).

Catechists, youth ministry leaders, and school teachers can incorporate into their lesson plans and programs the themes of Catholic social teaching found in *Excerpts from Sharing Catholic Social Teaching*. Ideas and models can be found on the Internet at [www.stthomas.edu/cathstudies/cst/educ](http://www.stthomas.edu/cathstudies/cst/educ) and at [www.osjspm.org](http://www.osjspm.org).

Finally, you may want to conduct special adult education programs on Catholic social teaching, offering those who have taken the pledge a chance to act on it. Contact your diocesan education office or social action office for assistance.



# JUBILEE

*pledge*

FOR CHARITY, JUSTICE, AND PEACE

A Catholic Commitment for the New Millennium

THE JUBILEE OF OUR LORD'S BIRTH CALLS US "TO BRING GLAD TIDINGS TO THE POOR.  
... TO PROCLAIM LIBERTY TO CAPTIVES AND RECOVERY OF SIGHT TO THE BLIND,  
TO LET THE OPPRESSED GO FREE" (Lk 4:18).

*As disciples of Jesus in the new millennium, I/we pledge to:*

**PRAY** regularly for greater justice and peace.

**LEARN** more about Catholic social teaching and its call to protect human life, stand with the poor, and care for creation.

**REACH** across boundaries of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, and disabling conditions.

**LIVE** justly in family life, school, work, the marketplace, and the political arena.

**SERVE** those who are poor and vulnerable, sharing more time and talent.

**GIVE** more generously to those in need at home and abroad.

**ADVOCATE** for public policies that protect human life, promote human dignity, preserve God's creation, and build peace.

**ENCOURAGE** others to work for greater charity, justice, and peace.

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*Signature*

PREPARED BY THE SUBCOMMITTEE ON THE THIRD MILLENNIUM AND OTHER COMMITTEES OF THE  
NATIONAL CONFERENCE OF CATHOLIC BISHOPS/UNITED STATES CATHOLIC CONFERENCE

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and abroad.*

*Advocate public policies that protect human  
life, promote human dignity, preserve God's  
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*Encourage others to work for greater  
charity, justice, and peace.*



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on the Third Millennium and other committees of the  
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United States Catholic Conference.

## Reflection 1

*Indeed, it must be said that a  
commitment to justice and peace...  
is a necessary condition  
for the preparation and celebration of the Jubilee.*

*--Tertio Millennio Adveniente, John Paul II*



### Scripture:

When you enter the land that I am giving you, the land shall observe a sabbath for the Lord. ...in the seventh year there shall be a sabbath of complete rest for the land, a sabbath for the Lord. (Lev. 25: 2ff)

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

The divine image is present in every person. It shines forth in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the union of the divine persons among themselves. (*The Catechism of the Catholic Church*, #1702)

Gathered around the altar, we are reminded of our connection to all God's people through the mystical body of Christ. (*Called to Global Solidarity*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, p. 8)

Nature shares in God's goodness, and contemplation of its beauty and richness raises our hearts and minds to God. (*Renewing the Face of the Earth*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, p. 8)

The term *jubilee* speaks of joy; not just an inner joy but a jubilation which is manifested outwardly, for the coming of God is also an outward, visible, audible and tangible event, as St. John makes clear (cf 1 Jn. 1:1). (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, John Paul II, #16).

### Reflection/Action:

What are some ways that I might "exercise" the presence of God to others?  
Express the joy of the coming of God?

How does my prayer and the prayer of my community draw me closer to God's poor?

How is a "sabbath for the land" a part of my relation to the earth?

(This is page 1 of 8 pages to help individuals and communities prepare to make the Jubilee Pledge for Charity, Justice and Peace more meaningful. These can be used as bulletin inserts, for parish meetings or small group faith-sharing.)

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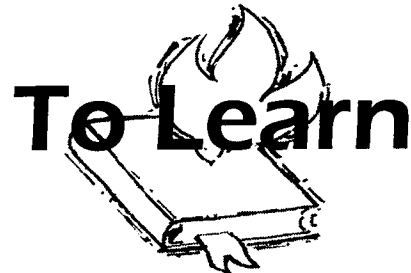


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### Scripture:

Seek the Lord while he may be found, call him while he is near...  
For just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down  
And do not return there till they have watered the earth,  
making it fertile and fruitful,  
giving seed to him who sows and bread to him who eats,  
So shall my word be  
that goes forth from my mouth;  
It shall not return to me void, but shall do my will,  
achieving the end for which I sent it. (Is. 55: 6ff)

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

The best preparation for the new millennium, therefore, can only be expressed in  
a renewed commitment to apply as faithfully as possible, the teachings of the  
Vatican II to the love of every individual and of the whole church. ( *Tertio  
Millennio Adveniente*, John Paul II, #20).

Catholic social teaching is based on and inseparable from our understanding of  
human life and human dignity. Every human being is created in the image of  
God and redeemed by Jesus Christ, and therefore is invaluable and worthy of  
respect as a member of the human family. ...Human dignity comes from God, not  
from any human quality or accomplishment. Our commitment to the Catholic  
social mission must be rooted in and strengthened by our spiritual lives. In our  
relationship with God we experience the conversion of heart that is necessary to  
truly love one another as God has loved us. ( *Sharing Catholic Social Teaching*,  
U.S. Catholic Bishops, p. 1)

### Reflection/Action:

What have I done to further my understanding of Catholic social teaching? How  
has our parish community increased our parishioners' understanding of Catholic  
social teaching?

How can I or my parish community apply the principles of Catholic Social Teach-  
ing to the social issues affecting our communities?

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Prepared by the Diocese of Lansing Jubilee 2000 Committee for Social Justice

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### Scripture:

Jesus went to the Pharisee's home... Some men came along carrying a paralytic... A Roman centurion had a servant... "You are a Jew. How can you ask me, a Samaritan and a woman, for a drink?" ...he healed all who were in need of healing, (*from the Gospels*).

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language, or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design, (*Gaudium et Spes*, 2nd Vatican Council, #29).

Beyond differences of language, race, ethnicity; gender, culture and nation, we are one human family.... Promoting the unity of the human family is the task of the whole Church. (*Called to Global Solidarity*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, 1997, p. 3).

Under the guise of other motives, (racism) is manifest in the tendency to stereotype and marginalize those segments of the population whose presence is perceived as a threat. It is manifest also in the indifference that replaces open hatred. The minority poor are seen as the dross of a post-industrial society—without skills, without motivation, without incentive. They are expendable. Many times the new face of racism is the computer print-out, the graph of profits and losses, the pink slip, the nameless statistic. ...Christian ideals of justice must be brought to bear in both the private and the public sector in order that covert racism be eliminated wherever it exists. (*Brothers and Sisters To Us*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, p.6)

### Reflection/Action:

How do the actions of Jesus reach across boundaries of religion, race, ethnicity, gender, and disabling conditions? How do my words and actions reach across these boundaries?

What have I done to bring about healing of racist and ethnic attitudes and actions in myself and in my communities? Do I have less prejudice against people of other religions, gender, or with disabilities?

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## To Live

### Scripture:

What profit would there be for one to gain the whole world and forfeit his life. (Mt 16:26)

Either declare the tree good and its fruit is good, or declare the tree rotten and its fruit is rotten, for a tree is known by its fruit. (Mt 12:33)

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

Catholicism does not call us to abandon the world, but to help shape it. This does not mean leaving worldly tasks and responsibilities but transforming them. Catholics are everywhere in this society. We are corporate executives and migrant farm workers, senators and welfare recipients, university presidents and day-care workers, tradesmen and farmers, office and factory workers, union leaders and small-business owners. Our entire community of faith must help Catholics to be instruments of God's grace and creative power in business and politics, factories and offices, in homes and schools, and in all the events of daily life. Social justice and the common good are built up or torn down day by day in the countless decisions and choices we make. (*Everyday Christianity: To Hunger and Thirst for Justice*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, p. 4).

### Reflection/Action:

How do I shape the world with my Catholicism, where I live and where I work?

As a parish community, do we affirm all workers as witnesses of the Gospel—the divine presence in their workplaces? Do we recognize and bless workers in our liturgies?

How are we "instruments of God's grace and creative power in business and politics, factories and offices, in homes and schools, and in all the events of daily life?"

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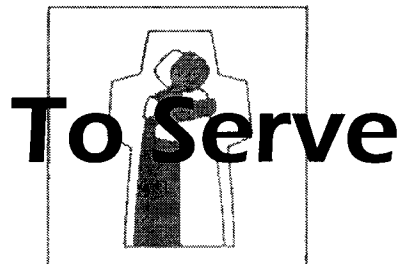


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## Reflection 5

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### Scripture:

And the king will say to them in reply, 'Amen, I say to you, whatever you did for one of these least brothers of mine, you did for me,' (Mt: 25:40).

And whoever gives only a cup of cold water to one of these little ones to drink because he is a disciple—amen, I say to you, he will surely not lose his reward, (Mt 10:42).

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

The Church's love for the poor...is a part of her constant tradition, (*Centesimus Annus*, John Paul II, 57).

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, (St. John Chrysostom)

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, (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 2nd Vatican Council, #8).

No one may appropriate surplus goods solely for their own private use when others lack the necessities of life, (*Populorum Progressio*, Paul VI, #23).

### Reflection/Action:

When have I walked with the suffering poor? How have my "riches" kept me from the divine presence?

How can our parish community join with the poor in our common pilgrimage of life?

How do I and my parish community put the needs of the poor first to satisfy the demands of justice?

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### Scripture:

This, rather, is the fasting that I wish:  
releasing those bound unjustly,  
untying the thongs of the yoke;  
Setting free the oppressed, breaking every yoke;  
Sharing your bread with the hungry,  
sheltering the oppressed and the homeless;  
Clothing the naked when you see them,  
and not turning your back on your own. (Is 58: 6ff).

When he looked up he saw some wealthy people putting their offerings into the treasure and noticed a poor widow putting in two small coins. He said, "I tell you truly, this poor widow put in more than all the rest; for those others have all made offerings from their surplus wealth, but she, from her poverty, has offered her whole livelihood." (Luke 21:1-4).

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

The poor are your brothers and sisters in Christ. You must never be content to leave them just the crumbs from the feast. You must take of your substance, and not just of your abundance, in order to help them, (*Homily at Yankee Stadium*, John Paul II, October 2, 1979).

Wherever people are to be found who are in want of food and drink, of clothing, housing, medicine, work, education, and means necessary for leading a truly human life, wherever there are people racked by misfortune or illness, people suffering exile or imprisonment, Christian charity should go in search of them and find them out, comfort them with devoted care and give them the helps that will relieve their needs. This obligation binds first and foremost the more affluent individuals and nations. (*Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity*, 2nd Vatican Council, #8).

### Reflection/Action:

How have I gone out in search of those who are vulnerable to share of my substance? Has my parish community intentionally reached out to the poor?

How does my generosity measure up to the widow of the gospel? Our parish community?

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## To Advocate

### Scripture:

Behold, the wages you withheld from the workers who harvested your fields are crying aloud, and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. (James 5:4)

Be doers of the word and not hearers only, deluding yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks at his own face in a mirror. He sees himself, then goes off and promptly forgets what he looked like. But the one who peers into the perfect law of freedom and perseveres, and is not a hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, such a one shall be blessed in what he does. (James 1:22ff)

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

Action on behalf of justice and the participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel, of, in other words, the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation. (*Justice in the World*, Synod of Bishops, 1971, #6).

The Church makes a moral judgment about economic and social matters, "when the fundamental rights of the person or the salvation of souls requires it." (*Gaudium et Spes*, 2nd Vatican Council, #76)

We need to be heard as we approach the jubilee on how international debt transfers wealth from poor nations to rich societies and diminishes the lives and integrity of so many. We need to be heard especially on behalf of women, who bear the greatest burdens of poverty and injustice. We need to be heard on behalf of millions of child laborers in the world. We can insist that U.S. corporations eliminate child laborers in all their assembly plants. (*Called to Global Solidarity*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, p. 11).

### Reflection/Action:

In what ways have I/my parish community advocated on behalf of justice for my brothers and sisters who live in poverty?

How do I take my political responsibility seriously?

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## Reflection 8

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## To Encourage



### Scripture:

First, I give thanks to my God through Jesus Christ for all of you, because your faith is heralded throughout the world. ... For I long to see you, that I may share with you some spiritual gift so that you may be strengthened, that is, that you and I may be mutually encouraged by one another's faith, yours and mine. (Romans, 1:8ff)

### The Wisdom of our Social Tradition:

Catholic social teaching offers not an alternative social system, but fundamental values that test every system, every nation, and every community. It puts the needs of the poor first. It values persons over things. It emphasizes morality over technology, asking not simply what can we do, but what ought we do. It calls us to measure our lives not by what we have, but by who we are; how we love one another; and how we contribute to the common good, to justice in our community, and to peace in our world (*Century of Social Teaching*, U.S. Catholic Bishops, p. 7).

While I invite the faithful to raise to the Lord fervent prayers to obtain the light and assistance necessary for the preparation and celebration of the forthcoming jubilee, I exhort my venerable brothers in the episcopate and the ecclesial communities entrusted to them to open their hearts to the promptings of the Spirit. He will not fail to arouse enthusiasm and lead people to celebrate the jubilee with renewed faith and generous participation. (*Tertio Millennio Adveniente*, John Paul II, #59).

### Reflection/Action:

How can I invite others to share in the spiritual celebration of the coming jubilee year? How can the jubilee be a part of my family?

How can we invite others to call for the restoration of justice among the rich and poor, and among all peoples?

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