



Lesson Plan

Why Do We Advocate?

Objectives:

Through this activity participants will:

- Gain a greater understanding of concepts surrounding advocacy.
- Understand why we as Catholics are called to be advocates for those whose voices aren't being heard in the halls of power.

Summary:

Participants will examine the theology behind advocacy in groups in order to understand better why advocacy is a part of Catholic social teaching.

Materials:

- *Why Do We Advocate?* handout of quotes and principles
- Scissors

Process:

1. Cut out the quotes and principles found on the *Why Do We Advocate?* handout.
2. Split up the class into small groups, and provide each group with one quote / principle from the handout.
3. Have one group member read the quote aloud to the rest of their group. Each group should discuss their quote using the questions provided below, and should prepare to present their quote to the class along with a few sentences on how it relates to advocacy.
4. After 10 minutes of group work, have each group present their quote to the class.

Discussion Questions:

1. How does this principle or quote call us to advocacy?
2. What specific actions can you think of that would connect this quote or principle to advocacy?
3. Can you think of any stories or situations from Scripture, the life of a saint, or from your community that demonstrate this principle or quote being lived out?

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“None of us can think we are exempt from concern for the poor and for social justice.”

- Pope Francis

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“Hope has two beautiful daughters; their names are anger and courage. Anger at the way things are, and courage to see that they do not remain as they are.”

- St. Augustine of Hippo

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“[Solidarity] then is not a feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good; that is to say to the good of all and of each individual, because we are all really responsible for all.”

- St. John Paul II

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“Justice comes before charity.”

- St. John XXIII

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“We need to participate for the common good. Sometimes we hear: a good Catholic is not interested in politics.

This is not true: good Catholics immerse themselves in politics by offering the best of themselves so that the leader can govern.”

- Pope Francis

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’”

- Matthew 25:40

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“Speak up for those who cannot speak, for the rights of all the destitute. Defend the rights of the poor and needy.”

- Proverbs 31:8-9

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of injustice, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free, and to break every yoke? If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall rise in the darkness and your gloom be like the noonday.”

- Isaiah 58:6-10

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“He who oppresses the poor shows contempt for their Maker, but whoever is kind to the needy honors God.”

- Proverbs 14:31

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

“For there will never cease to be poor in the land. Therefore I command you, ‘You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor, in your land.’”

- Deuteronomy 15:11

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: Solidarity

We are one human family, whatever our national, racial, ethnic, economic and ideological differences. Loving our neighbor has global dimensions in an interdependent world.

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: 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.

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: 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.

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: Life and Dignity of the Human Person

The human person is the clearest reflection of God among us. Each person possesses a basic dignity because he or she is made in the image of God. The sacredness and dignity of the human person is the foundation of our vision for society.

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

A basic moral test of our society is how our most vulnerable members are treated. We are called to put the needs of those who are poor and vulnerable first.

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: 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.

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

CST Principle: 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.

Principles adapted from USCCB's Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching and CRS Lesson Plan: "Catholic Social Teaching, Up Close!"

