

## Government Relations Workshop Handout

This document accompanies the three PowerPoint presentations on government relations. The workshop is designed for delivery at the parish council level by anyone with basic computer skills. Flexibility is built into the presentations so that they can be delivered individually over the council's chosen timeframe or together as a one-day retreat or full-day workshop.

One highly recommended resource to accompany this workshop and further develop members' skills in collaborating with government is the *Advocacy Toolkit: Helping ordinary people make a difference*, published by Citizens for Public Justice (CPJ). Find the toolkit at [cpj.ca](http://cpj.ca) under "Resources." Copies can be ordered directly from CPJ for \$15.00 (July 2022 price).

### Part One: Why is Government Collaboration so Important to Members?

- Members' call to participate in social justice.
- The League's core values:
  - Faith—following Catholic social teaching
  - Service—local, national and international
  - Social justice—actively involved in society
- The League's history of social justice action (e.g., writing resolutions, meeting with government and creating change).
- The critical component of sacred scriptures.
- Members' baptismal call to build God's kingdom on earth and further the Reign of God.
- The mandate through the Second Vatican Council to "read the signs of the times" and be Christ for others.
- The connections between the above points and the League's mission, core purpose and envisioned future.

## Part Two: Catholic Social Teaching Drives Collaboration Works

### The Seven Key Principles of Catholic Social Teaching (CST)

#### The Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- The foundation of all CST is that each person has an inherent dignity because they were created in God's image and likeness.
- The church calls people to be concerned with the well-being of all.
- People are called to value and respect each person's life and dignity regarding economic, political, social, ecological and spiritual needs.
- Every human person is created in the image and likeness of God. Therefore, every person's life and dignity must be respected and supported from conception through natural death. Catholics believe the measure of every institution is whether it threatens or enhances the life and dignity of the human person.

#### The Call to Family, Community, Subsidiarity and Participation

- Catholics are called
  - to be family—*families* that are schools of generosity, patience and dialogue.
  - to be community—contributing to the cultural, economic, political and social life while showing respect for the needs of others.
  - to subsidiarity—people are entitled to a voice in decisions affecting their lives.
  - to participation—how people interact affects the dignity of individuals and the progress of society.
- The human person is not only sacred but social. How people organize society—socially, economically, legally and politically—directly affects human dignity and the ability of every person to grow in community. Marriage and family, the foundations for social life, should be strengthened and supported. Every person has a right to participate in society and a corresponding duty to work to advance the common good and the well-being of all.

#### Rights and Responsibilities

- Each person has the right to live as God intended, but this right is linked with the rights of others.
- People have a responsibility not to take more at another's expense.
- Human society requires that people contribute to a civic order with rights and responsibilities for all.
- Every person has the fundamental right to life, which makes all other rights possible. Each person also has a right to the conditions for living a decent life—food, health care, housing, education and employment. People have a duty to secure and respect these rights for others and fulfill their responsibilities to their families, each other and society at large.

### The Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- God's love is universal. He calls Catholics to be in solidarity with the vulnerable.
- The needs of the poor come before the wants of the rich.
- The rights of workers come before profit.
- The preservation of the earth comes before uncontrolled industrialization.
- Production for peoples' basic needs comes before production for military purposes.
- Scripture teaches that God has a particular concern for the poor and vulnerable. The church calls on all to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. This preferential option for the poor and vulnerable should be reflected in both peoples' daily lives and public policies. A fundamental measure of a society is how people care for and stand with the poor and vulnerable.

### The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

- Workers are called to participate in God's creation.
- The dignity of work and workers must be respected.
- Workers have the right to a safe workplace and to rest as needed.
- Workers have the right to own property and to make economic initiatives.
- The economy must serve people, not the other way around. Work is more than a way to make a living—it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation. The basic rights of workers—the right to productive work, fair and livable wages, and to organize and join a union— must be respected to uphold the dignity of work.

### Solidarity–Community and the Common Good

- People must consider the good of the whole human family in organizing society—economically, politically and legally.
- Catholics must love one another and prioritize the good of the human family over commercial interests.
- God intended the earth and everything on it to be available to everyone.
- With justice and charity, there should be enough for all.
- People are one human family—their brothers' and sisters' keepers, wherever they may be. Loving one's neighbour has global dimensions. At the core of the virtue of solidarity is the pursuit of justice and peace. Love for all calls Catholics to see a peaceful and just society where goods are distributed fairly, opportunity is promoted equally, and the dignity of all is respected.

## Care for God's Creation

- God created the earth, and it is sacred.
- Earth is ecologically diverse, beautiful, life-sustaining and worth preserving.
- People have a duty to protect and cherish the earth for the good of all and their descendants.
- As the human family, God calls people and inspires them to be creative and responsible for creation.
- The world that God created has been entrusted to all. Stewardship of the earth is a form of participating in God's creation and sustainment the world. In their use of creation, people must be guided by a concern for generations to come. Catholics show their respect for the Creator through their care for creation.

## **The Two Feet of Christian Service: Social Justice and Charity**

### “Vote With Your Feet” Activity Quotes:

- **Human Dignity:** All people are created in the image of God. People do not lose dignity because of disability, poverty, age, lack of success, or race. This emphasizes people over things, being over having.
- **The Common Good:** Individuals live in common with others, and their individual rights must be balanced with the common good of all.
- **Solidarity:** When one suffers, all suffer. People's responsibilities to each other cross national, racial, economic and ideological differences. People are called to work with those who struggle and with those who work for justice.
- **Care for Creation:** The world's goods are meant for all. People are responsible for caring for the earth and its goods as guardians/trustees, not as mere consumers and users.
- **Option for the Poor:** Seeing the world through the eyes of the poor leads to action for justice with and on behalf of those poor and marginalized. People are called to look at public policy decisions regarding how they affect the poor.

## Workshop Part Three: Skills to Collaborate

### Distinguishing between collaboration and advocacy

- Collaboration: When two or more members work together *in faith* to accomplish a common goal or create something for the common good and social justice.
- Advocacy: Voicing support for a policy, cause or idea.

### Elements of collaborating with government

- The call to action is based on members' faith.
- Members' need to respond to social justice issues in the world to effect change.
- Distinguishing between charity (works of mercy in response to an immediate need) and justice (long-term change by addressing the condition's underlying cause).
- The importance of networking with those in government and others who support a similar view—building a foundation of a relationship, nurturing diversity and engaging youth.

### ROGER HART'S LADDER OF PARTICIPATION



Adapted from Hart, R. (1992). Children's Participation from Tokenism to Citizenship. Florence: UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre, as cited in [www.freechild.org/ladder.htm](http://www.freechild.org/ladder.htm)

## **Application of CST and *Canada's Youth Policy***

In February 2018, the federal government launched a dialogue with youth to help share the country's first youth policy. A diverse cross-section of young Canadians discussed priorities, leadership, youth engagement and the role of government across 10 themes organized under the following categories.

### School, jobs and housing

- Economic opportunity, innovation and money
- Education and employment
- Rural, remote and northern communities

### Engagement and empowerment

- Civic engagement and youth impact
- Gender equality, inclusion and accessibility
- Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples

### Your health, your community, your world

- Canadian identity, immigration and international experience
- Environment and climate change
- Physical and mental health
- Service and volunteering

For each theme listed above, identify which of the seven key CST principles fit. There may be more than one principle for each theme.

1. The Life and Dignity of the Human Person
2. The Call to Family, Community, and Participation
3. Rights and Responsibilities
4. The Option for the Poor and Vulnerable
5. The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers
6. Solidarity–Community and the Common Good
7. Care for God's Creation

## **The Four Steps of Engagement**

### Step 1: Develop an ASK

- What do you want? Based on an identified concern or problem, what do you want to change?
- Clarify short- and long-term goals.
- Problems often have more than one contributing factor. Which factor(s) do you want to address?
- What is your specific ASK?

### Step 2: Prepare the ASK

- Identify who can grant what you specifically need. Who in government can respond to the ASK?
- Research the key facts and figures. Gather and analyze the research to inform your case.

### Step 3: Communicate the ASK

- Share the ASK with the stakeholder (government official).
- How was the ASK received?
- Is further refinement of the ASK required?
- What more is needed to achieve acceptance of the ASK?

### Step 4: Evaluate and Develop the Next Steps

- Determine engagement outcomes.
- Perform an analysis of how well you achieved your goals.
- Close the loop.

*At this point, refer to the Government Relations Workshop: Part Three Mini-Workshop—Developing an Ask Handout.*

## Guide to League Collaboration and Advocacy Work at the Parish Council Level

- Ensure the concern or issue aligns with CST.
- Reflect on one or more of the League’s core values of faith, service and social justice.
- Investigate if this is a topic the League has addressed in the past or is in the process of pursuing (past or current resolutions).
- Communicate with diocesan and/or provincial presidents the concern or issue and intent to advocate/collaborate with government officials and at which level.
- Always remain non-partisan in your collaboration and advocacy activity.
- Clarify when writing a letter with a personal concern that you are not acting as a representative of the League (i.e., no use of League letterhead or “speaking for” anyone else).

### Who Does What in Government?

Federal	Provincial	Municipal
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Crown-Indigenous relations and Northern affairs</li> <li>• employment and social development</li> <li>• environment</li> <li>• health</li> <li>• immigration and citizenship</li> <li>• infrastructure</li> <li>• international trade and global affairs</li> <li>• national defense</li> <li>• regional development and diversification</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• community and social services</li> <li>• education</li> <li>• energy</li> <li>• labour</li> <li>• training, colleges and universities</li> <li>• natural resources</li> <li>• Northern development and mines</li> <li>• children and youth services</li> <li>• health delivery and long-term care</li> <li>• environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• economic development</li> <li>• policing</li> <li>• parks and recreation</li> <li>• public housing</li> <li>• building permits and inspections</li> <li>• community and social services</li> <li>• public health and inspections</li> <li>• solid waste management</li> <li>• transportation systems</li> <li>• water and sewer</li> <li>• fire protection</li> </ul>



## Resources

### Guides, PowerPoints and Toolkits

Title, Publisher, Year	Link
<i>A Challenge to Live the Gospel.</i> Randall Burke.	<a href="http://slideplayer.com/slide/5816115/">slideplayer.com/slide/5816115/</a>
<i>A councillor's workbook on engaging with young people.</i> Local Government Association, 2019.	<a href="http://local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/11.167%20A%20Councillor%27s%20Workbook%20on%20Engaging%20Young%20People_update_v01.pdf">local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/11.167%20A%20Councillor%27s%20Workbook%20on%20Engaging%20Young%20People_update_v01.pdf</a>
<i>Advocacy Toolkit: Helping ordinary people make a difference.</i> Citizens for Public Justice.	<a href="http://cpj.ca/cpjs-advocacy-toolkit/">cpj.ca/cpjs-advocacy-toolkit/</a>
<i>Engaging Young People in Open Government: A communication guide.</i> Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development	<a href="http://oecd.org/mena/governance/Young-people-in-OG.pdf">oecd.org/mena/governance/Young-people-in-OG.pdf</a>
<i>Political Advocacy Toolkit for Teens.</i> Florida Youth Commission, 2012.	<a href="http://flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/yc_toolkit.pdf">flgov.com/wp-content/uploads/childadvocacy/yc_toolkit.pdf</a>
<i>Youth Advocacy Toolkit.</i> UNICEF.	<a href="http://unicef.org.uk/working-with-young-people/youth-advocacy-toolkit/">unicef.org.uk/working-with-young-people/youth-advocacy-toolkit/</a>

### Publications

Author, title, publisher, year	Link
<i>Building a Youth Policy for Canada—What We Heard report.</i> Government of Canada, 2018.	<a href="http://canada.ca/en/youth/corporate/transparency/what-we-heard.html">canada.ca/en/youth/corporate/transparency/what-we-heard.html</a>
<i>Canada's Youth Policy</i> Government of Canada, 2018.	<a href="http://canada.ca/content/dam/y-j/documents/YP-ENG.pdf">canada.ca/content/dam/y-j/documents/YP-ENG.pdf</a>
Hart, R. "Children's Participation: from Tokenism to Citizenship." <i>Innocenti Essays No. 4.</i> UNICEF, 1992.	<a href="http://unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf">unicef-irc.org/publications/pdf/childrens_participation.pdf</a>
McGlone, M. "Twentieth Sunday in Ordinary Time: A joyful vision of God's reign." <i>National Catholic Reporter</i> , 2022.	<a href="http://nronline.org/news/spirituality/scripture-life/twentieth-sunday-ordinary-time-joyful-vision-gods-reign">nronline.org/news/spirituality/scripture-life/twentieth-sunday-ordinary-time-joyful-vision-gods-reign</a>

## Websites

Web Page	Link
Advocacy Canadian Jesuits International	<a href="http://canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/outreach/advocacy/">canadianjesuitsinternational.ca/outreach/advocacy/</a>
Global Issues: Youth United National	<a href="http://un.org/en/global-issues/youth">un.org/en/global-issues/youth</a>