

# SEE, JUDGE, ACT: HOW SHOULD WE RESPOND?

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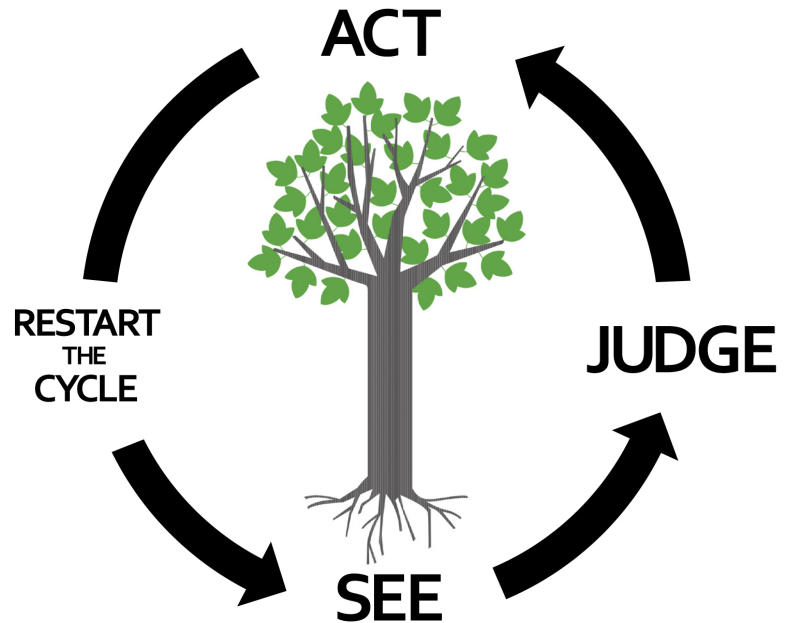
SLIDE 1: TITLE SLIDE //

SLIDE 2 //

How do we respond . . . ?

*Give current examples for each and ask the participants to identify responses. As the discussion is to tap into prior learning, it can be brief.*

- when natural disasters strike here in Canada or in other countries? (e.g. floods, earthquakes, typhoons, drought)
- in situations of war? (e.g. Syria, Darfur)
- when a social crisis happens in our own community or country? (e.g. bullying, violence, religious intolerance)
- when faced with ongoing injustices here in Canada or around the world? (e.g. poverty, racism, the legacy of residential schools)



SLIDE 3 //

When an earthquake happens, famine strikes, or a violent conflict starts around the world or in Canada, we naturally want to respond as quickly as possible. However sometimes the quickest way to help is not always the most effective way to help. Sometimes our efforts to 'help' others in need can lead to unintended or even harmful consequences - especially when we do not understand the problem fully. We also know that bad things happen when good people do nothing. So, what can a person of good will do to help?

*What Should We Do?*

*A catholic approach starts with discernment. We discern when we listen for and recognize God's call to us on how to bring about the good of all - in our own lives or when we work for fairness. We do this when we act humbly, gather information, pray and reflect on current events. These events can be in our lives, our communities and our world. We will know we have made a good decision when we feel at peace.*

Development and Peace uses the Tree of Catholic Social Teaching to show how we can discern wisely and act fairly to respond to natural disasters, human crises or stop situations that are unfair or exclude people. This cycle called See-Judge-Act was first developed by Belgian Cardinal Joseph Cardijn. It allows us to judge the impact of our own actions when we work for fairness.

*The people affected by the unfairness are central to each situation we act to change. These people have knowledge, hopes, skills and the power to transform their own situations. Keeping their work and ideas at the centre of our actions reflects the Catholic Social Teaching principle of Human Dignity and helps ensure that our own actions are just.*

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*In Stage 1 we SEE.* We ask important questions to help find information, and we look at how unfairness and injustice affects people. We also look at how we are connected to the situation.

*In Stage 2 we JUDGE.* We determine the following:

- a. who is affected, how and why; and
- b. what our faith says about these kinds of situations.

*In Stage 3 we ACT.* Now we plan and carry out actions in light of our Faith. We work to change the situation and build the Kingdom of God here 'on Earth.'

*In Stage 4 we RESTART the CYCLE.* We return to the SEE stage and examine the impact of our actions.

### SLIDE 4: SEE //

The soil represents the place where there is unfairness or injustice. We must see, hear and experience the lived realities of people and their communities, so that we can:

- a. learn as much as we can about the unfairness and how it affects people; and
- b. learn about our relationship to the situation.

### SLIDE 5 //

- a. We have to learn as much as we can about the unfairness we are looking at and those it affects. To begin, we can ask the questions on the slide.

### SLIDE 6 //

- b. To find out the connections between ourselves and this issue, we can ask the following questions:

### SLIDE 7: JUDGE //

Then we JUDGE the situation, as at Confirmation we receive the gift of Right Judgement.

The trunk is where the filtering process of the tree takes place. Here, it represents our thinking about the unfairness or injustice through:

- a. understanding the situation, and
- b. applying the teachings of our faith so that we can discern which path to follow.

### SLIDE 8 //

- a. *Understanding the situation* gives us a more complete picture of the injustice, its causes and what contributes to it. Here we try to make sense of the reality we saw in step one and answer these questions:

### SLIDES 9-14 //

Now we can look more deeply at the situation. Who suffers in this situation, and how? In some situations there are people who benefit, who get something from a situation of unfairness.

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### SLIDE 15 //

- b. Now we can judge the situation in light of the *teachings of our faith*: scripture, the life and teaching of Jesus, and Catholic Social Teaching. This includes reflection and prayer.

### SLIDES 16-17 //

Next, we turn to Catholic Social Teaching. Catholic Social Teaching is the teaching of the Church. It is developed by the Pope and the Vatican, bishops in Canada and around the world, and Catholic thinkers. They look at what is happening in the world and apply the teachings of Christ to our lives. It also helps us see how people around the world are connected.

Here are three principles of Catholic Social Teaching. How can they guide us in our actions on the issue we are exploring?

PRINCIPLE	DEFINITION
Human Dignity	We are each made in the image and likeness of God.
Common Good	Each and every person's well-being is protected.
Solidarity	As members of one global family, we are committed to the good of every person and group, and responsible to one another. Even if we are different, we are our sisters' and brothers' keepers, called to love one another in this world.

### SLIDE 18: ACT //

Now that we have answered these questions, we can ACT! We can plan and carry out actions to transform the situation. We can use the information we gathered in the SEE stage and what we learned in the JUDGE stage. Through this process, we learn how God calls us to respond.

Sometimes we may need to return to an earlier stage to gather more facts; to think more; or prayerfully consider new information in the light of our faith before we act.

### SLIDES 19-20 //

In acting to address situations of unfairness or injustice, we show our love for God and neighbour. We must act in a way that brings about a more fair and just situation for everyone. Through action to transform the situation, we reach out like the branches of the tree, and our actions bear fruit. First we must ask (Slide 20):

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### SLIDES 21-22 //

Our action should include both aspects of social justice: charity and justice. Both are equally important; both are equally necessary in any response.

*Acts of Charity* meet immediate needs, such as food, water, shelter and clothing. They reflect the love of Christ.

*Acts of Justice* seek to resolve the root causes of the problem for the long term, so charity is no longer needed. When Jesus was here on Earth he worked for justice and fairness.

### SLIDE 23 //

To plan effectively for our action, we can ask ourselves the following questions:

### SLIDE 24 //

*You can test the proposed action plan against the principles of Catholic Social Teaching in slide 15. Ask these guiding questions:*

### SLIDES 25-26 //

The fruit falls and nourishes people, animals and the soil. Seeds produce new roots that will grow into more trees. We cultivate fairness through right action. We can ask ourselves these questions:

### SLIDE 27 //

By acting we not only change the world, but change ourselves. However, we need to remind ourselves that See-Judge-Act is a cycle and that it begins again after each action. We can examine the fruits of our labour, and the impact of our actions by starting again at SEE.

### SLIDE 28 //

#### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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