

Charity and Justice

Story of the Big Boulder

A massive boulder fell into the middle of a highway. Cars would zip around the curve and crash into it. A family living nearby was horrified and moved to pity at the sight. They would help people from their smashed up cars, tend their injuries, feed them, comfort and pray with them and send them on their way. Finally, after years of compassionate care one family member said, "You know we really should try to remove that boulder."



WORKING FOR PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE MEANS WORKING TO REMOVE BIG BOULDERS

"Charity will never be true charity unless it takes justice into account...
Let no one attempt with small gifts of charity to exempt themselves
from the great duties imposed by justice." (Pope Pius XI *Divini Redemptoris* 49)

Charity	Justice
Charity is working for social services which provide direct assistance such as shelter, ablutions, food and clothing.	Justice is working for social transformations which promote change in institutions or political structures.
Charity responds to immediate needs. Scriptural reference: THE GOOD SAMARITAN (Luke 10.29-37)	Justice responds to long term needs. Scriptural reference: THE EXODUS (Exodus 3.1-15.21)
Charity focuses on the effects of injustice. It is directed at the symptoms of injustice. Charity addresses the immediate needs before us.	Justice focuses on the underlying causes of social problems. It investigates and uncovers structures of injustice.
Charity attends to personal acts of love and caring.	Justice focuses on public group action for change for the better.
<u>Some examples of charity are:</u> Drop-in centres; refuges for the homeless; food relief; clothing drives; emergency services (medical, legal, counselling, etc.)	<u>Some examples of justice are:</u> Restorative Justice networks; change in legislative restrictions on refugees; education programs for minority groups; reconciliation groups; peace groups; political action.