

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

LESSON PLANS GRADES 1-8



Photo by Ashley Rytter for CRS

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# background information for session leaders

## CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

Call to Family, Community and Participation is one of the Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching as outlined by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, or USCCB. Catholics believe that every human life is sacred and should be respected from conception until natural death. We also believe that human life is inherently social, and that how we relate to each other in society impacts human dignity and our ability to grow in community (Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching) USCCB. Marriage and family are foundational communities of society. In the Acts of the Apostles, St. Paul describes what community looks like: Disciples of Christ shared their food and possessions to make sure the neediest among them were taken care of (Acts 2:42-47). These members of the early Church model a society in which all members of a community care for one another.



Children play during a community-run mother's club meeting. Bottom: A girl attends a graduation ceremony for mothers who have learned about preventing malnutrition in young children through an educational program.

Photos by Ashley Rytter/CRS

## CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

Catholic Relief Services is the official international humanitarian agency of the Catholic community in the United States. We are motivated by the example of Jesus Christ to assist poor and suffering people in more than 100 countries on the basis of need, without regard to race, religion or nationality. Founded in 1943, CRS reaches 85 million of the world's poorest people each

year with innovative solutions to poverty, hunger, drought, disease and emergencies. CRS works in close partnership with the Catholic Church around the world, and with local, national and international organizations that share our commitment to finding ways to meet immediate needs while empowering communities for the long term.

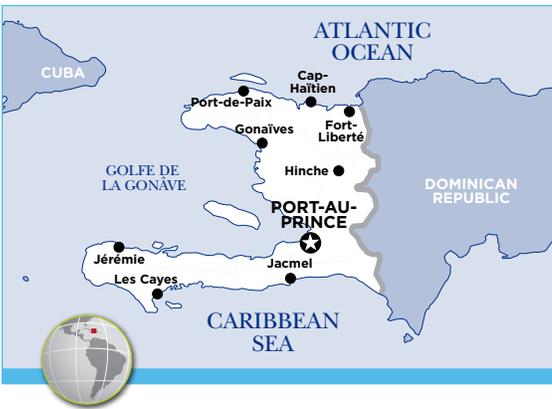
## CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION, AND CRS

The health care program in Les Cayes, Haiti, is just one example of how CRS supports the Call to Family, Community and Participation. The program was run almost entirely by Haitian resident volunteers like Louisma. Volunteers contributed more than 175,000 hours per year and reached out to more than 29,000 children and 12,000 mothers. In target communities, the malnutrition rate decreased from 14 percent to 8 percent.





# Louisma's Story



Haiti, the poorest country in the Western hemisphere, is located in the Caribbean Sea. Most Haitians live on less than \$2 per day. Around the seaport of Les Cayes, there are few doctors or hospitals. Catholic Relief Services is working with volunteers like **Louisma Toussaint** to set up community health clinics. CRS trained Louisma and her fellow volunteers to provide basic checkups and medical assistance, and helped set up a community “rally post,” where families meet with Louisma and the other volunteers. Mothers bring their babies to the rally post for monthly checkups. Louisma weighs and measures the babies to make sure they are healthy and growing, vaccinates them and treats their illnesses. When someone needs a doctor, Louisma helps them get to the closest hospital. When they return home from the hospital, Louisma checks on them to make sure they are doing well.

Top: Mothers who gather to learn about community health also grow vegetable gardens to provide their children with nutritious food. Above left: Haiti is the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, with 80 percent of Haitians living on less than \$2 a day. The dire situation in Haiti was worsened by a 7.0-magnitude earthquake in January 2010 that killed about 230,000 people. Map credit: OCHA. Photo by Ashley Rytter/CRS

A mothers’ club meets at the rally post each month to share tips. They also get advice from Louisma about keeping themselves and their children healthy. The club has a community garden where the mothers grow vegetables and fruits. They share recipes for using vegetables to make healthy, balanced meals. Louisma and her fellow volunteers are making a big difference. Since Louisma began volunteering, the number of children who suffer from malnutrition in her community has dropped by nearly half. “I look at all the children ... and to see this energetic group of them, the future seems more fruitful.”

## CALL TO FAMILY, COMMUNITY AND PARTICIPATION

Human beings are social by nature. We, like the early disciples, are invited to come together as a community, whether in our classroom, workplace or family. As God’s family, we are called to look out for one another.

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

LESSON PLAN GRADES 1-3

45 Minutes

## OBJECTIVE

Students will learn about the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching) through the story of Louisma Toussaint, a volunteer at a health care center in Haiti.

## MATERIALS

- Ball of yarn and a large space
- **Call to Family, Community and Participation Activity Sheets, Grades 1-3**
- Coloring supplies
- **Louisma's Story**
- Whiteboard and marker
- World map

## DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

1. Explain that students will learn about the Church's teaching on the Call to Family, Community and Participation through the story of Louisma, a volunteer at a health care center in Haiti.
2. Locate Haiti on the world map. Read **Louisma's Story**.
3. Ask: How is Louisma helping her community? Relate this to the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation.

## ACTIVITY\* (25 MINUTES)

1. Gather everyone in the middle of the room. Give one student the ball of yarn and instruct him or her to hold onto the end and throw the ball to another student. While tossing the ball, invite the student to say one thing he or she could do to help the person catching it. The student catching the ball should hold onto an end and then throw the ball to another student, while naming a way to help that person. Repeat until everyone is holding a piece of the yarn.
2. Before you put the yarn away, invite students to observe how interconnected everyone in the circle really is.
3. Explain that it is easy to see how we are interconnected to everyone in our class because we see each other nearly every day. Explain that the class is a community. Ask students to name other examples of community. Write their answers on the board. If the answer doesn't come up naturally, encourage the class to think of Louisma's community.
4. Distribute the **Call to Family, Community and Participation Activity Sheets, Grades 1-3**, and coloring supplies, and allow 5 minutes to complete them.

## CLOSING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

*Loving God, we pray for Louisma Toussaint and all people who help make their communities a better place to live. Inspire us to help people who are sick, suffering and hungry. Amen*

## TAKING IT HOME

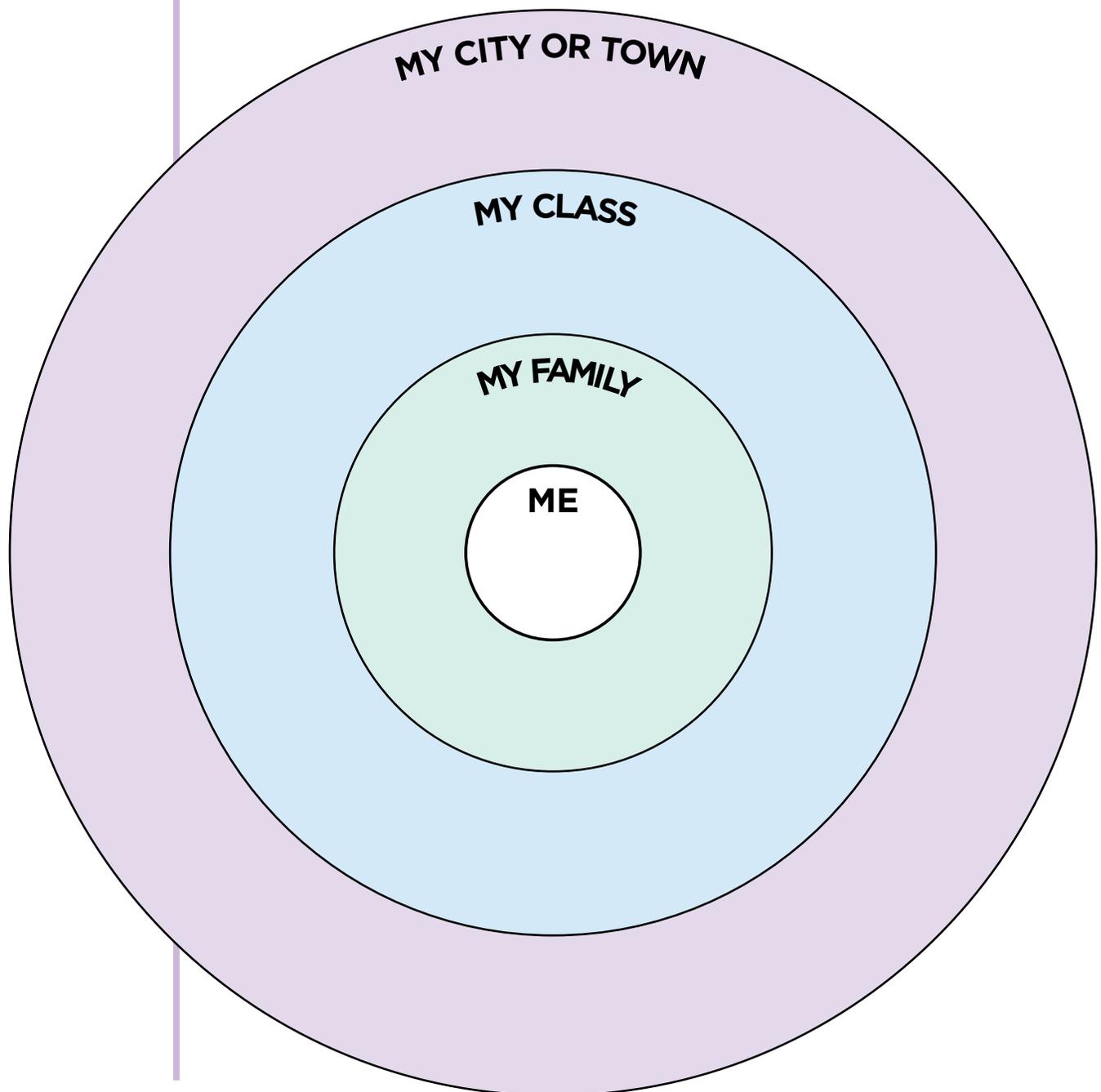
Invite students to share and discuss their completed activity sheets with their families.

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

ACTIVITY SHEET GRADES 1-3

1. Write the name of one person you know from each of the communities named in the circles.
2. Write or draw something you can do to help each community.



# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

LESSON PLAN GRADES 4–6

45 Minutes

## OBJECTIVE

Students will learn about the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation, (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching) through the story of Louisma Toussaint, a volunteer at a health care center in Haiti.

## MATERIALS

- **Call to Family, Community and Participation Activity Sheets, Grades 4–6**
- **Louisma’s Story**
- Pens or pencils
- Pieces of colored construction paper cut into the shapes of various tropical fruits, enough for each student to get one cutout
- Rolls of tape
- Whiteboard and marker
- World map

## DISCUSSION (20 MINUTES)

1. Share that students will learn about the Church’s teaching on the Call to Family, Community and Participation through the story of Louisma, a volunteer at a health care center in Haiti.
2. Locate Haiti on the world map. Read **Louisma’s Story**.
3. Ask students to imagine health challenges facing the community. Write these on the board.
4. Point out how Louisma is helping her community respond to these challenges, and relate this to the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation.

## ACTIVITY (20 MINUTES)

1. Draw an outline of a tree around the list of challenges that the students generated. Over the tree, write “A Fruitful Future.”
2. Read **Louisma’s Story** again, and ask students to listen for the ways that community members responded to these challenges.
3. Distribute **Called to Family, Community and Participation Activity Sheets, Grades 4–6**, and allow students time to complete them.
4. Give each student one of the fruit cutouts. Ask them to write on it the solution that most touched them and to tape their fruits on the “Fruitful Future” tree.
5. Tell students that the Call to Family, Community and Participation invites us all to respond to challenges facing our communities as Louisma did in Haiti.

## CLOSING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

*Lord God, we pray for all people who encounter challenges in their communities. We pray that, like Louisma, we will help all people obtain what they need for a fruitful future. Amen*

## TAKING IT HOME

Encourage students to pray with their families for people in their community facing challenges.

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

ACTIVITY SHEET GRADES 4-6

**Directions:** Draw a line to match each problem with a solution from the CRS health care project Louisma volunteers with.

## PROBLEMS

|   |    |
|---|----|
| Few fresh fruits and vegetables available to families                     | 1  |
| Fruits and vegetables in the market more expensive than less healthy food | 2  |
| Limited understanding about health care and nutrition                     | 3  |
| Checkups for babies limited   | 4  |
| Lack of attention to mothers' own health needs                            | 5  |
| Lack of doctor follow-up after hospital stays                             | 6  |
| Illness goes untreated  | 7  |
| No hospitals nearby   | 8  |
| Poor nutrition in family diet   | 9  |
| Preventable diseases common in the community                              | 10 |

## SOLUTIONS

|   |  |
|---|--|
| A | Vaccines given   |
| B | Community gardens to grow fresh food                       |
| C | Post-hospital monitoring                                   |
| D | More produce stands available in markets                   |
| E | Trained volunteers referring people to health care centers |
| F | Health care and nutrition education                        |
| G | Signs of illness identified                                |
| H | Recipes for nutritious meals provided                      |
| I | Local health care stations available for regular checkups  |
| J | Educating mothers about healthy lifestyles                 |

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

LESSON PLAN GRADES 7-8

40 Minutes

## OBJECTIVE

Students will learn about the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching) through the story of Louisma Toussaint, a volunteer at a health care center in Haiti.

## MATERIALS

- Bible
- **Call to Family, Community and Participation Activity Sheets, Grades 7-8**, cut into enough cards for each student
- **Louisma's Story**
- Whiteboard and marker
- World map

## DISCUSSION (15 MINUTES)

1. Explain that students will learn about the Church's teaching on the Call to Family, Community and Participation through the story of Louisma, a volunteer at a health care center in Haiti.
2. Locate Haiti on the world map. Read **Louisma's Story**.
3. Point out how Louisma is helping her community and relate this to the Catholic social teaching principle Call to Family, Community and Participation.
4. Ask students what they think a "rally post" is, and have them list locations in their communities that serve a similar function.

## ACTIVITY (20 MINUTES)

1. Explain that each student will receive a card that lists either a challenge or solution in Louisma's community. Distribute one card to each student. Invite students to pair up with the person who has the challenge or solution card that fits with their card.
2. Invite each pair of students to read their challenges and solutions to the class. Have students return to their seats.
3. Share that our call as disciples is to identify and respond to the challenges in our communities.
4. Ask students to name some of the challenges and potential solutions facing their own neighborhoods and school communities.

## CLOSING PRAYER (5 MINUTES)

Remind students that Louisma's community in Haiti mirrors how the early Christians lived. Read Acts of the Apostles 2:42-47. Invite students to offer petitions aloud for their own communities.

## TAKING IT HOME

Invite students to talk to their families about how they could participate in community service as a family.

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

ACTIVITY SHEET GRADES 7-8

Cut out enough  
Challenge and  
Solution cards for  
each student to  
receive one card.  
(Page 1 of 2)

## CHALLENGE

Few fresh fruits and vegetables  
available to families

(A)

## CHALLENGE

Lack of doctor follow-up  
after hospital stays

(F)

## CHALLENGE

Fruits and vegetables in the market  
more expensive than less healthy food

(B)

## CHALLENGE

Illness goes untreated

(G)

## CHALLENGE

Limited understanding about  
health care and nutrition

(C)

## CHALLENGE

No hospitals nearby

(H)

## CHALLENGE

Checkups for babies limited

(D)

## CHALLENGE

Poor nutrition in family diet

(I)

## CHALLENGE

Lack of attention to  
mothers' own health needs

(E)

## CHALLENGE

Preventable diseases common  
in the community

(J)

# call to family, community and participation

COUNTRY SPOTLIGHT: HAITI

ACTIVITY SHEET GRADES 7-8

Cut out enough  
Challenge and  
Solution cards for  
each student to  
receive one card.  
(Page 2 of 2)

## SOLUTION

Community gardens to grow fresh food

(A)

## SOLUTION

Post-hospital monitoring

(F)

## SOLUTION

More produce stands  
available in markets

(B)

## SOLUTION

Signs of illness identified

(G)

## SOLUTION

Health care and nutrition education

(C)

## SOLUTION

Trained volunteers referring people to  
health care centers

(H)

## SOLUTION

Local health care stations  
available for regular checkups

(D)

## SOLUTION

Recipes for nutritious  
meals provided

(I)

## SOLUTION

Training for mothers  
about healthy lifestyles

(E)

## SOLUTION

Vaccines given

(J)