

# **Social Analysis in Service-Learning: A Way for Students to Discover Catholic Social Teaching**

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## **Abstract**

Many Catholic colleges and universities incorporate community service-learning as a teaching strategy that exemplifies Catholic mission and identity. This article shows how service-learning courses can teach students about an essential part of the Catholic tradition, Catholic Social Teaching, by engaging students in a process of social analysis.

Service-learning holds promise for the development of students' understanding of their academic disciplines and commitment to civic responsibility. It can also foster colleges' and universities' engagement with the communities in which they exist. Service-learning also has the potential to teach values consistent with Catholic mission and identity and to demonstrate the relevance of Catholic Social Teaching (CST) to contemporary social issues.

Curricular service-learning is a pedagogy that integrates community service into academic courses to meet specific learning goals for students. Faculty, working in partnership with representatives of community organizations, design service-learning projects based on two main objectives: (1) advancing the students' understanding of specific course content and related civic learning objectives, and (2) responding to community-identified needs and assets. Strong reflective and analytical components are built into the course to help students analyze relationships that exist between their service and the course's curriculum, and its impact on their values, vocations, and professional goals.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This definition is slightly modified from the definition offered by the Midwest Consortium for Service Learning in Higher Education. See <http://themidwestconsortium.googlepages.com/>

<sup>1a</sup> For this issue of the *Journal of Catholic Higher Education*, all papal encyclicals follow the capitalization style used by the Holy See.

Curricular service-learning can occur in a compressed form (such as a seminar during which students travel during spring break week to perform service) or an extended form (such as a semester-long course or several courses in a curriculum). For students who place a higher value on deeds than words as evidence of commitment, service-learning can be an effective way of demonstrating the viability of the Catholic social tradition.

The term “service-learning” can be misleading in that its practice includes not only service, but also the work of justice. Both service and justice are integral to authentic service-learning. “Service” (or charity) implies that someone provides for the immediate needs of another. Service is usually limited in time and impact. Little attention is paid to structural causes of inequity in resources and power. Decisions about distribution are usually made by the provider. For example, someone acting in the paradigm of charity recognizes that someone else is hungry now, and therefore feeds her.<sup>2</sup>

Service-learning includes social analysis and practice of social justice. In this article, the terms “justice” and “social justice” are synonymous.<sup>3</sup> Social justice seeks long-term solutions. Those engaging in justice activities develop relationships among stakeholder groups, including those in need of service. Justice work requires a learning environment that continually exposes structural (or root) causes of inequities. For example, those engaged in doing justice ask why people are hungry now, and then seek—through advocacy regarding public policies, community organizing, and other forms of civic engagement—to change the social and institutional structures that contribute to hunger.<sup>4</sup>

Significant research exists on the value of service-learning as a teaching method. Several comprehensive guides to service-learning have been published, and “how-to” information with sample syllabi from various disciplines is readily available via websites.<sup>5</sup> This article

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<sup>2</sup> See Keith Morton, “The Irony of Service: Charity, Project and Social Change in Service-Learning,” *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning* 2 (Fall, 1995): 19-32.

<sup>3</sup> For a much fuller description of justice, see Karen Lebacqz, *Six Theories of Justice: Perspectives From Philosophical and Theological Ethics*, (Minneapolis: Augsburg, 1986).

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.* See also Jennifer Reed-Bouley, “Service and Justice: Understanding the Relationship through Community Service-Learning,” *Journal of Religion and Culture* 37/1 (Winter, 2002): 53-63.

<sup>5</sup> See Janet Eyler et al., *A Practitioner’s Guide to Reflection in Service Learning: Student Voices and Reflections* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University, 1996). See also National

avoids duplicating the fine work of others regarding many dimensions of service-learning. Its purpose is to show how students can learn about the relevance of CST to contemporary issues while engaging in social analysis of service-learning. This article refers to the method of social analysis elucidated by Henriot and Holland, but some colleges and universities may prefer another method such as David Kolb's model of the learning cycle.<sup>6</sup>

Faculty members often focus their service-learning courses on the discipline-specific lessons of the service. Research indicates that service-learning can teach students a great deal about their disciplines.<sup>7</sup> Faculty may also find that they can manifest the Catholic mission of their colleges and universities through service-learning. Students may be more likely to appreciate the Catholic mission and identity of their colleges and universities when the mission is integrated into majors and courses across the curriculum in addition to being addressed in campus ministry and theology or religious studies departments.

CST is one part of the Catholic faith tradition that can be integrated throughout the curriculum. This article provides reference information on CST so that faculty can incorporate this distinctive resource into the process of analyzing service-learning at Catholic colleges and universities.

### **Catholic Social Teaching as a Resource for Understanding Contemporary Social Issues**

Often unknown to Catholics and others, the documents that explain CST are an authoritative part of the Catholic tradition.<sup>8</sup> Introducing

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Service Learning Clearinghouse's website at <http://www.servicelearning.org/>, Campus Compact's website at <http://www.compact.org/>, and Community Campus Partnerships for Health's website at <http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/>

<sup>6</sup> Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice*, Revised Edition (Maryknoll: Dove Communications, Orbis, and the Center of Concern, 1983). For another method, see David A. Kolb, *Experiential Learning: Experience as the Source of Learning and Development* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1983).

<sup>7</sup> See, for example, Edward Zlotkowski, ed., *Service-Learning in the Disciplines*, 18 Volume Set Series (Washington: American Association for Higher Education, 2006) and Janet Eyler and Dwight E. Giles, Jr., *Where's the Learning in Service-Learning?* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1999).

<sup>8</sup> See Peter J. Henriot et al., *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret*, Revised Edition (Maryknoll: Dove Communications, Orbis Books, and the Center of Concern, 1987). For an explanation of why Catholic colleges and universities do not teach CST as thoroughly as they might, see Monika K. Hellwig's Preface, "Curricular Contexts and

students to CST can help them recognize social structures, and understand and practice both service and justice as central to Christian faith. The documents expressing CST, as well as analyses of the same, are vast and complex. This brief overview of the documents and major principles is intended for faculty teaching at Catholic colleges and universities who may not yet be conversant with this tradition.<sup>9</sup>

Since publication of the encyclical *Rerum novarum* in 1891, Catholic thought has analyzed society and criticized injustice, calling for rejection of personal and social sins. The following excerpts establish a pattern of teaching about the need to engage in social analysis, criticize unjust social structures, and insist that Christian faith requires both service and justice.

In *Rerum novarum*, Pope Leo XIII expressed his concerns that communism and socialism were gaining strength, observing that a newly industrialized Italy required people to work long hours at dangerous jobs for little pay.<sup>10</sup> Leo XIII's social analysis led him to seek social and economic reforms in order to prevent a violent revolution. In 1931, Pope Pius XI published the encyclical *Quadragesimo anno* (forty years after *Rerum novarum*), in which he "broadened the Church's concern for the poor workers to encompass the structures which oppress them."<sup>11</sup> His analysis criticized the economic structures of capitalism, socialism, and communism.

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Challenges for Catholic Social Thinking," in *Living the Catholic Social Tradition: Cases and Commentary*, Kathleen Maas Weigert and Alexia K. Kelley, eds. (Lanham, Maryland: Rowman and Littlefield, 2005), xi-xxiii.

<sup>9</sup> For further analysis of Catholic social thought, see David Hollenbach, *Justice, Peace, & Human Rights: American Catholic Social Ethics in a Pluralistic Context* (New York: Crossroad, 1988); John Coleman, *One Hundred Years of Catholic Social Thought: Celebration and Challenge* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 1991); Kenneth R. Himes, ed., *Modern Catholic Social Teaching: Commentaries and Interpretation* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2004); Fred Kammer, S.J., *Doing Faithjustice: An Introduction to Catholic Social Thought* (New York: Paulist, 1991), and many others. Most authors cite *Rerum novarum* as the inaugural document of official Catholic social teaching. For another view, see Michael Schuck, "Early Modern Roman Catholic Social Thought, 1740-1890," in Himes, 99-124.

<sup>10</sup> References to papal documents until 1990 and documents from the Second Vatican Council are from Michael Walsh and Brian Davies, eds., *Proclaiming Justice and Peace: Papal Documents from Rerum novarum through Centesimus annus*, Revised Edition (Mystic, Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991); Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum novarum: On Capital and Labor* (Vatican City, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1891), ¶ 23 and 24.

<sup>11</sup> Henriot et al., 31.

In 1961, Pope John XXIII promulgated the encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, in which he affirmed a formulation of reflection and action usually associated with the lay movement Catholic Action. He encouraged the “three stages” of social analysis and action—“look, judge, act” or “see, judge, act.” John XXIII deemed the application of this method of social analysis “a task which belongs particularly to . . . the laity, for it is their lot to live an active life in the world.”<sup>12</sup> John XXIII’s encyclical *Pacem in terris*, written in 1963 during the Second Vatican Council, offered a strong endorsement of human rights and identified authentic human development as the means to constructing peaceful relations.

At the Second Vatican Council in 1965, the world’s Roman Catholic bishops asserted the importance of using social analysis by declaring that the Church has “the duty of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in the light of the gospel.”<sup>13</sup> Pope Paul VI’s 1967 encyclical *Populorum progressio* discussed systemic reasons for the disparity in wealth among nations and encouraged integral development to improve the situation of the world’s poor.

In 1971, Pope Paul VI wrote “A Call to Action” on the occasion of the eightieth anniversary of *Rerum novarum*. In “A Call to Action,” Paul VI encouraged local communities to engage in a process similar to “see, judge, act” by analyzing local social structures, making judgments with the guidance of CST, and acting to make society more just. He wrote that it “is up to the Christian communities to analyse (*sic*) with objectivity the situation which is proper to their own country, to shed on it the light of the gospel’s unalterable words, and to draw principles of reflection, norms of judgement (*sic*), and directives of action from the social teaching of the Church.”<sup>14</sup>

The 1971 statement by the Synod of Bishops, “Justice in the World,” explicitly analyzed and condemned “unjust systems and structures” that oppress people.<sup>15</sup> It contains one of the clearest statements on justice ever proclaimed:

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<sup>12</sup> Pope John XXIII, *Mater et Magistra: On Christianity and Social Progress* (Vatican City, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1961), ¶ 236 and 240.

<sup>13</sup> Pope Paul VI, *Gaudium et spes: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (Vatican City, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1965), ¶ 4.

<sup>14</sup> Pope Paul VI, *A Call to Action* (Vatican City, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971), ¶ 4.

<sup>15</sup> Synod of Bishops, *Justice in the World* (Vatican City, Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1971), ¶ 270 and 276.

Action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world fully appear to us as a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the gospel, or, in other words, of the Church's mission for the redemption of the human race and its liberation from every oppressive situation.<sup>16</sup>

Here the bishops insisted that Christian faith and action for justice cannot be separated. If one claims to be Christian, one must work for justice.

Pope John Paul II echoed and elaborated upon earlier popes' critiques of the economic structures of capitalism and communism in his 1981 encyclical, *Laborem exercens*. In *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (1987), he commemorated the twentieth anniversary of *Populorum progressio* by reiterating the Church's concern for the suffering of the majority of the world's peoples, citing the conflict between east and west as the major source of poor countries' difficulties. *Centesimus annus* (1991), released on the hundredth anniversary of *Rerum novarum*, addressed the fall of communism and critiqued capitalism's foundation in individualism.

In agreement with John Paul II's focus on the economy and suffering of the poor, the bishops of the United States of America wrote *Economic Justice for All* (1986). This analysis criticized the United States for allowing increasing poverty in the midst of plenty. Rather than being accidental or inevitable, social and economic structures are human constructions and, therefore, can be made more just. The bishops reinforced this theme in subsequent teaching, such as "Ten Years after *Economic Justice for All*," "A Place at the Table," and "Faithful Citizenship."

Pope Benedict XVI's first encyclical, *Deus caritas est* (2005) emphasized the primacy of love in the Christian life as it is expressed through acts of service and justice. Critical of Marxist understandings of economic theory that could lead to social revolution, and mindful of the role of the state in securing justice for its citizens, he affirmed that "the direct duty to work for a just ordering of society. . . is proper to the lay faithful . . . The mission of the lay faithful is therefore to configure social life correctly . . ." <sup>17</sup> In his second encyclical, *Spe salvi* (2007), Benedict XVI focused on the nature of Christian hope. He emphasized that social structures alone cannot guarantee human fulfillment.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid.

<sup>17</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est: God is love*, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20051225\\_deus-caritas-est\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est_en.html) ¶ 29.

Because God gifts us with freedom, persons are always free to choose good or evil.<sup>18</sup> We cannot achieve the Kingdom of God in this world, but “every generation has the task of engaging anew in the arduous search for the right way to order human affairs; this task is never simply completed.”<sup>19</sup>

In addition to these major documents of CST, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) has written other authoritative documents on a wide range of social issues, including housing, debt, labor, war, health care, education, and welfare. Students and faculty can easily access this teaching, as well as the Bishops’ “action alerts,” letters, background information, and recommendations for action on contemporary social issues.<sup>20</sup>

The particular emphasis of each documents of CST is influenced by the social and historical situation in which it was written. CST is a tradition that analyzes the signs of the times in light of the Catholic theological tradition and scripture. As a tradition, the documents in CST share a basis in major principles, which include the following: life and dignity of the human person; call to family, community, and participation; rights and responsibilities; option for the poor and vulnerable; dignity of work and rights of workers; solidarity; and care for God’s creation.<sup>21</sup> These principles can be applied to any social issue.

How can courses external to theology and religious studies departments benefit from this tradition? First, faculty can connect particular documents of CST on labor, immigration, the environment, or other issues to the corresponding issues students encounter in their service-learning placements. For example, students in a marketing

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<sup>18</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Spe salvi: On Christian hope*, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/benedict\\_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_ben-xvi\\_enc\\_20071130\\_spe-salvi\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20071130_spe-salvi_en.html) ¶ 24.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>20</sup> See the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, <http://www.usccb.org/>

<sup>21</sup> For a list and brief description of each principle, see the website of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/projects/socialteaching/excerpt.shtml>, and “Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions” (Washington: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1998). The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, second ed., (Washington: United States Catholic Conference, 1994) elaborates on the principles. For commentary on the principles, see Henriot et al., as well as the websites sponsored by the Archdiocese of St. Paul and Minneapolis, [http://www.osjspm.org/major\\_themes.aspx](http://www.osjspm.org/major_themes.aspx) and NETWORK, <http://www.networklobby.org/about/socialteaching.htm>

course whose service-learning project focuses on developing a marketing plan for a nonprofit organization dedicated to recycling may add another angle of vision to their study by reading the U.S. bishops' recent teaching on global climate change and environmental stewardship. Students in an education course who tutor recent immigrants to the United States may be required to read "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope," a document on immigration by the U.S. and Mexican Bishops.<sup>22</sup> Students in a personal finance course who assist residents belonging to an affordable housing organization could read the background information, "action alerts," and general recommendations for action regarding affordable housing provided on the USCCB website.<sup>23</sup> By reading and discussing CST, students can place their service-learning in a wider context.

Second, using the resources cited here, faculty can introduce their students to the principles of CST and explain the meaning of each principle. Then faculty can pose questions based upon the principles about the social issues students encounter in service-learning. The method of integration suggested here preserves faculty members' academic freedom as experts who teach discipline-specific content while introducing students to the perspectives provided by CST. As Pope John Paul II wrote in his Apostolic Constitution *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, "Freedom in research and teaching is recognized and respected according to the principles and methods of each individual discipline, so long as the rights of the individual and of the community are preserved within the confines of the truth and the common good."<sup>24</sup> In this way, service-learning can teach students in a concrete way about CST, a tradition that provides both principles for analysis and specific recommendations for addressing contemporary social issues.

### **Engaging in Social Analysis**

As is evident in the principles listed above, CST emphasizes the dignity of individuals within their communities and the fundamental sociality of the human person. Perceiving persons in the context of social systems necessitates social analysis but students easily identify the

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<sup>22</sup> United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and Conferencia del Episcopado Mexicano, "Strangers No Longer: Together on the Journey of Hope," (Washington, D.C.: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2003).

<sup>23</sup> See <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/urban.shtml>

<sup>24</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Ex corde Ecclesiae: On Catholic universities*, (Vatican City: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1990), Part II, article 2, ¶ 5.



ways in which individuals contribute to their own suffering and need for service. This section, therefore, focuses on how faculty can help students also understand the social structures that create needs for service.

One of the drawbacks of focusing exclusively on discipline-specific learning in service-learning is that students miss much of the complexity of the issues. They may conclude erroneously that the people are the sole causes of their own suffering. For example, students in a nursing course who provide a health fair for indigent clients do not automatically learn anything about why these clients cannot access high quality, professional health care on a regular basis. The students do not necessarily find out how the United States health care system is structured and why so many Americans are uninsured and underinsured. Instead, students may be pleased by how they helped others but may also blame the clients for their poor health and health care. Students may not recognize that while individuals can take responsibility for their own health and health care, some individuals have more resources and power to do so than others.

Service-learning can raise important questions about social structures, and faculty must explicitly provide opportunities for social analysis in order to avoid reinforcing some students' misinformed judgments about complex social realities. Catholic colleges and universities can draw upon the principles of CST, as well as its recommendations about particular social problems, as rich resources for such social analysis.

Joe Holland and Peter Henriot, S.J.'s *Social Analysis: Linking Faith and Justice* elucidates a process of thinking about and engaging in social analysis that locates social analysis within the "pastoral circle." This circle results from the connection among four "mediations of experience: (1) insertion [for our purposes, the community service-learning], (2) social analysis, (3) theological reflection, and (4) pastoral planning."<sup>25</sup>

Most helpful here is Holland and Henriot's method of doing social analysis. They define social analysis as "the effort to obtain a more complete picture of a social situation by exploring its historical and structural relationships."<sup>26</sup> They explore the following elements of society when doing social analysis: history, structures, divisions, and levels.

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<sup>25</sup> Holland and Henriot, *Social Analysis*, 7. See also the model proposed by Laurie Green, *Let's Do Theology: A Pastoral Cycle Resource Book* (England: Mowbray, 1990).

<sup>26</sup> Holland and Henriot, *Social Analysis*, 14.

Looking at the history of an issue or policy offers insight about how society arrived at its present situation and where it is headed in the future.

Analyzing economic, political, ecclesial, social and cultural structures is necessary for the subsequent action to be most effective.

Examples of social divisions include race, sex, age, class, ethnicity, religion, and geography. A simple analysis can ask three basic questions: “(1) Who makes the decisions? (2) Who benefits from the decisions? (3) Who bears the costs of the decisions?”<sup>27</sup>

The focus of analysis can include local, regional, national and international levels.

For social analysis to be most comprehensive and effective, all of these elements need to be included.

Holland and Henriot acknowledge that social analysis illuminates the context of a given question or problem, but is not intended to offer an immediate answer or solution. We all make everyday decisions based on implicit social analysis. Furthermore, social analysis is not a neutral process. To do social analysis best, honest assessments of one’s social location, biases, and assumptions are required. Holland and Henriot’s framework makes the process more explicit and precise for students. They admit that social analysis “is a difficult task [because] it is complex, never ending, and always controversial.”<sup>28</sup> Despite the challenges implicit in the process, rigorous social analysis is essential if we hope to reap the full benefits of service-learning.

Social analysis is a useful tool for facilitators who wish to broaden their students’ learning beyond a particular discipline and by posing questions about the social contexts of students’ service. The method of questioning is designed to help students appreciate the multiple social influences on the particular social problems they encounter, as well as the multidisciplinary research required in order to understand and solve the social problems. Because most social issues have multiple dimensions, students should be cautioned that they cannot easily construct a complete analysis of a social situation. Rather, social analysis helps them to appreciate the complexity of the issues and avoid overly individualistic accounts of suffering.

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<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 28. See also 21, 24-27.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 19. See also 15 and 16.

Because service-learning projects are usually done in collaboration with community organizations that serve community members who are economically poor or otherwise vulnerable, students are likely to notice first the deficits and needs in a community. It is important that faculty members help students to notice the community's assets. Community assets include churches, neighborhood organizations, and other community associations and institutions such as businesses, schools, and libraries. These assets constitute the community's capacities, resources, and strengths.<sup>29</sup> The model of noticing assets assumes that there are committed people within the neighborhood or community working for its improvement. Representatives of colleges and universities can partner with local residents rather than see themselves as the outsiders with solutions to impose upon the community.

For undergraduate students who are novices at social analysis, the goal presented is to generate questions that, if researched and answered well, lead to an understanding of systems affecting a problem students encounter while engaging in service-learning. The goal for the novice is not to provide definitive answers but to pose good questions and to understand more deeply the relevant issues. One way faculty can introduce the process of social analysis is to ask students, "In what directions would we need to focus our research in order to understand better the important issues affecting the problem or issues you witness in your service-learning?"

Faculty can structure social analysis with college students in the following way: Any social issue can be "dissected" or analyzed according to the various systems that affect it. We can analyze the political, economic, educational, and health care dimensions of a particular issue. There are other systems we could also consider, such as systems regarding ecology, religion, security, culture and race, but we will begin with just a few systems. In order to understand the systemic dimensions of the social issues students encounter in service, we need to analyze the dimensions separately and then see how they affect one another.

Students may find this analogy helpful: Medical students learn about the human body in its totality and the interactions among the various systems by dissecting each system. We understand the entire body as an organism better if we break it into its component systems, just as we understand a social issue better if we analyze the systems that influence it.

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<sup>29</sup> The classic text describing the Asset-Based Community Development Model is John L. McKnight and John P. Kretzmann, *Building Communities From the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets* (Evanston, Illinois: Northwestern University Institute for Policy Research, 1993).

Students in the class can work in teams of two or three, with each group providing analysis on one particular system in relation to a social issue they encounter through service-learning. Some examples of systems and introductory questions to pose about them follow:<sup>30</sup>

### *Political System*

This system refers to people's power to participate in the decisions that affect their lives. Questions to ask in order to analyze this dimension include the following:

- How are decisions made?
- Who has the power to influence decision-making?
- Who does not have power to influence decision-making?
- Which principles of CST are most helpful in analyzing this system, and what insights do they provide?<sup>31</sup>
- What insights do the documents of CST provide about the political dimensions of the social issue being addressed?<sup>32</sup>

### *Economic System*

This system refers to production, distribution, and consumption of goods and services. Questions to ask in order to analyze this dimension include the following:

- Who owns the resources?
- Who benefits financially from this situation?
- Who suffers financially from this situation?
- Which principles of CST are most helpful in analyzing this system, and what insights do they provide?
- What insights do documents of CST provide about the economic dimensions of the social issue being addressed?

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<sup>30</sup> This set of questions is adapted from the Eighth Day Center for Justice, "Toward a Spirituality of Justice," available at <http://www.8thdaycenter.org/resources/publications/printbook.pdf>

<sup>31</sup> These principles, as indicated above, include the following: life and dignity of the human person, call to family, community and participation, rights and responsibilities, option for the poor and vulnerable, dignity of work and rights of workers, solidarity, and care for God's creation.

<sup>32</sup> Another question that could be added for each system is the following: What insights could the discipline being studied and the service-learning experience offer to the Catholic social tradition?

*Social System*

This system refers to how people categorize or “group” themselves, and the relationships among the various groups. Questions to ask in order to analyze this dimension include the following:

- Which groups are included?
- Which groups are excluded?
- Which CST principles are most helpful in analyzing this system, and what insights do they provide?
- What insights do the documents of CST provide about the social dimensions of the social issue being addressed?

*Educational System*

This system refers to structures providing formal education, including those funded by public and private entities. Questions to ask in order to analyze this dimension include the following:

- How is this resource distributed?
- How does access affect life chances?
- How does a particular group’s likelihood of accessing these resources affect its life chances?
- Which CST principles are most helpful in analyzing this system, and what insights do they provide?
- What insights do the documents of CST provide about the educational dimensions of the social issue being addressed?

*Health Care System*

This system refers to structures providing physical and mental health care, including those funded by the public and by private entities. Questions to ask in order to analyze this dimension include the following:

- How is this resource distributed?
- How does access to it affect life chances?
- How does a particular group’s likelihood to access these resources affect its life chances?
- Which CST principles are most helpful in analyzing this system, and what insights do they provide?
- What insights do the documents of CST provide about the health care dimensions of the social issue being addressed?

After each small group analyzes a particular system, members report their findings, particularly the questions and information needed to describe the system's effects on the social issue. The large group then discusses how the systems affect one another, thus complicating the issue even more. The goal for novices is to pose better questions and appreciate the complexity of issues, using CST principles and documents as resources. If the service-learning occurs within an academic course, this process may chart the way toward an individual or group research or action project that may contribute towards the solution. More social analysis will follow any action taken to address the problem. Upper-division students can engage in more sophisticated research and informed action.

Faculty teaching at Catholic colleges and universities can use CST as a resource for their service-learning courses in order to extend students' learning while drawing upon their institutions' Catholic mission. CST makes at least two important contributions to these courses. First, its principles and documents provide a foundational point of departure for analysis of the specific social issues students confront in service-learning. Second, it considers not only the personal but also the social and structural causes of suffering. Including CST as a lens through which to conduct social analysis helps students not only to appreciate the Catholic social tradition's relevance to contemporary understanding and action but also to possess more nuanced and complex views of academic disciplines and communities.