

THE CANDY CURRENCY GAME

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OBJECTIVE // To illustrate charity and justice responses to poverty and inequality

TIME // 15 minutes

MATERIALS //

- Playing cards (1 per student)
- Small candies or tokens (such as Camino individually wrapped chocolates or another fair trade brand)
 - » 1 individual pack (or set of 30) for every 10-15 participants
 - » The rest can be a bulk pack of candy, or one large bag of tokens for easy distribution
- Prepare 10 “prizes” (See attached examples, and adapt as necessary for your group.)

PREPARATION //

- Prepare prizes according to your audience, or use the prizes attached
- Separate 1 playing card per person from the deck, including only 1 royalty card for every 10-15 participants.

HOW TO PLAY

1. Distribute one playing card to every participant. Each card represents the participant's role in this game. The candy/tokens represent the currency. The object of the game is to use the candy/token currency to purchase the prizes. Each of the prizes costs 10 pieces of candy/tokens. Set the prize cards on a table in front of you for the participants to see.
2. Ask the participants with royalty cards to identify themselves. Explain to the group that:
 - a. the participants with royalty cards will each get 1 full individual pack of candy (or 30 tokens);
 - b. all the other participants with non-royalty cards will each receive 2 pieces of candy/2 tokens.
3. Distribute the candy/tokens accordingly. Remind the participants that each prize costs 10 pieces of candy/tokens, and that they are to hand over their payment to you in order to select their prize on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Optional additions: To make the issues of uneven power dynamics more apparent you can add the following twists:

- In order to request donations from royalty, non-royalty must beg for donations or borrow money from them – at a high interest rate.
- To draw attention to inequality around the world, encourage one 'Royal' to quietly come to the front and simply start purchasing items.

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4. The game continues until all prizes are purchased. Some participants may pool their resources to purchase a prize; some may ask the Royalty for donations. Depending on the participants, some Royalty may ask questions of those asking for donations while others may not.
5. Once all prizes are purchased and distributed you can engage the participants in a discussion. The following guiding questions may be used to draw out the parallels between the uneven distribution of cards in this game and the uneven distribution of wealth in the world and the social justice implications.
 - a. Review what happened:
 - Who has the most prizes?
 - The least?
 - How are the prizes distributed amongst the group?
 - How did the non-royalty participants come to purchase their prizes?
 - b. Discuss the parallels between their actions and reactions in this game to those of local and global situations of uneven distribution of wealth. The scenarios below help to establish links between the scenarios in this game, real-life situations and Catholic Social Teaching (CST).

Debrief each scenario that arose in the game by asking: how did this reflect real life situation? What does Catholic Social Teaching tell us about this? (See the Principles of CST attached).

SCENARIOS:

• PARTICIPANTS DO NOT ENGAGE WITH THE GAME.

Life Situation: Sometimes individuals and groups quietly disengage from society, out of their own volition, because they do not have the means to participate or are excluded by geography, gender, language, physical or mental impairment or other reason, to participate. They are often forgotten or invisible. Many marginalized people around the world lack opportunity to achieve their full potential. They may lack the capacity or means of communications to have their voices heard. People and whole countries are excluded, via international trade agreements, policies or opportunity to participate in decisions that concern them. There are many forms of suffering that are not always apparent and many people who suffer silently.

CST: Human Dignity; Common Good; Solidarity; Preferential Option for the Poor; Participation

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- **PEOPLE POOL THEIR CANDY/ TOKENS TOGETHER.**

Life Situation: Cooperatives and other community actions such as community gardens that involve communal sharing of resources

CST: Common Good; Solidarity; Participation; Subsidiarity; Economic Justice

- **PEOPLE GO TO ROYALTY AND BEG, BORROW OR EXCHANGE THEIR SERVICES OR OTHER GOODS IN ORDER TO GET CANDY/TOKENS.**

Life Situation: Sometimes people and communities have to publicize their misery or give something back in return for basic support. Sometimes we, as donors, expect to feel good about our donation, so much so that it becomes more about us than the people we are trying to help. It can be much more difficult to support causes or advocate for labour rights than to give to a child or a family in need, even if supporting the rights of a labouring dad might in fact give him better the capacity to care for his own children.

CST: Charity and Justice; Human Dignity; Solidarity; Subsidiarity; Economic Justice

- **ROYALTY COMES FORWARD TO GET PRIZES BECAUSE THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ASKED TO GIVE RESOURCES.**

Life situation: People go on about their daily lives because they have not heard about a situation, or there is too much other “noise” and they cannot discern what to do. Sometimes, those in need cannot communicate their needs in a way that is easily understood due to lack of political interest in their situation, lack of infrastructure, etc.

CST: Common Good; Solidarity; Rights & Responsibilities

- **ROYALTY COMES FORWARD TO GET PRIZES, EVEN THOUGH THEY HAVE BEEN ASKED FOR HELP, BUT THEY REFUSE.**

Life situation: People go on about their daily lives, feeling entitled to the opportunities and resources they possess.

CST: Common Good; Solidarity; Rights & Responsibilities; Economic Justice; Peace

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- ROYALTY SHARES THEIR CANDY/ TOKENS INDISCRIMINATELY.

Life situation: Many people give money out of generosity to charitable causes. However, when they give indiscriminately, they often give to those who are loudest and nearest, those who they know or who they favor, rather than looking at the organization from the lens of the principles of Catholic Social Teaching. (See Principles at the end of the activity.)

CST: Preferential Option for the Poor; Solidarity

There are likely to be other scenarios. Debrief other scenarios that may arise in the same pattern: How does this reflect real life? What does Catholic Social Teaching tell us about this?

Explaining the meaning of charity: We often understand charity as the generous act of giving what is mine to others; money, food or other kinds of help to meet the often-immediate need of another. As Catholics, we believe that "charity is the theological virtue by which we love God above all things for Gods own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God."ⁱ

Discuss that what some of the royalty did was charitable.

Add that charity does not challenge the root cause of problems. Acts of charity are important; we must take care of people when they are in need. Acts of charity are a good and moral thing to do. However, they should be done in an informed way, and we must also pay attention to the underlying causes of the need for charity.

6. Ask the group: "Were the rules of the game *just*?"
You will likely get mixed responses.

Explain that if we look at the local or global distribution of wealth we notice that a very few have a lot, some have a little, and many do not have enough to live. Share the following statistics:ⁱⁱ

- Wealth, both nationally and globally, is becoming increasingly concentrated.
- 0.7% of the world's population controls 45.2% of the world's wealth.
- The world's wealthiest 10% control 88% of the world's wealth.
- The poorest half of the world's population holds less than 1% of global wealth.
- 1 in 9 people, 805 million, live in chronic hunger.

Even though charitable actions are necessary, we need to also address the primordial question: *why* do some people have to beg for necessities while others live in luxury? Answering this question requires an understanding of the role of justice in responding to situations like the one explored in this activity.

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Add that justice ensures each person is accorded what is due to them by virtue of their human dignity. This often requires those with more to sacrifice some of what they have.ⁱⁱⁱ Acting for justice means learning, judging and acting in a way that works to address the underlying causes of injustice.

7. Responding to this world problem requires actions of both charity and justice. Brainstorm actions that your group can take to reduce inequality in the world, and categorize as acts of justice or acts of charity.

Examples of Acts of Charity:

- Participants could hold a bake sale and donate the proceeds to Development and Peace.
- Participants could collect food for the foodbank, to take care of the immediate needs of those who are hungry.

Examples of Acts of Justice:

- Participants could facilitate this activity for others, to educate their communities about injustice, and how we are called as Christians to respond.
- Participants could write a letter to the Prime Minister or their MP advocating for strong Canadian policies and support which will benefit vulnerable people.

8. After brainstorming, choose, as a class, one act of charity and one act of justice to move forward with. Send a picture of your acts of charity and justice with a short blurb to us at youth@devp.org.

To further explore the ideas of charity and justice with your group, check out "[Prescription: Charity vs. Justice](#)," an activity that can be found in the Development and Peace Activities Database.

To learn more about what Development and Peace does, or how to get involved, visit the website at [devp.org](http://www.devp.org) or contact your local animator. Find contact information at: <http://www.devp.org/en/contactus/address>.

¹*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Part Three, Section 1, Chapter 1, Line 1822.

²Shorrocks, Anthony; Davies, Jim; Lluberas, Rodrigo. "Global Wealth Databook, 2015." (Zürich, Switzerland: Credit Suisse Research Institute, 2015). 99; FAO, IFAD and WFP. 2015. The State of Food Insecurity in the World 2015. Meeting the 2015 international hunger targets: taking stock of uneven progress. Rome, FAO.

³*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Part Three, Section 1, Chapter 2, Line 1928.

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PRINCIPLES OF CATHOLIC SOCIAL TEACHING

DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

The foundation of all Catholic Social Teaching is the inherent dignity of the human person, as created in the image and likeness of God. The Church, therefore, calls for Integral Human Development, which concerns the wellbeing of every person in every dimension: economic, political, social, ecological, and spiritual.

COMMON GOOD

We must all consider the good of others, and the good of the whole human family, in organizing our society – economically, politically, legally. Human Dignity can only be realized and protected through our relationship with society-at-large. We must love our neighbours, locally and globally, and prioritize the good of the human family over commercial interests.

SOLIDARITY

We are all part of the human family and we are all interconnected and interdependent. Loving our neighbour has global dimensions. We must see ourselves in others and collaborate toward solutions. Solidarity is a recognition that we are 'all in this together,' and is a commitment to strengthen community and promote a just society.

PREFERENTIAL OPTION FOR THE POOR

The moral test of any society is based on how the most vulnerable are treated. Just as God's love is universal, this principle does not intend that we should focus on the poor to the exclusion of others, but rather that we are called to prioritize those who are in most need of our Solidarity.

STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION

The Earth is sacred. Creation has its own intrinsic value. We have a responsibility to protect and to cherish the Earth's ecological diversity, beauty and life-sustaining properties. Together, we must hold it in trust for future generations.

SUBSIDIARITY & THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT

The state is an instrument to promote human dignity, protect human rights, and build the common good. Subsidiarity holds that such functions of government should be performed at the lowest level possible, as long as they can be performed adequately. When they cannot, higher levels of government must intervene. This principle goes hand-in-hand with Participation, the principle that all peoples have a right to participate in the economic, political and cultural life of society, and in the decisions that affect their community.

PARTICIPATION

Human beings are social, and how we live together affects the dignity of the individual and the progress of our society. All persons are entitled to participate in community and in decisions that affect their lives, and cannot be excluded for any reason.

RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

We all have a right to those things which are required by Human Dignity. Rights arise from what we need to live as God intended us to. These are innately linked to our responsibility to ensure the rights of others – that we do not take more than is needed to fulfill our rights at the expense of another's.

ECONOMIC JUSTICE

The economy must serve people, and not the other way around. All persons have a right to dignified work and to fair wages and working conditions. Work is more than a way to make a living; it is a form of continuing participation in God's creation.

PEACE

To be in right relationship with God and with each other. Peace is the fruit of Charity and the consequence of Justice.

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PRIZES

Designed to be cut-out and used during game

FREE
POST-SECONDARY
EDUCATION

WORLD TRAVEL

PERSONAL CHEF

NEW TABLET
OF YOUR CHOICE

FREE HOUSE

NEW CAR

FOOD

NEW GAMING
CONSOLE

FREE CONCERT AND
MEETING WITH YOUR
FAVOURITE MUSICAL ARTIST

UNLIMITED ITUNES
MONEY