

Hello!

So you've taken the plunge and signed up to go to Bethlehem Farm during Family Week. We at the Farm are excited to meet you, pray with you, and work with you. In addition to the pre-trip resources on our website, we like to include a few additional resources that are more tailored to Family Week participants. If you haven't checked out our pre-trip resources yet, you can find them here:

<http://bethlehemfarm.net/service-week-volunteers/service-week-orientation>

We encourage you to watch the videos with your family, familiarize yourself with the mission and vision, and learn about the local community you will be calling home for a week. We also have some resources for learning about Catholic Social Teaching and a link to *At Home in the Web of Life*, which is a pastoral letter promulgated by the bishops of Appalachia that talks about social, economic, and environmental issues in the area and how they affect those who live here.

Specific pre-trip Family Week resources include the two comments below from parents who've brought their family to the Farm in years past. Additionally, on top of the age-appropriate descriptions of Catholic Social Teachings, there is a coloring activity your family might be interested in trying before arrival in the document entitled *Catholic Social Teaching for All Ages*. A final idea that families have found rewarding in the past is to have the childrens' (and parents') godparents write them letters of affirmation or support and encouragement. And if you have any questions at any time during your preparation for your time in Summers County at Bethlehem Farm, please do not hesitate to get in touch with our Volunteer Coordinator or call the Farm directly at 304-445-7143.

Sincerely,

Joseph

Catechetical Coordinator

From Kathryn Moran, Family Week veteran and Bethlehem Farm Board Member:

What would I say to first time Family Week attendees? First of all "Welcome Home!" You will certainly wonder why I would welcome you "home" to a place you have never been. Well, your family will soon be very familiar with this greeting (and requisite hug). Likely, you will hear and use this salutation with ease and frequency as you fall into the rhythm of Family Week. Similarly, there are a range of Farm traditions consistent with the cornerstones of simplicity, community, prayer, and service that will be shared throughout the week.

Before I arrived at the Farm, a veteran mom cautioned me about referring to the week as "vacation." In fact, I requested "vacation time" from my job...but point taken. From the kids' perspective, any summer week away from home might reasonably be anticipated as a "vacation." I found "service week" to be a better fit. For children who are already comfortable attending religious types of activities, you could even call it a retreat week...on a farm...with home repair thrown in. These terms plant the seeds that there is work involved. Prayer too. However, rest assured, there is much fun and friendship to be found at the Farm. In particular, the basement offers nightly gathering space for games where adults rarely venture (except for ping pong challenges!).

Admittedly, despite the "service week" lingo, my preteens arrived with trepidation. I got the "evil eye" for the first 48 hours or so. But a wonderful 18 year old veteran took my daughter under her wing and...fast forward...we have eagerly returned *annually since 2012*. Yup. Every summer. The Farm will

work with you to figure out what works best for each member of your family...from work crew assignments to dietary restrictions and nap time for the younger set.

The trickiest aspect to explain/prepare for is the lack of internet/cell service. This is a foreign, often unwelcome, concept for all of us. The kids do miss the connectivity...but they are all in the same boat. So everyone figures out the off grid entertainment and in person conversation! In the spirit of simplicity, the attire is very, very casual. This feature may be a big adjustment too. But again, the sense of community builds quickly and since no one is sporting stylish clothing, fancy hair, makeup etc. the normal daily rituals seem to slide away temporarily.

In spite of all the Farm routines and traditions, Family Week is different each year -- a mixture of new and returning volunteer faces. It has been a rich and defining component of our family life. I trust it will be the same for you. Welcome Home.

From Peter Denio, Family Week 2018 participant

We brought our family of five and added one of our kid's godparents with us to Family Week as a way to spend quality time between those we want to model faith for our children. We awoke to fun wake-up songs that stuck with me and the kids and we wound up singing them throughout the rest of the day. Creatively described (and disguised) farm and house chores were posted for us to select. The early morning was spent farming in the gardens and doing necessary upkeep throughout the house. After morning prayer we all hopped into our car to go to one of several sites we would visit near the Farm to help others in the community. The kids enjoyed meeting the families while they helped move a neighbor to a new house, design a ramp for a man who had a mobility impairment, paint houses, and refurbish an old farm.

The days were full yet life-giving in so many ways. The Summer Servants and Caretakers, staff of Bethlehem Farm, were the highlight of our kids' experience. The staff gave our pre-teen and teenaged kids the loving care that only adults and young adults (who are not their parents) could - a healthy and hopeful model of how one could live in the world. Each family prepared a prayer experience during the week. They were powerful examples of the different ways we can pray and included our whole being into the activity. Meals were so fresh, if a bit new for our kids. They learned the value of not wasting what is on their plate, how to pitch in to help with meals, and witness so many others model the same behaviors - so much so that they insisted we change the way we live at home! Faith was so well integrated into the week that our children experienced it as a natural part of the day, not something to be inserted every so often.

It was a profound experience for my kids, my wife, and me. Perhaps the best testimony to the power of the experience is the following: One of our kids went into the experience reluctantly and crying that they were going to need to "work" for a full week with people she didn't know. As we pulled out of the driveway of Bethlehem Farms to go home, her tears were because she loved the experience so much and wanted to know when next she could return!

Some more tips from group week veteran, father of three, and Chair of the Bethlehem Farm Board, Jake Teitgen include:

- There is a fair amount of "down time" during the week, and great activities at the Farm include anything "unplugged" like books to read, crafts, outdoor recreation, and exploring gear. This is especially needed for kids who are not yet old enough to go on work sites.
- Swimsuits are a must for little kids - not only the play in the river but also for the kiddie pool or to play in the rain.
- Prepare for all kids clothes to get very dirty at the Farm! Part of the fun of Family Week is that kids are allowed to be messy and have fun.
- Children who go to sleep before adults may want a sound machine or white noise maker of some kind to help drown out the sounds of others who are awake later at night.
- We took time to prepare for the trip with our daily prayers at home. Rather than just explaining what was going to happen at the Farm one time, our daily prayers for the caretakers, families, and homeowners helped our kids be ready for what they were entering.
- Food at Bethlehem Farm is different. We made sure our kids were trying all the delicious Farm food, but also brought some of our own in case their taste buds weren't quite there. There is some limited refrigerator and freezer space available. Family Week is also during prime berry-picking season, though, with kids, few berries tend to make it inside.
- The Fitts family lives at the Farm and is incredibly hospitable to other families with children, but their [very small] private space is sacred space for them and needs to be respected.
- Kids should definitely be included in group prayer as often as possible. Even if you don't do it at home as often as you'd like, these are incredible moments of seeing "faith like a child" play out.

Themes from Catholic Social Teaching: Elementary School Level

CST principle explanations for the Elementary School level were adapted with permission by CCHD of the Archdiocese of Baltimore from "Themes from Catholic Social Teaching" by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person: People should love each other. Some medicine and science practices forget this. Wars hurt people. We should solve problems without fighting. We also should not kill anyone. We are all people with value and should care for each other.

Call to Family, Community, and Participation: People are social. The way we make our rules is important. We need to remember our whole community when we make rules. Loving families are good. Law and money rules should be fair for everyone. We need to help people who are poor.

Rights and Responsibilities: People need food, clothes, a house, and to be able to go to school. We have a right to these things. Sometimes people in our community lack these things. We should help them.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable: We need to think about how people who are poor in our community live. People who have enough need to share with people who do not have enough. We should put the needs of people who are poor and vulnerable first.

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers: People need to work to make a living. Their work should make them happy. It should be safe. They should make enough money to buy what they need to live a decent life. We should make sure all workers are protected.

Solidarity: We are one human family. We are brothers and sisters even if we are different. We need to get along with each other. Solidarity means not fighting and helping others. We should love our neighbors all over the world.

Care for God's Creation: We love God by taking care of the earth. We must protect the planet and its people. We must live in harmony with creation.

Themes from Catholic Social Teaching: Middle School Level

CST principle explanations for the Middle School level were adapted with permission by CCHD of the Archdiocese of Baltimore from "Themes from Catholic Social Teaching" by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person: The main lesson is to love and respect other humans. Our world often harms human life but we should make it promote life instead. Instead of wars, have peaceful ways to solve arguments. Instead of harmful medicine and science, find alternatives that care for people. Instead of the death penalty, have programs to reform criminals and help those in trouble.

Call to Family, Community, and Participation: People are social. How we shape society affects everyone in it. We must support healthy marriage and family life. We should be sure law and economics are fair for everyone. Everyone should get a chance in society. We should make sure all people are cared for, especially people who are poor.

Rights and Responsibilities: People need food, clothing, shelter, and education. All humans have a right to these things. We must protect these rights. We have a responsibility to help each other, our family, and our community.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable: We need to consider how the most vulnerable members in our community are doing. There is a gap between the rich and the poor. It is up to us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first and close this gap.

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers: People need to work to make a living. Their work is also a way to participate in God's creation. Workers' rights must be protected. These include safe conditions, getting paid a fair amount, and being able to talk about and fix problems at their job.

Solidarity: We are one human family regardless of what we look like, think, or where we come from. We are all brothers and sisters and must love our neighbor on a global level. Solidarity means promoting peace in a world full of fighting.

Care for God's Creation: We show respect for God by taking care of His creation. We are called to protect the planet and its people. We must live in harmony with all of God's creation. Caring for the environment is an ethical issue, not just an Earth Day slogan.

Themes from Catholic Social Teaching: High School Level

CST principle explanations for the High School level were adapted with permission by CCHD of the Archdiocese of Baltimore from "Themes from Catholic Social Teaching" by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005.

Life and Dignity of the Human Person: The primary principle is to respect the life and dignity of the human person. Our world often harms human life but we should make it promote life instead. Instead of wars, have peaceful ways to solve arguments. Instead of harmful medical and scientific practices like abortion, euthanasia, and embryonic stem cell research, make sure all stages of life are protected and have alternative research. Instead of the death penalty, have programs to reform criminals and keep people from committing crimes at all.

Call to Family, Community, and Participation: Human life is sacred but we are also social beings. The way our institutions are organized affects people's ability to grow. We must support and strengthen the central social institutions of marriage and family. We also must make our economy, politics, law, and policy benefit all people. Everyone has a right and duty to participate in society and seek the common good and well-being of all, especially people who are poor and vulnerable.

Rights and Responsibilities: Every person has a right to life and the things required to live in decent conditions. People need certain things to live decent lives, like food, clothing, shelter, and education. They have a right to these things and these rights must be protected. We have a responsibility to help each other, our family, and our community.

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable: We need to consider how the most vulnerable members in our community are faring. Our society has a division between people who are rich and poor. It is up to us to put the needs of people who are poor and vulnerable first and close this division.

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers: Work is more than making a living. It is a way to participate in God's creation. Workers have rights that must be protected. These include the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

Solidarity: We are one human family regardless of our background, beliefs, looks, or culture. We are all brothers and sisters and must love our neighbor on a global level. Solidarity means promoting peace and justice in a world full of violence and conflict.

Care for God's Creation: We show respect for God by taking care of His creation. We are called to protect the planet and its people by living in harmony with all of God's creation. Caring for the environment is an ethical issue, not just an Earth Day slogan.

Themes from Catholic Social Teaching: College and Adult Level

These are used with permission from the "Themes from Catholic Social Teaching" by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C., 2005.

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

Call to Family, Community, & Participation: The person is not only sacred, but also social. How we organize our society, by economics, politics, law, and policy, directly affects human dignity and individuals' capacity to grow in community. Marriage and family are the central social institutions that must be supported and strengthened, not undermined. We believe people have a right and a duty to participate in society, seeking together the common good and well-being of all, especially the poor and vulnerable.

Rights & Responsibilities: The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. Therefore, every person has a fundamental right to life and a right to those things required for human decency. Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society.

Option for the Poor & Vulnerable: A basic moral test is how our most vulnerable members fare. In a society marred by deepening divisions between rich and poor, our tradition recalls the story of the Last Judgment (Mt 25:31-46) and instructs us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

The Dignity of Work & Rights of Workers: The economy must serve the people, not the reverse. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. If the dignity of work is to be protected, then the basic rights of workers must be respected—the right to productive work, to decent and fair wages, to the organization and joining of unions, to private property, and to economic initiative.

Solidarity: We are one human family whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic, and ideological differences. We are our brother's and sister's keepers, wherever they may be. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in a shrinking world. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Pope Paul IV taught that "if you want peace, work for justice." The Gospel calls us to be peacemakers. Our love for all our sisters and brothers demands that we promote peace in a world surrounded by violence and conflict.

Care for God's Creation: We show our respect for the Creator by our stewardship of creation. Care for the earth is not just an Earth Day slogan; it is a requirement of our faith. We are called to protect the people and the planet, living our faith in relationship with all of God's creation. This environmental challenge has fundamental moral and ethical dimensions and cannot be ignored.

the World with Justice:

Themes of Catholic Social Teaching Coloring Activity

Created by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development Archdiocese of Baltimore
Megan Maher CCHD Intern 2012

Description: The purpose of this activity is to help participants understand the seven themes of Catholic Social Teaching, which is the basis of Catholic Social Justice. It uses coloring pages/drawings to illustrate the current state of the world, and what the world will be when people act out the theme. There are also reflection activities to deepen understanding of the theme and see how the theme applies in the participant's community.

The instructions are below, followed by handouts explaining the themes for each grade level. A key to assist the facilitator in finding the correct drawing for the principles is at the end. The drawings are in the corresponding document.

Audience: The instructions below indicate how to structure the activity for nearly any age group.

For Younger Children (or any group that would enjoy coloring):

Supplies:

- Copies of the “bad example” coloring pages and the “good example” coloring pages
- Coloring supplies (crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers); for participants under age 13, use the Life and Dignity of the Human Person “Child” version drawing
- Dry erase board, flip chart, or large pieces of paper to write out ideas
- Handouts of the principles for the appropriate grade level

Separate the children into 7 groups. Give each group one of the “bad example” coloring pages and supplies to color with. Ask them to think about the story in the picture as they're coloring it. Who are the people? How did they get to be in the situation they're in?

Then give them the corresponding “good example” to color. Ask them to think about how this picture is different. Have each group think about the stories happening in the “good example” picture.

Have the class come together and present their thoughts on the good and bad example to the group. The teacher/facilitator will then explain the Catholic Social Teaching principle represented in each good drawing.

Have the kids from all the groups brainstorm ways they can make this principle come alive in their own community. Ask them how they personally can help make the principle come alive, but also how others, such as policy makers or their parents, can contribute. Give suggestions of how they can get involved in service or how they can act out some of their ideas.

For Older Children and Adults:

Supplies:

- Copies of the “bad example” coloring pages and the “good example” coloring pages (you may also use the colored versions of the “good example” drawings); for Life and Dignity of the Human Person use the “Adult” version drawings
- Coloring supplies (crayons, colored pencils, and/or markers)
- Dry erase board or flip chart to write out ideas
- Handouts of the principles definitions for the appropriate grade level

Separate the group into 7 smaller groups, one for each principle. First, give each person a copy of one of the “bad example” coloring pages. Ask them:

Look at the drawing. What do you see? What are the people doing? What could be done to help the people who are suffering? Do you see any of this in your community?

Then give each person a copy of the corresponding good example coloring page (or colored version) for their group’s principle with the handout of all the principles definitions. Tell them: In order to correct these problems, we need to use the Catholic Social Teaching principle of _____. **Find the appropriate grade level on the “Themes Handout” and read the corresponding principle**

Have them brainstorm ideas for how they can change the “bad example” into the “good example” and ask them: What can be done in your community to live out this principle?

Have all the groups share their reflections with the class and write their best ideas on the dry erase board or flip chart. If some of the projects seem feasible, suggest action in the form of a community service project or other action.

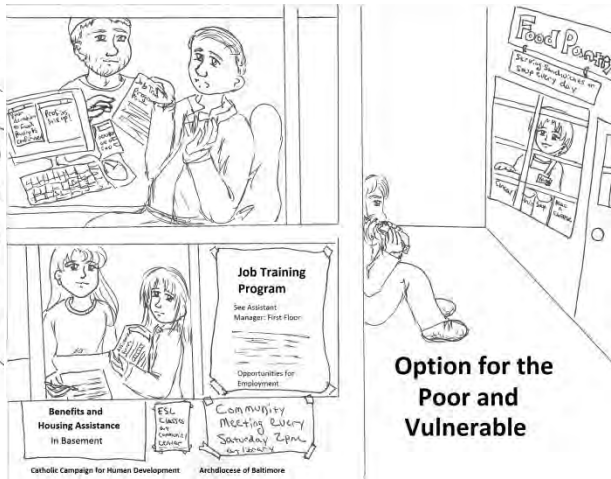
Call to Family, Community, and Participation:



Rights and Responsibilities:



Option for the Poor and Vulnerable:



The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers:



Solidarity:



Care for Creation:



Key:

Life and Dignity of the Human Person Adult:



Life and Dignity of the Human Person Child:

