

LESSON
PLAN



Photo by Lane Hartill/CRS

LENGTH 1 hour

OBJECTIVES Through this activity participants will:

- ❖ Pay attention to the challenges of migration around the world by reviewing current news on the sufferings of migrants.
- ❖ Understand how forced migration can be prevented through the work of international development organizations.

SUMMARY This activity will help participants to connect news on the plight of migrants with Catholic social teaching and a successful project supported by Catholic Relief Services that responds to the issue of migration.

MATERIALS

- Cut outs or print outs of news clippings on migrants enough for the small groups
- Catholic Social Teaching Principles (handout)

PREPARATION Cut out news clippings on migrants or migration or go to an international news website such as CNN or BBC and type in “migrants” in the search field to get news articles on the plight of migrants. Print out stories of migrants facing abuse, persecution or other challenges in their journey.

Also, visit crs.org to find the latest information on CRS’ work on migration.

PROCESS **Leader:** I am not sure if you have been paying attention to the news on the plight of migrants but at least once a week there’s a news item on the challenges of migration—refugees from Myanmar suffocating on the freezer of a truck, African migrants dying after their boat sunk on the way to the Canary Islands, villagers in Darfur being killed while running for safety after an attack by the militias. We’ll take time now to look at some of these true stories.

Divide the participants into groups of four to five. Distribute the news clippings to the groups.

Leader: I would like to ask you to carefully read the news clipping and say a short prayer for the migrants in those stories.

After everyone has prayed ask the groups to come up with a body sculpture to depict the story in their news. They are to select a compelling section of the news clipping and come up with a sculpture using their bodies to depict that particular event in the news. The other groups will try to guess what they are trying to communicate without words but only through their bodies and emotions. Allow time for the groups to practice.

Option: If the youth group is not too keen on a body sculpting exercise you can ask them to create a public service announcement on a poster board or newsprint to call attention to the issue related in their assigned news clipping.

Call the groups together and ask them to present their body sculptures. Ask the other groups to explain what they think the group is trying to depict. The presenting group will explain their sculpture after all groups are finished. After everyone has presented and the groups have explained their sculptures, ask the following questions:

- What challenges about migration did you read in the news clippings or were successfully communicated by the sculptures?
- What does this say about the plight of migrants today?
- How are migrants from poor countries being treated in the world today?
- Could these situations have been prevented? How?

Distribute Catholic Social Teaching Principles Handout

Leader: What principles of Catholic social teaching are reflected in this project?

Leader: These stories highlight for us the importance of economic development opportunities in the source countries, of the reality that if the poor have a choice they would remain home. We are all challenged to find ways where people can live and flourish as individuals, to work for the common good and to affirm our shared humanity, our solidarity with one another. More importantly if we provide opportunities for people to meet their basic needs and live a happy life, we can actually help migrants. The challenge for us then is to find ways where we can help migrants or even to challenge ways that people view migrants. As Christians we are challenged by Pope Benedict XVI in his angelus on June 19, 2005, "... those who must leave everything, at times even their families, to escape from grave difficulties and dangers... [should find] the Church as a homeland where no one is a stranger."

LIFE AND DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

The human person is the clearest reflection of God among us. Each person possesses a basic dignity that comes directly from our creation in the image of God. Through our actions we must express that each person is precious and the lives and welfare of all people are priorities. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.

RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

People have a fundamental right to life and those things that make life truly human: food, clothing, housing, health care, education and security. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY, AND PARTICIPATION

We realize our dignity and rights in relationship with others. The first community is the family, where we learn and act on our values. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all.

OPTION FOR THE POOR & VULNERABLE

A basic moral test of our society is how our most vulnerable members are treated. Those with the greatest needs require the greatest response.

THE DIGNITY OF WORK AND THE RIGHTS OF WORKERS

Work is an expression of our human dignity. It is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. The economy must serve people, not the other way around.

SOLIDARITY

We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. Learning to practice the virtue of solidarity means learning that loving our neighbor has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

CARE FOR GOD'S CREATION

We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. We are called to protect people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation.