

Faith Loops

Faith Loops are PowerPoint presentations with images and information that will help us grow in the understanding of our Catholic faith. They will be projected on the screens during the twenty minutes prior to each weekend mass. To learn more about your faith while waiting for Mass to begin, come a few minutes early.

The slides will loop, or repeat, themselves. Thus, the name: Faith Loops.



It's Tradition – Pretzels During Lent

In Europe, pretzels have been associated with Lent since at least the 7th century, and perhaps as early as



the fifth century. Monks in monastery kitchens used to twist bread into the pretzel shape to represent arms crossed over the chest, which was then the posture used for prayer. The three holes in the pretzel represented the three persons of the Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

It's Tradition – Pretzels During Lent

The word *pretzel* comes from the Latin *pretoila*, meaning “little reward”. Pretzels were given away as a reminder to pray more during Lent and as rewards to children for learning new prayers.

Perhaps your children or grandchildren would like to learn a new prayer for Lent and be rewarded with a pretzel.



What is Catholic Social Teaching?



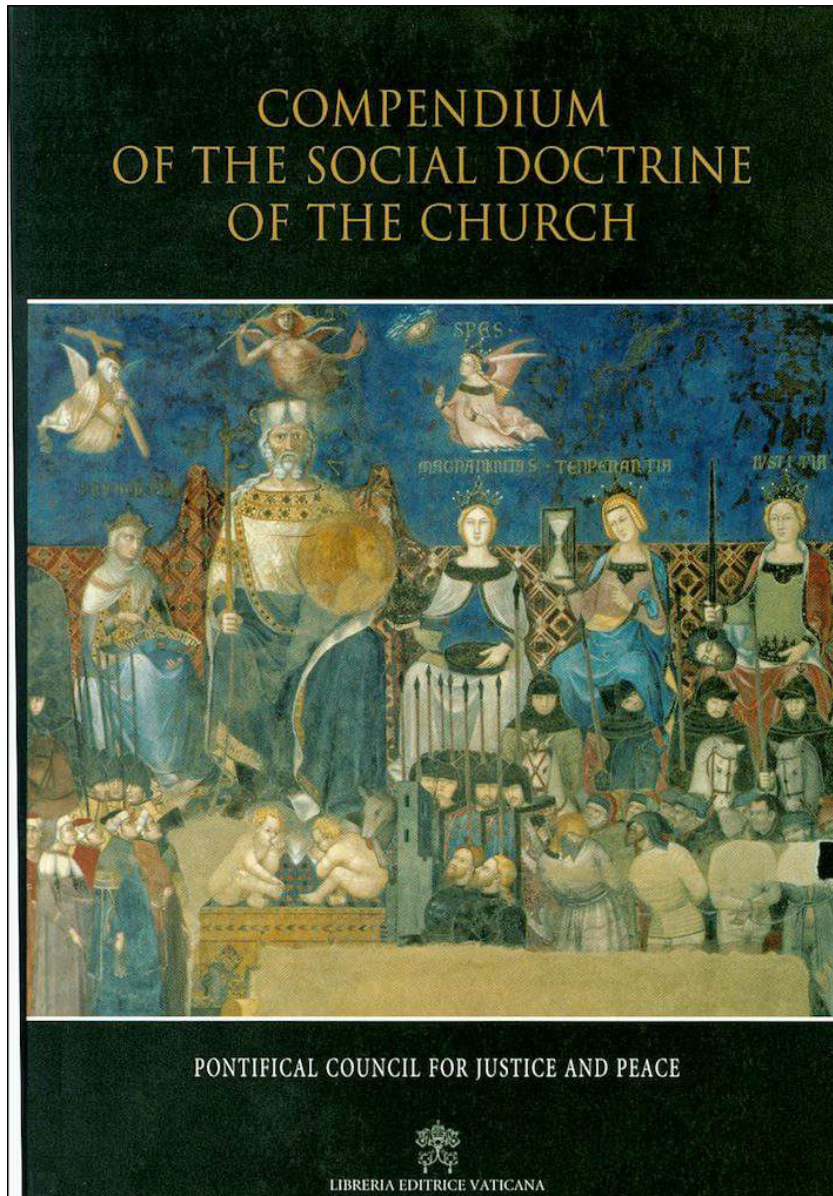
Faced with injustice and inequality in our world —unemployment, poverty, war, racism, etc. — what is our responsibility? The basic needs of many are not being met.

The Catholic Church has identified seven principles we need to embrace so we can build a just and peaceful society and grow in holiness amidst these challenges.

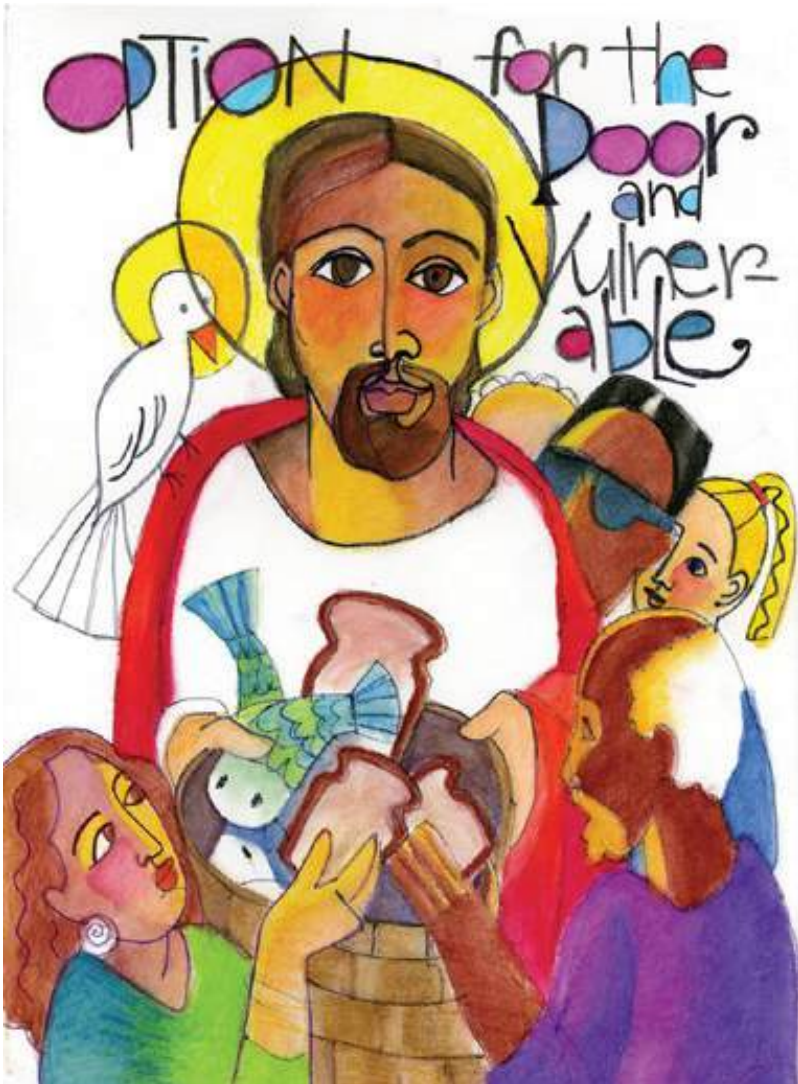
What is Catholic Social Teaching?

The fact that the Catholic Church has identified these seven principles – and has written a comprehensive compendium of the Social Teaching of the Catholic Church – is said to be one of the Church's best-kept secrets.

Let's not keep it a secret any longer.



Catholic Social Teaching Principle #4: **Option for the Poor and Vulnerable**



God wants us to help people who are poor, who don't have enough food, a safe place to live, or a community.

- Jesus said "Just as you did it to one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did it to me." Parable of the Last Judgment (Matt. 25)
- Put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first.

Word of the Week: **Repent**

John the Baptist proclaimed that “the kingdom of God has come near; **repent**, and believe in the good news” (Mark 1:15). We often hear that Lent is a time for **repentance**.

The word ‘repent’ means to have a change of heart or to change one’s mind, which results in a change in one’s life. To repent is to turn away from sin and to turn back to God. It is a 180-degree turn.

When we **repent**, we refrain from doing things our own way and return to God’s way.

It would be prudent to pay heed to John’s advice.

Word of the Week: Repent

Jesus had that sort of effect on people. Jesus invited Zacchaeus, the tax collector, to have dinner with him. Zacchaeus had a tremendous change of heart and



said, “Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much” (Luke 19:8).

The prodigal son (Luke 15:11–32) also repented for his selfish, careless behavior and returned to his father a changed man.

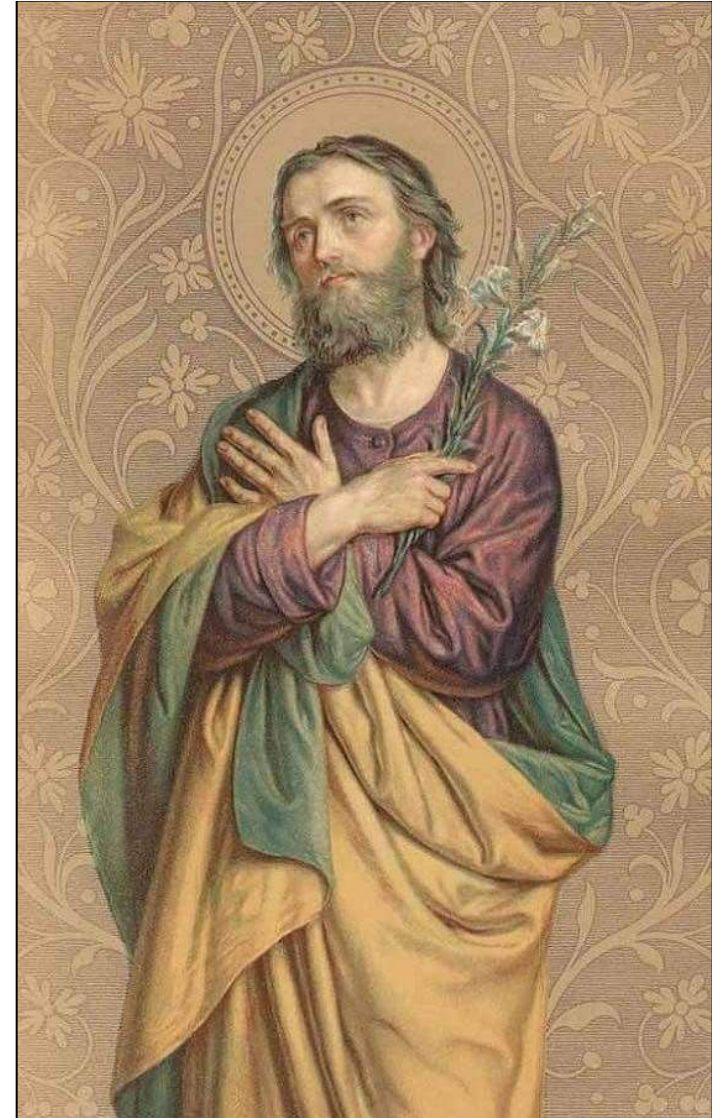
Saint of the Week: **St. Joseph**

Joseph is such an important saint that two days in the liturgical year – March 19 and May 1 – have been dedicated in his honor. On March 19 we recognize Joseph as the husband of Mary and the foster father of Jesus. On May 1, we celebrate the feast of St. Joseph the Worker.

Everything we know about St. Joseph comes from Scripture, yet not one spoken word of his is found in the bible. We know that Joseph was a carpenter, a working man. In Matthew 13:55, the Nazarenes ask about Jesus, “Is this not the carpenter’s son?”

St. Joseph

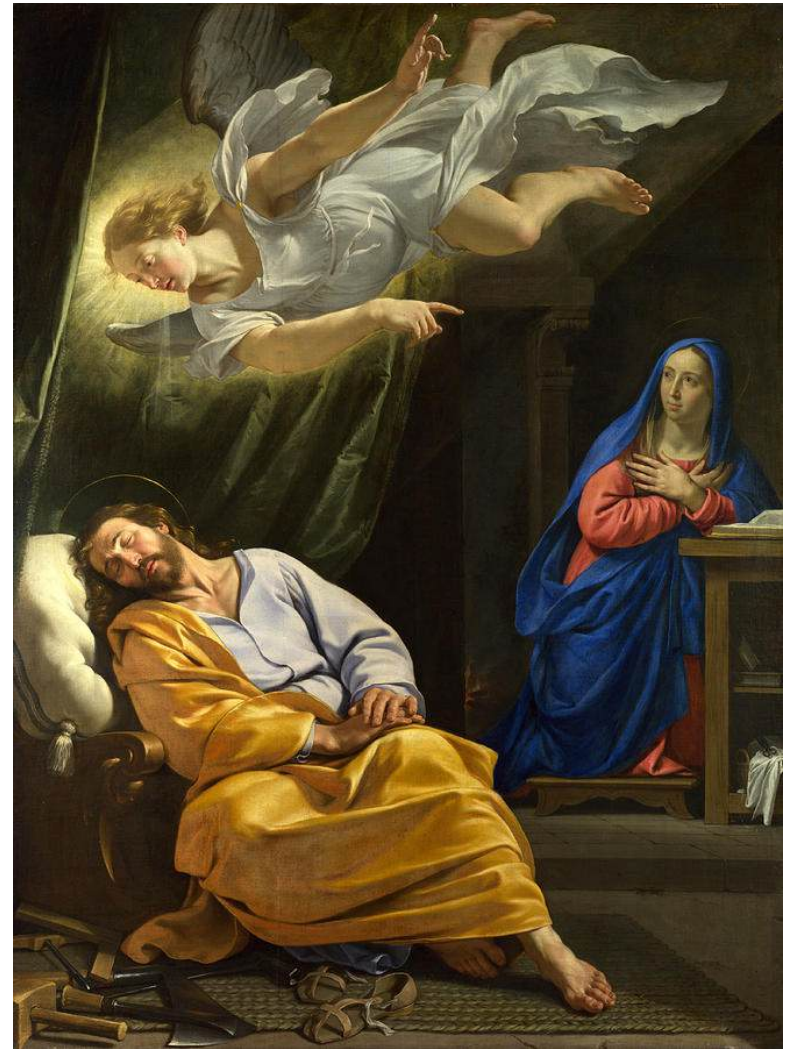
Joseph is also known as a compassionate and caring man. When he discovered that Mary was pregnant and he knew the child was not his own, he planned to divorce her according to the Law. He showed great concern for Mary's safety and her suffering. He knew that she could be stoned to death for being accused of adultery, so he decided to divorce her quietly and not expose her to shame or cruelty (Matt. 1:19-25).



St. Joseph

Joseph was a man of faith. He was obedient to God without knowing the outcome. When an angel came to Joseph in a dream and told him the truth about the child Mary was carrying, Joseph took Mary as his wife without question.

When the angel told him that his family was in danger, he left everything he owned and fled to safety with his new family. He then remained in Egypt until the angel told him it was safe again to go back (Matt. 2:13–23).



St. Joseph

We know that Joseph loved Jesus very much. His major concern as a parent was for the safety of his child Jesus – whom he treated as his own son. Over and over the people of Nazareth say of Jesus, "Is this not the son of Joseph?" (Luke 4:22).



This painting is entitled *St. Joseph with the Christ Child* by 17th century Spanish painter, Sebastian Martinez.



St. Joseph

We know that Joseph respected God. He followed God's commands throughout his life and put his trust in him. Upon learning that Mary was with child, Joseph had good reason to divorce her but, being a righteous, God-fearing man, he

listened to and obeyed God's messenger and chose to do what would bring honor to both God and to Mary.

Since Joseph doesn't appear in Jesus' public life or at his death or resurrection, many historians believe he died before Jesus entered public ministry.

St. Joseph

Although we know not where and when Joseph was born, how he spent his days, and when and how he died, Scripture *does* leave us with the very important knowledge of who he was: “a righteous man” (Matt. 1:18).



St. Joseph is the patron saint of the Catholic Church around the world, of Canada, and of fathers, carpenters and social justice. He is also the patron of a happy death. He is a protector and model for us all.

Significance of Sackcloth in Lent

Sackcloth – similar to what we call burlap – has religious significance. In fact, sackcloth is a symbol of



Lent. The prophet Jeremiah told the people to repent by putting on sackcloth and rolling in the ashes. (Remember: To repent means to “turn away from sin and towards God.”) There are similar references throughout the Old Testament: Isaiah 58:5; Daniel 9:3.

Sackcloth in Lent

Even Jesus referred to the use of sackcloth and ashes as signs of repentance: “Woe to you, Chorazin! Woe to you, Bethsaida!

For if the mighty deeds done in your midst had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would long ago have repented in sackcloth and ashes” (Matt. 11:21).

In olden days people would wear sackcloth clothing for the whole season of Lent. It was very itchy on one’s skin and would constantly remind the people that it was Lent and that they were to try to better themselves in preparation for Easter.



What Do You Know About Lent?

Which of the following is NOT a Lenten observance?

- a. Fasting
- b. Praying
- c. Almsgiving
- d. Tithing



What Do You Know About Lent?

Which of the following is NOT a Lenten observance?

d. Tithing



Tithing refers to the giving of 10% of one's salary to the Church. In the Old Testament, it was customary under the Law of Moses for Jews to tithe (Deut. 26:12). In the Catholic Church, tithing is not obligatory. However, adults are expected to financially support the Church, giving freely and cheerfully whatever amount they are able.

From the Suggestion Box ...

If suicide and assisted suicide are not permitted, as they are a sin, what about when a decision is made to stop the respirator? Is that not assisted suicide?

The Church teaches that extraordinary measures need not be taken to keep someone alive, e.g., the use of a ventilator when a person's breathing system is shutting down.



From the Suggestion Box ...

End of Life Care and Appropriate Measures

At the same, the Church teaches that ordinary medical care should never be forsaken, i.e., food and fluids—even when taken intravenously—unless receiving food or fluids yield more harm than good.

In any case, we are called to accompany our loved ones as they approach death and tend to their emotional and spiritual needs, including arrangements for a priest to administer the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

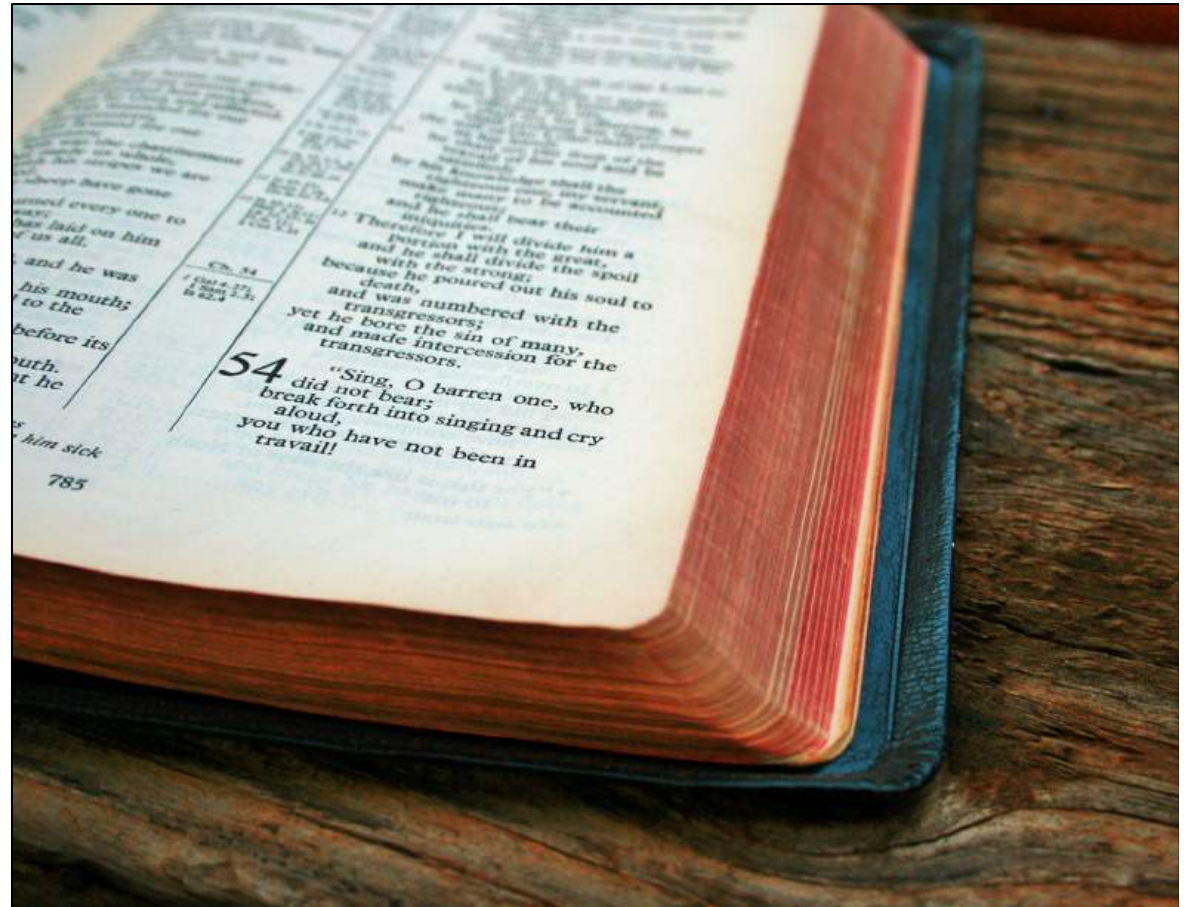


Test Your Knowledge:

The New Testament

The last book in the Bible is ...

- a. Gospel of John
- b. Revelation
- c. Acts
- d. 2 Corinthians



Test Your Knowledge:

The New Testament

The last book in the Bible is ...

b. the Book of Revelation

The Book of Revelation, believed to be written by the apostle John, dates back to 90 – 95 A.D. It describes a number of visions that John experienced, all of them giving us a glimpse of heaven, the mysteries of things to come, and the glory that awaits us at the end of time. Revelation contains a great deal of symbolic imagery. It is helpful, therefore, to read it with a study bible or a biblical commentary.

Lenten Grace

Lord, help me to remember as I eat bread thankfully, that there are many who have no bread and no fresh water.

As I breathe air joyfully, there are those who breathe only pollution.

As I study and learn freely, many are denied a proper education.

And as I live life fully, thousands will die before nightfall.

Lord, help me to remember and, having remembered, to care. Amen.



Why **Violet**?

Depending on the liturgical season, the priest or deacon's vestments and the cloths on the altar change in color. The colors are symbolic and help to convey the tone of the liturgical season. They elicit an emotional response from everyone attending the liturgy, encouraging us to enter the spirit of the liturgical season.



During Lent, you will see the color, **violet**, which symbolizes repentance and penance. It represents conversion and renewal – turning away from sin and towards God and all that is good. It is also used during Advent and at Masses for the dead.

Prayer Before Mass

Dear God, help me to be open to all that you want to give me at Mass today.

My heart is open. I come in hope.

I come empty and unsure and troubled.

I come in need to be loved by you,
united with this faith community,
strengthened by your word,
and nourished by the Bread of Life.

Cleanse me. Refresh me.

Strengthen me for the journey ahead.

Lead me to heaven.

Thank you, God, for this time together.

Thank you, God, for everything. Amen.



Questions???

Do you have a question about the Catholic faith or about the celebration of the Mass? If so, write it on a piece of paper and drop it into the marked shoebox on the table at the back of the church. We will try to answer it in a Faith Loop at a later date.

Thank you.

