

## Lower Primary Learning Sequence

### PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

#### Teacher introduction

By the end of this unit, students will have explored the concept of fair and unfair sharing and reflected on ways they can follow Jesus' example in caring for the poor.

Teachers, before you start:

1. Watch the CST ['Preferential Option for the Poor' film](#) for your own background and familiarise yourself with the Lower Primary cartoon in the Learning Experience below.
2. Download the resources (worksheets, slides, etc.) and have them ready to go on your computer/interactive whiteboard.
3. Locate the Scriptures and copies of Church texts in the Learning Experience below.

#### Learn - Focus

Teacher's Note: The Big Question for this Learning Experience may need to be rephrased for lower primary students. For example: 'How should we share what God has given us?' 'What is fair sharing?' 'How should we share with people around the world?'

Students may already be aware of injustice in the world through media and family discussion. We suggest using the idea of 'unfair sharing' to introduce young students to global poverty and unequal distribution of the world's resources. This notion is deepened in the learning activities across all the Catholic Social Teaching principles. Depending on the group it may be more beneficial to restrict the context of this example to sharing within the classroom, or school.

Explore the concept of fair sharing through personal experiences.

Tune into students' current understanding of the concept of sharing.

**Discuss:** How do students share at home and at school? What are the kinds of things that are shared? For example, toys, food, etc. Why do they share these things?

Students share their experiences of sharing at home and at school.

**Discuss:** What are the things that God gives people to live?

Generate a list of the world's resources such as water, land, food, and necessities such as shelter, jobs, education, etc.

Briefly discuss: Does everyone in the class have these? Do all people in the world have these things? How do you know? Have you heard about this before?

#### Learn - Explore

Students consider a situation of unfair sharing.

Explain that as a class you are going to explore the right or best way to share the things God has given us.

#### Cake Simulation activity

Create a simulation of the cake illustration in the cartoon, using an object or items that can be divided or shared. For example a range of plastic toys or images representing necessities such as food, water, shelter or

simply paper in the shape of a cake or pizza that can be cut into different sizes. Cut the object into as many pieces as there are students.

Split the class into five even groups. Give one group the majority of the items or pieces- ie. the largest share of resources. For example, if you have a class size of twenty, one group would get around 12 pieces, the second group 4, the third 2, and the last two groups would get 1 or half a piece, or the smallest share. Teachers can watch the ['Preferential Option for the poor' film clip](#) to see an example of this done with coloured tiles.

**Explain** that around the world, all the things that God has given us to live are not always shared fairly, just like with the 'cake' or in the activity above.

**Discuss:** How do students feel about the cake simulation? How did the students with the least feel? How did the students with the most feel?

In a think-pair-share routine, students are given time to think about their own response and then discuss with a partner: What have they been taught is the right or best way to share? What do they think bible teaches us about sharing?

## Learn - Demonstrate

Students explore what Jesus requires us to do when we see 'unfair' sharing.

**Pose the question:** What does the Bible tell us about this? How would Jesus want us to treat people who are not getting their fair share?

### Isaiah 58 analysis

#### [Read Isaiah 58: 6-9](#)

**Distribute** [cartoon images or the images and Scripture](#). Select student/s to read these verses. Alternatively, only use the images and explain that they illustrate the Scripture verses. After the task, the cartoons could be displayed around the classroom.

**Discuss:** In this Scripture passage, who does Jesus teach us to love?

**Emphasise** how Jesus instructs us to love everyone, with particular emphasis on the poor- the people who do not have what they need to live.

This is the preferential option for the poor: *"People who do not have what they need (food, water, work, housing, school, medical care) are poor. Our Church teaches that these brothers and sisters of ours must be treated with extra respect and given what they need. Those of us who are not poor must share what have with those who are."* (Anne Neuberger)

**Highlight** that while it might sadden us to think that some people do not have what they need, the good news is that we are all able to do something about it!

**Teacher's Note:** *It is important to include hope and opportunities for positive action alongside what can be distressing facts or discussion about global poverty. You may like to informally discuss some things that can people can do to help each other at this point or in the 'prayer' section of this learning experience.*

### Extension:

In small groups, students create a collage to show who Jesus identifies himself with; who he teaches us to love. This could be a mixed media artwork, with magazine image cut outs, images from the Internet and Caritas Australia Website, drawings or photographs. Groups present and explain their selection of images.

## **Act**

Students identify what Jesus requires us to do in when we see 'unfair' sharing.

Display the [Lower Primary 'Preferential Option for the Poor' cartoon vignette.](#)

Select one student to read the title, or read as a class.

**Discuss:** How should the cake be shared? What have we learned about how things in the world are shared? Does everyone in the world get a fair share?

**Review** students' ideas and learnings about the best way to share.

As a class or individually, collect questions students may still have about sharing, or people experiencing poverty. What do students still wonder? Students may be encouraged to use video software or voice recording software to continue investigating a further question.

## **Pray**

Students write a prayer for help to work towards a world where the things that we all need to live are shared fairly.