

PRAYER FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

**God, source of all light,
we are surrounded by the darkness of
the injustices experienced by your people,
the poor who are hungry and who search
for shelter,
the sick who seek relief,
and the downtrodden who seek help in
their hopelessness.**

**Surround us and fill us with your Spirit
who is Light.**

**Lead us in your way to be light to your people.
Help us, the community of St. Clare to be salt for our
community
as we share your love with those caught
in the struggles of life.**

**We desire to be your presence to the least
among us
and to know your presence in them as
we work through you
to bring justice and peace to this world
in desperate need.**

**We ask this through our Lord Jesus Christ,
your son, who lives and reigns with you
and the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever.
Amen**

Charity and Justice

Charity	Justice
Charity = social service. Charity provides direct services like food, clothing, shelter.	Justice = social change. Justice promotes social change in institutions or political structures.
Charity responds to immediate needs.	Justice responds to long-term needs.
Charity is directed at the <i>effects</i> of injustice, its symptoms. Charity addresses problems that already exist. Otherwise put: LOVE MOPS UP.	Justice is directed at the <i>root causes</i> of social problems. Justice addresses the underlying structures or causes of these problems. Otherwise put: JUSTICE TRIES TO MAKE SURE THE MESS ISN'T MADE TO BEGIN WITH.
Charity is private, individual acts.	Justice is public, collective actions.
Examples of charity: homeless shelters, food shelves, clothing drives, emergency services.	Examples of justice: legislative advocacy, changing policies and practices, political action.

(Source: Office for Social Justice, Archdiocese of St. Paul/Minneapolis.)

The Four Main Aspects of Social Justice

- **1.SOLIDARITY**

Living as though other people and living things matter. Examples of this would be:

- FASTING in solidarity with the hungry, the oppressed etc
- LIVING SIMPLY. Do I really need all those gadgets coming out in the stores? Recycling where you can; being a good steward of all our natural resources and of our planet that God has given us.
- PRAYING for the poor, the homeless, or an end to sweatshops, etc.

- **2.EDUCATION**

We are obligated to educate ourselves and others about social justice. Read all you can about the subject. Study all you can about all the social issues facing us in the world today. Spread the word about these issues. Examples :Global Warming, the natural disasters, sweatshops, the death penalty, oppressed and persecuted Christians in the Sudan etc.everthing!

- **3.COMMUNITY ORGANIZING**

Get involved in the community! Join or start a food pantry. Start a neighborhood watch program if one is needed. Start or join a group in your parish that studies the issues of the community/world and decides what can be done about the problems facing us. Start a volunteer voter registration group. Organize the community in consolidating the efforts of giving its help to the poor. Join Habitat for Humanity etc. etc.Just do it!

Community organizing is also about leadership development of the people who are actually going through the pressures and issues. Working WITH instead of just FOR the people who are affected by systemic injustices is empowering and brings them to their full potential as men and women created in God's image and likeness.

- **4.ADVOCACY**

This is giving a voice to those who have no voice, that is, the poor, the sick, the shut in, the unborn, the dying, the disadvantaged, the immigrants, those imprisoned, the homeless, racial minorities etc. We are called to speak out! Write a letter to the editor, join a march, call your elected officials and let them know how you feel. Very often legislation gets passed to the disadvantage of many, because the elected official simply didn't know how people feel about the subject. This is because no one bothered to call!