

The Ministry of Peace and Justice

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Session 6 Handout

What's Next?

In this session, you'll begin the process of scheduling, planning, and organizing experiences for parishioners to participate in. While this is the final gathering outlined here in *The Ministry of Peace and Justice*, you will need to keep gathering regularly for your ministry to be successful.

The main part of this session is a brainstorming activity meant to help get some potential activity ideas over the next twelve months down on paper. Before you start discussing potential activities, here are some things to bear in mind:

Start with the “Discern” Step of the DART Process

What issues are pressing in your area? What organizations exist that you might be able to partner with? What are the strengths and values of the parish? What sort of activity in some other ministry area has been successful in the past? What is the parish already doing in a peace and justice area that could use some promotion or expansion? (For instance, how might you add reflection and transformation pieces to a quarterly food drive?)

Consider the Liturgical, Parish, and Civil Calendars

The church's liturgical calendar sets the rhythm for the year. When you're thinking about potential activities, consider

connecting them to liturgical seasons like Lent and Advent and/or special feast days (like the feast of St. Francis of Assisi in October, a good time for an activity connected to the saint's special love of creation). The US Catholic bishops also set aside certain times for special peace and justice observances, such as National Migration Week in January and Respect Life Month in October.

Take a look at the “Important Peace and Justice Days and Seasons” below.

Also, you'll want to be in tune with the parish calendar. Are there already-existing events or traditions you could partner with? Are there particularly busy times to avoid?

Finally, the civil calendar is important to bear in mind. Does the parish empty in the summer months? Is there an opportunity to create an experience for a holiday like Martin Luther King, Jr. Day?

Variety Is the Spice of Life— and Peace and Justice Ministry

One-evening educational events. Small faith-sharing groups that meet six times to serve and reflect together. Recurring, monthly visits to a nursing home that various ministry groups in the parish take turns attending. Opportunities in the six different areas of peace and justice ministry, looking at one or more of the seven themes of Catholic social teaching. As you start to fill in a blank calendar with ideas, you'll want to include activities for different audiences with different themes, set to run in different time frames. This way, you'll have the chance to experiment and learn what sort of thing works for your parish.

Important Peace and Justice Days and Seasons

January:

- World Day of Peace (January 1)
- Epiphany
- National Migration Week (US Catholic bishops)

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
- Anniversary of Roe v. Wade (Supreme Court decision legalizing abortion)

February:

- Ash Wednesday (sometimes)
- Lent
- Black History Month

March:

- Women's Herstory Month
- Bl. Oscar Romero Feast Day (March 24)

April:

- Easter (sometimes)
- Earth Day (April 22)

May:

- Feast of St. Joseph the Worker (May 1)
- World Fair Trade Day
- Ascension (sometimes)
- Pentecost (sometimes)
- Memorial Day

June:

- Feast of Sts. Peter and Paul (June 29)

July:

- Independence Day

August:

- St. Maximilian Kolbe Feast Day (patron of pro-life movement and imprisoned people; August 14)
- Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary (August 15)

September:

- Bl. Teresa of Calcutta Feast Day (September 5)
- Labor Day
- St. Vincent de Paul Feast Day (September 27)

October:

- Respect Life Month (US Catholic bishops)
- St. Francis of Assisi Feast Day (October 4)

November:

- St. Frances Cabrini Feast Day (patron of migrants; November 13)
- Anniversary of Dorothy Day's death (founder of the Catholic Worker movement; November 29)
- Thanksgiving

December:

- Advent
- Immaculate Conception
- Christmas