

Week 2: Preferential Option for the Poor

The Gospel message recognizes a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable. The Catholic Church calls this a basic moral test.

Bulletin Inserts

The extent of poverty is worldwide, and the people who hunger are making urgent appeals for help. We must take concrete action to encourage social justice among all nations and to offer less developed nations the means whereby they can further their own progress (Populorum Progressio, 5)

Concern for the poor is a constant theme of the scriptures – a passion of the prophets, the witness of Jesus, and the example of the early Church. We are called to treat all people with dignity and respect. The social doctrine of the Church provides principles for reflection, criteria for judgment, and guidelines for decisions that we must make each day. The presence of Christ in the poor requires the Church to make a preferential option for the poor and vulnerable. The principle of solidarity reminds us that we are members of one family and neighbors to each other. Our faith gives us the strength to continue, as a Church, to put into action the call to be Christ to others. (A Place at the Table: A Catholic Recommitment to Overcome Poverty and to Respect the Dignity of All God's Children, USCCB, 2002)

Discussion questions

The preferential option for the poor and vulnerable covers significant territory in Church teaching. Yet, Jesus challenges us to meet the poor and vulnerable where they are and help to lift them up. How do I, as an individual, or we, as a community, discern where there are opportunities for us to work for the common good and help those in need?

Am I as an individual, or are we as a community, truly giving preference to those most in need?

Petition

May the Church continue outreach and provide hope for the poor and most vulnerable, we pray to the Lord

Penitential Act

Lord Jesus, you remind us that we are all part of God's family: Lord, have mercy
Christ Jesus, you call us to care for the poor and vulnerable: Christ, have mercy
Lord Jesus, you teach us to bring hope to all: Lord, have mercy

