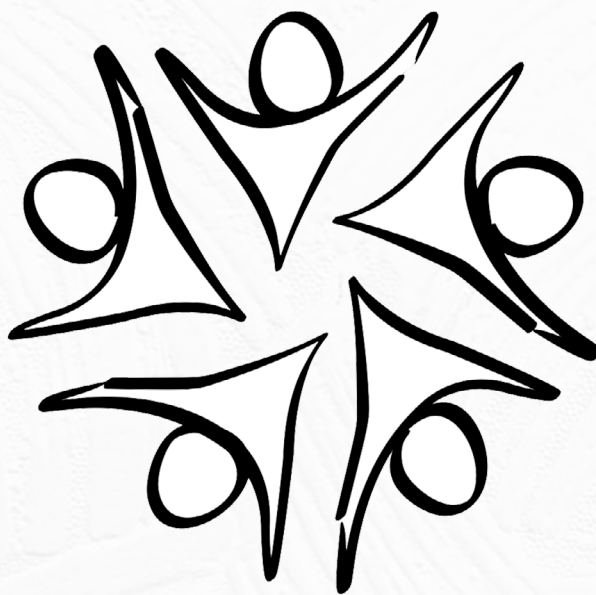




Common Good

He Painga Mā te Katoa



PARISH RESOURCE



Easy as CST: Unlocking the Church's Potential
Māmā noa, pēnei i te CST: Te Tuku i ngā Pūmanawa o te Hāhi kia Whai Hua





Common Good He Painga mā te Katoa



The Good of Each and All

Commitment to the common good means respecting the rights and responsibilities of all people.

Our actions have an impact on wider society. It is up to every one of us – governments, communities and individuals – to promote the common good. When we make decisions, we should choose to consider the good of all.

No one should miss out on the opportunity to grow and fulfil their potential. Each and every person deserves to have what they need to survive and flourish.

Searching the Scriptures...

Social Justice teaching is founded on firm scriptural foundations.

- ‘So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.’
Romans 12:5
- ‘All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people.’ **Acts 2:43-47**
 - ‘Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others.’
Philippians 2:3-4
- ‘Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it?’ **Luke 15:4**

...and in light of Catholic Social Teaching.



“Beside the good of the individual, there is a good that is linked to living in society: the common good. It is the good of ‘all of us’, made up of individuals, families and intermediate groups who together constitute society.”

Caritas in Veritate, #7, 2009





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“Do not live entirely isolated, having retreated into yourselves, as if you were already justified, but gather instead to seek the common good together.”

St Barnabas, from the Catechism of the Catholic Church (#1905)

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“The common good...the sum total of social condition which allow people, either as groups or individuals, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily.”

Second Vatican Council, Gaudium et Spes, #26, 1965

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“The whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts... We constantly have to broaden our horizons and see the greater good which will benefit us all. But this has to be done without evasion or uprooting... We can work on a small scale, in our own neighbourhood, but with a larger perspective.”

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, #235, 2013

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Great Examples - The Aotearoa COVID-19 experience

Putting the common good principle into practice requires thought and prayer about what is in the best interests of all of society. We saw this in New Zealand during the Covid-19 crisis. Leadership from the government at a national level was important but the common good would not have been served without similarly inspired leadership serving at both the regional and local community levels.

Serving the common good at the National level

The nationwide New Zealand response to the Covid-19 pandemic has been nothing short of amazing. The “team of five million” managed to achieve what few other countries have done – eliminate COVID-19 from its shores and put in place a testing regime and border controls to mitigate risks of future cases emerging.

Uniting a country to confront a major external threat like the COVID-19 global pandemic required effective leadership which placed human dignity and the common good at the centre of decision-making. Such leadership required humility for leaders to acknowledge the expertise of advisors; “mobilising the collective effort” to inform, educate and unite people to adopt the actions needed - and explaining why these actions are important. A well-publicised alert level framework also helped the people to understand what was required and when. All these actions enabled planning - and also served to build trust through providing transparency about Government decision-making.



Dr Ashley Bloomfield, Director-General of Health.
Image Credit: Government House

Serving the common good at Regional Level - Queenstown Lakes District Council



Jim Boulton, Mayor of Queenstown
Image Credit: Government House

Queenstown Lakes District Council assisted 2,000 migrant workers who were unable to return to their home countries during the COVID-19 lockdown. Council support workers were able to access accommodation assistance, they used funds from Civil Defence Emergency Management Groups, and - for those with employment, they helped them tap into the government wage-subsidy scheme.

Queenstown Lakes Mayor Jim Boulton said there was a looming “humanitarian crisis” as more than 2,000 workers on short-term visas had registered with the council for welfare assistance since the lockdown began. They were getting \$240 a week from a Civil Defence fund.

Serving the common good at Community level - St Vincent de Paul Society

The St Vincent de Paul Society was founded in 1833 and since then has dedicated itself to work in a caring and practical manner to promote justice to those in need. All throughout the world there are established ‘conferences’ working today with that very same mission.



During COVID-19, St. Vincent de Paul Society, Wellington demonstrated how they continued to work for the common good of those in the Wellington area. This conference of St Vincent de Paul is made up of a diverse range of people who are committed to helping make a difference for people facing various challenges.

COVID-19 created a 400% increase in requests for help from St. Vincent de Paul around New Zealand. In Wellington they noted that this situation affected people from all walks of life. They were seeing a range of family types ranging from large families, grandparents looking after extended families, to migrant workers living in overcrowded housing, coming in for support and many who had never accessed welfare services before.

For many, asking for help is a brave and courageous act. St. Vincent de Paul, Wellington treat everyone who comes to them with full respect, no matter the circumstances or background of the individual, always ensuring the common good for all is being upheld.

“There is still work done and we’ll continue to be here as a stable support system for the community.”
St. Vincent de Paul, Wellington (28th April 2020)



“Thank you for helping my whanau. The kai parcels have helped H and me and our kids through a bit of a tough spot. We had no water — and you got us some water, we were cold, and you got us some blankets, my kids were cold and you got them some jackets, and when we had no kai – you got us some kai . I don’t know what to say, because it has been overwhelming. Thank you.”



Serving the common good at Community level – ShieldsUp

During the height of COVID-19, doctors, nurses and other medical personnel without the right protective gear were at high risk of getting the virus. A small group of volunteers decided to use their personal 3D printers to make face shields to distribute for free to these essential workers; this protected them and enabled them to continue caring for the sick. Soon more people joined in, and they became a network of over 500 volunteers, all doing what they could to help: 3D printing, managing supplies and orders, communications, and fundraising.

Together they formed the ShieldsUp organisation, which produced and distributed almost 19,000 face shields around New Zealand. By using their knowledge and resources for the common good, ShieldsUp helped keep entire communities safe and healthy during the pandemic.





Living out CST - Ideas for putting faith into action

Questions for Reflection and Discussion:

- How did each of the responses to the COVID-19 crisis support the common good?
- What can we learn from the actions at the different COVID levels?
- What are examples in my own experience of the COVID lockdown where I sought the common good?
- Why does the lost sheep in Luke 15:4 warrant special attention and care?
- Why is the common good so central to Catholic social teaching and our understanding on how we live our faith as a community?

| Individual | Family | Community |
|--|---|--|
| Read and reflect on the case studies and questions above. | Have a discussion about Pope Francis' words in Laudato Si' that 'the climate is a common good, belonging to all and meant for all' (#23). | Make it a point to call and check in with vulnerable people in your community. |
| Watch this video from Caritas Internationalis about us being one human family. | Reflect on the whakatauki (Māori proverb) as a family: He waka eke noa A canoe which we can all use. | Work alongside local organisations who serve the common good. |
| Take a break from social media and instead offer that time to be present with the people around you. | Watch Caritas Australia's video on the common good. | Gather as a community and pray for those who are most vulnerable, in the country and world, especially during the COVID crisis. |
| Read through Pope Leo XIII's Rerum Novarum and see what he had to say on the common good. | Watch our 2014 Caritas case study on The Good of Each and All . | Choose a prayer from the SJW2020 resources and use it in your parish liturgy – during Prayer of the Faithful or at the end of Communion. |



Closing Prayers

E te Atua, we ask for your continued grace in those who work for and with those in need. May we continue to learn from experiences to help us respond to the needs of others.

Leader: E te Ariki... All: whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou.

E te Atua, we ask for people to be open to the needs and concerns of everyone and for an end to issues that result in a person's right to basic resources being removed.

Leader: E te Ariki... All: whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou.

E te Atua, we ask that your Church continues to faithfully spread hope among all people.

Leader: E te Ariki... All: whakarongo mai rā ki a mātou.

Father, your truth is made known in your Word.
Guide us to seek the truth of the human person.
Teach us the way to love because you are Love.
Jesus, you embody love and truth.
Help us to recognise your face in the poor.
Enable us to live out our vocation to bring love and justice to your people.
Holy Spirit, you inspire us to transform our world.
Empower us to seek the common good for all persons.
Give us a spirit of solidarity and make us one human family.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Based on Pope Benedict XVI: Caritas in Veritate

