

CATHOLICS

CONFRONT

GLOBAL

POVERTY

WHY DO WE ADVOCATE?

RESPONDING TO OUR GOSPEL CALL

We are called to love and serve our neighbor—but how do we do that? We start by putting one foot in front of the other as we walk on the path of Caritas toward the Kingdom of God.

Two Feet of Love in Action describes two distinct, but complementary, ways we can put our faith into action in response to God’s love: justice, which addresses the systemic, root causes of problems affecting many people; and charitable works, which provide emergency assistance for individuals in need.



Photo by Laura Elizabeth Pohl
for CRS

SOCIAL JUSTICE “concerns the social, political and economic aspects and, above all, the structural dimension of problems and their respective solutions.” (Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church, no. 201)

We step with this foot when we advocate for just public policies and work to change the social structures that contribute to suffering and injustice at home and around the world.

CHARITABLE WORKS are our “response to immediate needs and specific situations: feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, caring for and healing the sick, visiting those in prison, etc.” (Deus Caritas Est, no. 31) We step with the charitable works foot when we aid or assist others both locally and globally to meet their immediate or short-term needs. Examples include engaging in direct service or providing food, clothing, shelter or monetary assistance to those in need.

FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP

Speaking out is part of who we are as a people of faith. By our Baptism, Catholics are committed to following Jesus Christ and being “salt for the earth, light for the nations.” As the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us, “It is necessary that all participate, according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This is inherent in the dignity of the human person ... As far as possible citizens should take an active part in public life.” (nos. 1913-1915)

JOIN US

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TAKE ACTION

Begin your journey with the USCCB’s Two Feet of Love in Action guide (www.usccb.org/twofeet) available both in English and Spanish, and watch the Two Feet of Love in Action video.



Photo by Philip Laubner/CRS

“WE ARE CALLED TO BRING TOGETHER OUR PRINCIPLES AND OUR POLITICAL CHOICES, OUR VALUES AND OUR VOTES, TO HELP BUILD A BETTER WORLD.”

—FORMING CONSCIENCES FOR FAITHFUL CITIZENSHIP: A CALL TO POLITICAL RESPONSIBILITY FROM THE CATHOLIC BISHOPS OF THE UNITED STATES

[Download the guide](#) (available in English and Spanish) and check out some of the [videos](#) on sharing your voice in the public square.

A partnership between the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Catholic Relief Services



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FAITH IN ACTION

Today, we invite you to join us as we work to shape U.S. foreign policy through prayer, education and advocacy based on our Catholic faith and concern for poor and vulnerable people worldwide. We can confront the root causes of poverty around the world—hunger, disease, violent conflict, and injustice—which disproportionately affect the lives of our impoverished brothers and sisters around the globe.

We seek to educate and mobilize Catholics to defend the lives and dignity of people living in poverty throughout the world, and urge our nation to act in response to the many faces of poverty. In February 2009, Catholics Confront Global Poverty, a joint initiative of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, or USCCB, and Catholic Relief Services, was launched to make this vision a reality.

These materials and resources are a collaboration of Catholic Relief Services and the USCCB Office of International Justice and Peace.

A BRIEF WORD ABOUT CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES

As the international relief and development agency of the Catholic community in the United States, Catholic Relief Services, or CRS, is committed to assisting people who are poor and disadvantaged around the world. We are motivated by the Gospel of Jesus Christ to cherish, preserve and uphold the sacredness and dignity of all human life, foster charity and justice, and embody Catholic social and moral teaching as we act to:

- Promote human development by responding to major emergencies, fighting disease and poverty, and nurturing peaceful and just societies; and,
- Serve Catholics in the United States as they live their faith in solidarity with their brothers and sisters around the world.

As part of the universal mission of the Catholic Church, we work with local, national and international Catholic institutions and structures, as well as other organizations, to assist people on the basis of need, not creed, race or nationality.

A BRIEF WORD ABOUT THE USCCB

The USCCB is an assembly of the hierarchy of the United States and the U.S. Virgin Islands that jointly exercise certain pastoral functions on behalf of the Christian faithful of the United States. The purpose of the conference is to promote the greater good that the Church offers humankind, especially through forms and programs of the apostolate fittingly adapted to the circumstances of time and place.

The conference’s purposes are “To unify, coordinate, encourage, promote and carry on Catholic activities in the United States; to organize and conduct religious, charitable and social welfare work at home and abroad; to aid in education; to care for immigrants; and generally to enter into and promote by education, publication and direction the objects of its being.”

The Office of International Justice and Peace assists the bishops in advancing the social mission of the Church, especially its advocacy for policies that advance justice, defend human dignity, and protect poor and vulnerable communities around the world.