



## Newsletter – June 2024

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### **HUMAN DIGNITY & OUR ROLE AS CHRISTIANS**

The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred, and that the dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society. This belief is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching. In our society, human life is under direct attack from abortion and euthanasia. The value of human life is being threatened by cloning, embryonic stem cell research, and the use of the death penalty. The intentional targeting of civilians in war or terrorist attacks is always wrong. Catholic teaching also calls on us to work to avoid war. Nations must protect the right to life by finding increasingly effective ways to prevent conflicts and resolve them by peaceful means. We believe that every person is precious, that people are more important than things, and that the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.



### **Tradition**

“The world exists for everyone, because all of us were born with the same dignity. Differences of colour, religion, talent, place of birth or residence, and so many others, cannot be used to justify the privileges of some over the rights of all. As a community, we have an obligation to ensure that every person lives with dignity and has sufficient opportunities for his or her integral development.” (Pope Francis, *On Fraternity and Social Friendship*)

Just as the commandment 'Thou shalt not kill' sets a clear limit to safeguard the value of human life, today we also have to say 'thou shalt not' to an economy of exclusion and inequality. Such an economy kills. How can it be that it is not a news item when an elderly homeless person dies of exposure or alone, but it is news when the stock market loses two points? This is a case of *exclusion*. Can we continue to stand by when food is thrown away while people are starving? This is a case of *inequality*.

Today everything comes under the laws of competition and the survival of the fittest, where the powerful feed upon the powerless. Consequently, masses of people find themselves excluded and marginalized: without work, without possibilities, without any means of escape. Human beings are themselves considered consumer goods to be used and then discarded. We have created a 'throw away' culture which is now spreading.

Human persons are willed by God; they are imprinted with God's image. Their dignity does not come from the work they do, but from the persons they are.



### **Forming the Person**

As we grow in our own personal formation, aided by grace, freed from natural impediments to trust God as His beloved child and to embrace God's love, we in return, can love God, **neighbour**, and ourselves with all our natural being in an ordered, intimate, personal, and mature way.

In this lifelong emotional and spiritual journey, we are also called to enjoy communion and to exercise stewardship in a physical universe. Communion and stewardship are the two great strands out of which the fabric of the doctrine of the *image of God* is woven.

As we grow in faith, two of the six tasks of faith formation **community life and missionary spirit**<sup>1</sup> calls us to engage with a community of believers as well as being present to demonstrate kindness and charity to all our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Let us continue this journey in our faith and personal formation but with a view on the marginalised, less fortunate, downtrodden and extend our hand to uphold their dignity as children of God!

## SEE:

1. As we rapidly progress in economic development and place ourselves in societal standards, are we leaving some behind?
2. While Singapore does not have an official poverty line, about 105,000 families approximately 350,000 people live in poverty. While these families can sustain their livelihood with the support of government grants and aid, many still remain and are affected by loneliness, depression, anxiety and lack of self-esteem.

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- <sup>1</sup> **Learn the Faith:** Knowledge of the faith is essential for conversion and ongoing discipleship. Understanding and reason inform our experience of faith.
  - **Celebrate the Faith:** Faith is a relationship expressed through liturgy, prayer, and sacraments.
  - **Live Morally:** Formation in Jesus Christ includes moral guidance.
  - **Pray:** Learning how to pray is crucial for spiritual growth.
  - **Community Life:** Faith is nurtured within a community of believers.
  - **Missionary Spirit:** [Faith formation prepares us to be present as Christians in society, showing kindness and charity](#)

## JUDGE

1. What does catholic social teaching (CST) tell us about human dignity and how we should reach out to those in need?
2. What does the bible say about human dignity and support for our fellow Christians?

## Scripture

- [Genesis 1:26-31](#)  
God created man and woman in his image.
- [Deuteronomy 10:17-19](#)  
God loves the orphan, the widow, and the stranger.
- [Psalms 139:13-16](#)  
God formed each of us and knows us intimately.
- [Proverbs 22:2](#)  
The Lord is the maker of both rich and poor.
- [Luke 10:25-37](#)  
The good Samaritan recognized the dignity in the other and cared for his life.

## ACT

1. Am I part of an outreach group or community supporting those that need spiritual, emotional or financial support?
  - *I have done enough and there is not much more I can do.*
2. Am I aware of those in my neighbourhood that need support? Am I ready to reach out to them?
  - *Are we worried we will not be able to cope with extra responsibility?*
3. Is our base group doing enough in reaching out to those that are in need to demonstrate love and care as Christ had done?
  - *Are we just caught up with own busy schedules?*

## Prayer

*Creator God, your image is alive in every human person giving to each of us an inviolable dignity.*

*Create in us a desire to act in solidarity, the ability to work together, and a willingness to share with others our time, our energy, our skills and talents, and our wealth.*

*As we share and enjoy the fruits of your creation, restore in us your vision of a world made whole, and inspire us to commit ourselves to the common good.*

*Gracious God, give us ears to hear, eyes to see and hearts to love, so that we reflect you in our way of life, and in our choices, words and actions.*

*Jesus is the good news to the poor. As his followers, may we recognise the call to be the same.*

*Amen.*