



Catholic Social Teaching

Principles,

*Two Feet of Love in Action,
and the Laudato Si' Goals*





Two Feet of Love in Action



SOCIAL JUSTICE

REMOVE ROOT CAUSES IMPROVE STRUCTURES

- Expand access to affordable housing
- Work to improve the education system
- Extend legal protection to unborn children
- Support environmental protection laws
- Participate in a living wage campaign
- Promote peace
- Advocate for international assistance



CHARITABLE WORKS

MEET BASIC NEEDS AID INDIVIDUALS

- Volunteer at homeless shelters
- Tutor children
- Assist women who face a crisis pregnancy
- Participate in a community beautification program
- Donate to food pantries and clothing closets
- Sponsor a refugee family
- Raise money for an overseas development project

"You are not making a gift of what is yours to the poor man, but you are giving him back what is his.

You have been appropriating things that are meant to be for the common use of everyone. The earth belongs to everyone, not to the rich."

- St. Ambrose, *Populorum Progressio*, #23, 1967

“Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs...

The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity."

- St. John Chrysostom

“The equal dignity of human persons requires the effort to reduce excessive social and economic inequalities. It gives urgency to the *elimination* of sinful inequalities.”

- Catechism of the Catholic Church, art. 1947

The BIG Idea:

People of faith are called

not only to *counteract* unjust politics and economics through charitable works

but also

to *transform* those unjust systems to eradicate the suffering that creates a need for charitable works.



Principles of Catholic Social Teaching

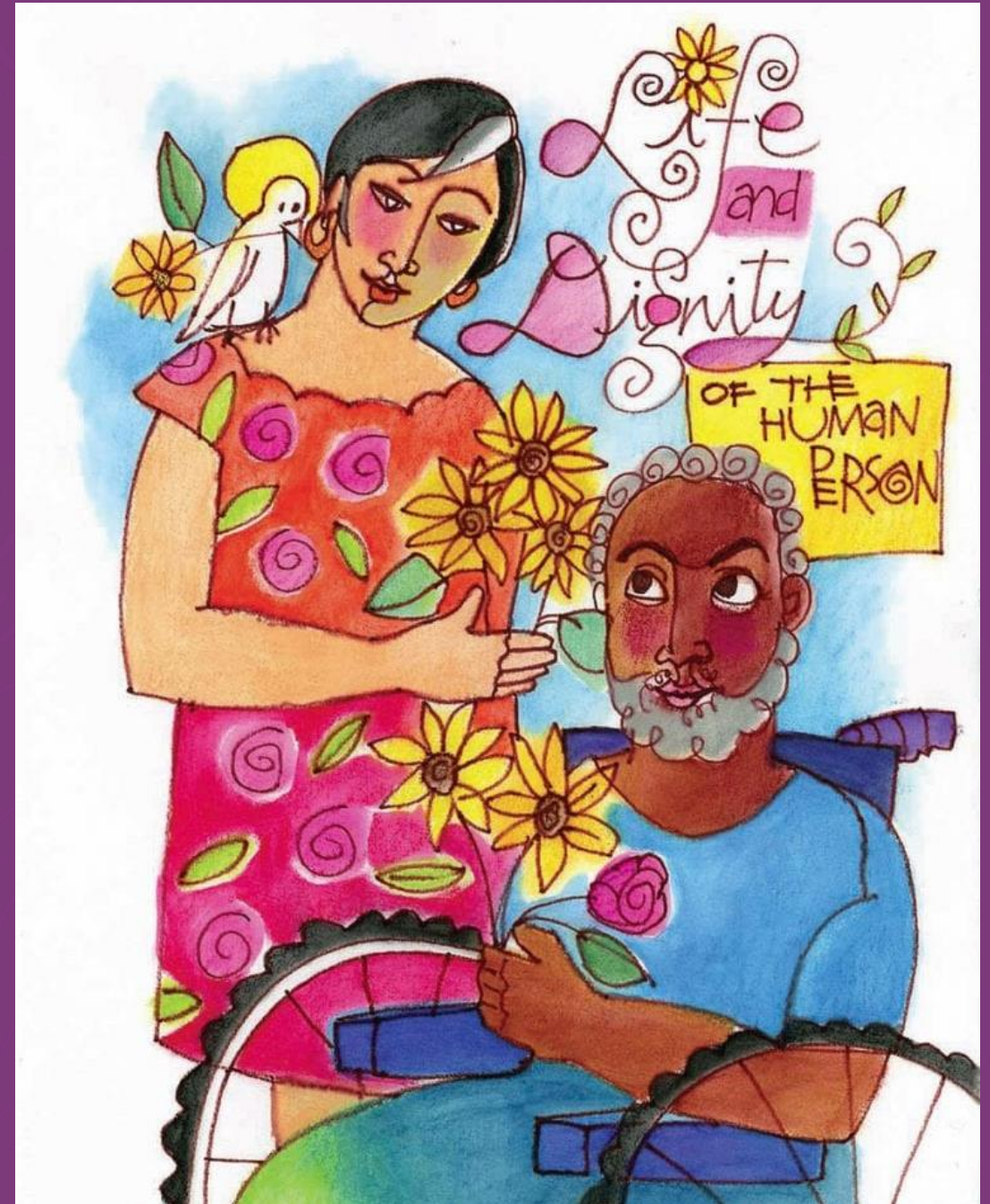
Human Dignity

We are called:

- To give (in thought, word, and deed) the respect and love inherently due to every human as a sacred child of God
- To uphold the inherent (i.e. unearned) rights of all people to access to the basic necessities required for a dignified life (food, water, shelter...)

“If we are to share our lives with others and generously give of ourselves, we also have to realize that every person is worthy of our giving. God created that person in [God’s own] image, and he or she reflects something of God’s glory. Every human being is the object of God’s infinite tenderness, and [God] is present in their lives.”

Pope Francis: Evangelii Gaudium - The Joy of the Gospel (paragraph 274), 2013



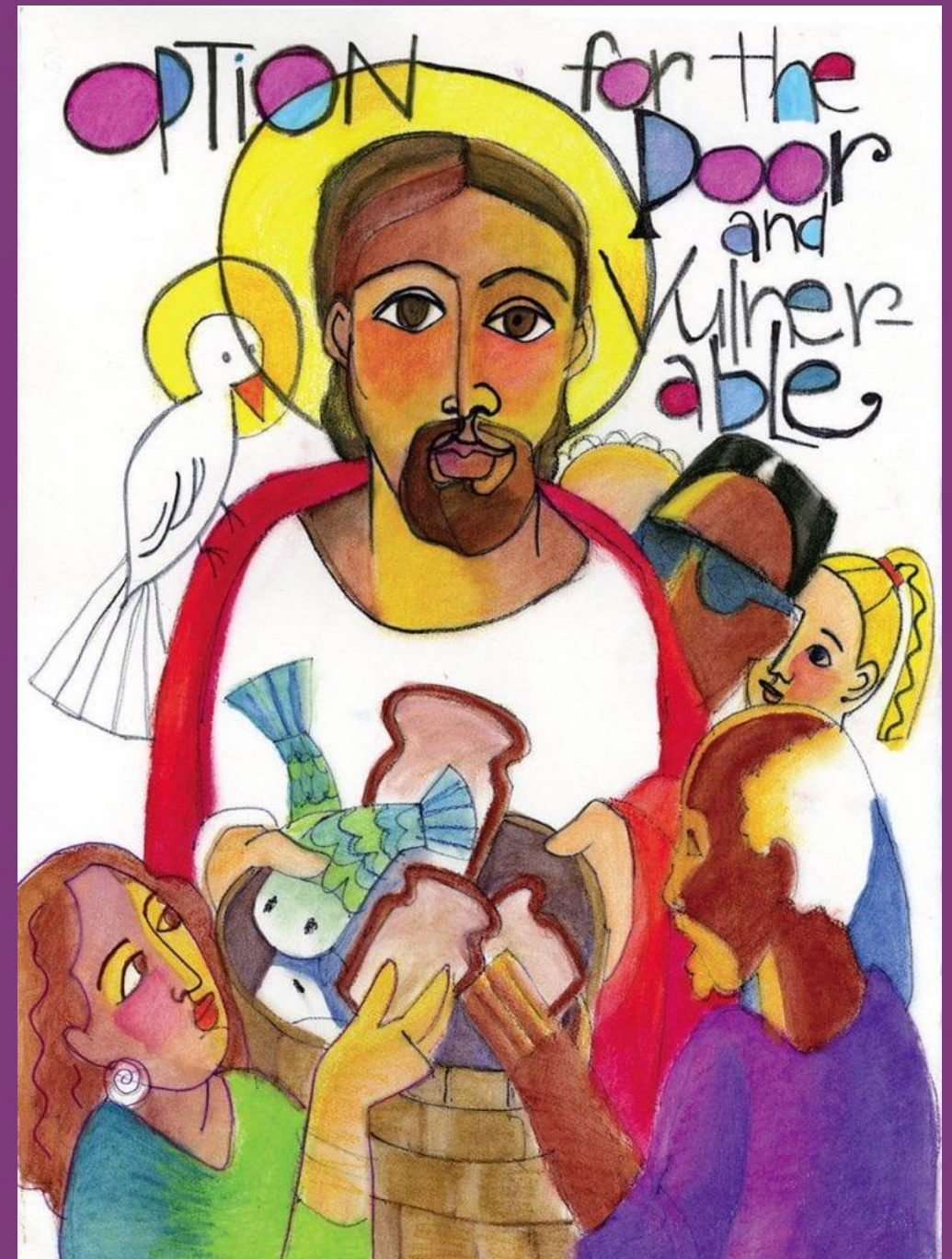
Preferential Option for the Poor & Vulnerable

We are called:

- To feed the hungry, offer hospitality to the stranger, clothe the naked, look after the sick, and visit those imprisoned
- To consider the impact of our own decisions and of public policy on the most vulnerable members of society
- To use whatever social power we possess to lift the voices of those who are forgotten or excluded and create opportunities for their leadership and agency

“Our tradition calls us to put the needs of the poor and vulnerable first. As Christians, we are called to respond to the needs of all our sisters and brothers, but those with the greatest needs require the greatest response.”

Cardinal Thomas Williams, We are Our Brother's Keeper, 1991



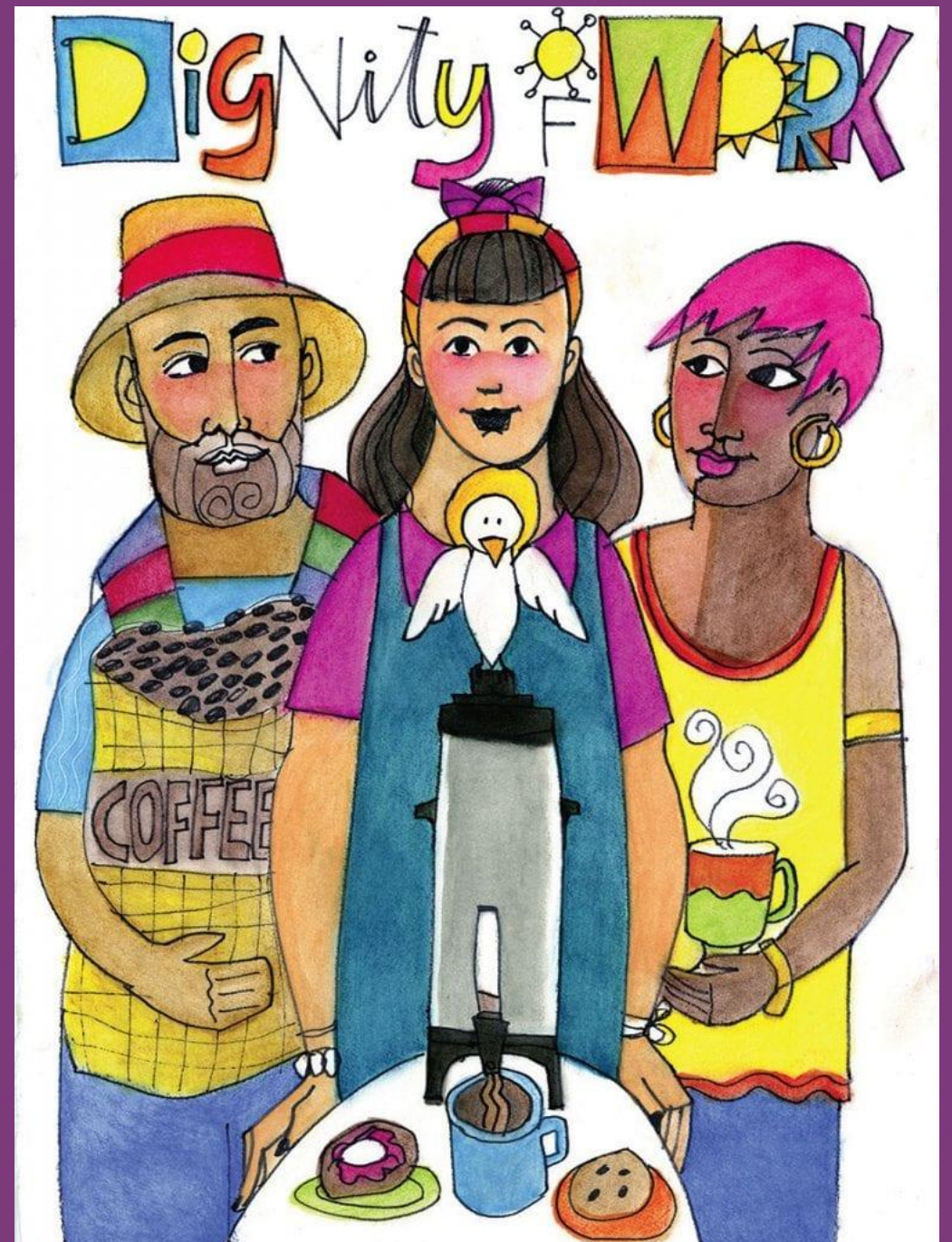
Dignity of Work & Rights of Workers

We are called:

- To uphold the truth that people are not objects in service of economies but that economies are meant to serve people
- To promote the understanding of work as a sacred undertaking and a form of ongoing participation in God's creation
- To defend the rights of workers to working conditions, wages, and protections that reflect their contribution to God's ongoing creation

“Work is a necessity, part of the meaning of life on this earth, a path to growth, human development and personal fulfillment. Helping the poor financially must always be a provisional solution in the face of pressing needs. The broader objective should always be to allow them a dignified life through work.”

Pope Francis, Laudato Si' (127-28)



Subsidiarity: Call to Family, Community, Participation

We are called:

- To be active members of our local, national and global communities
- To recognise that we each have something unique and important to contribute to society
- To be inclusive in our parishes, places of ministry, our congregations, local communities, and our decision-making processes
- To ensure all people are given a voice in the creation of policies and plans that affect them

“Participation is a duty to be fulfilled consciously by all, with responsibility and with a view to the common good...it becomes absolutely necessary to encourage participation above all of the most disadvantaged...”

Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church (#189)



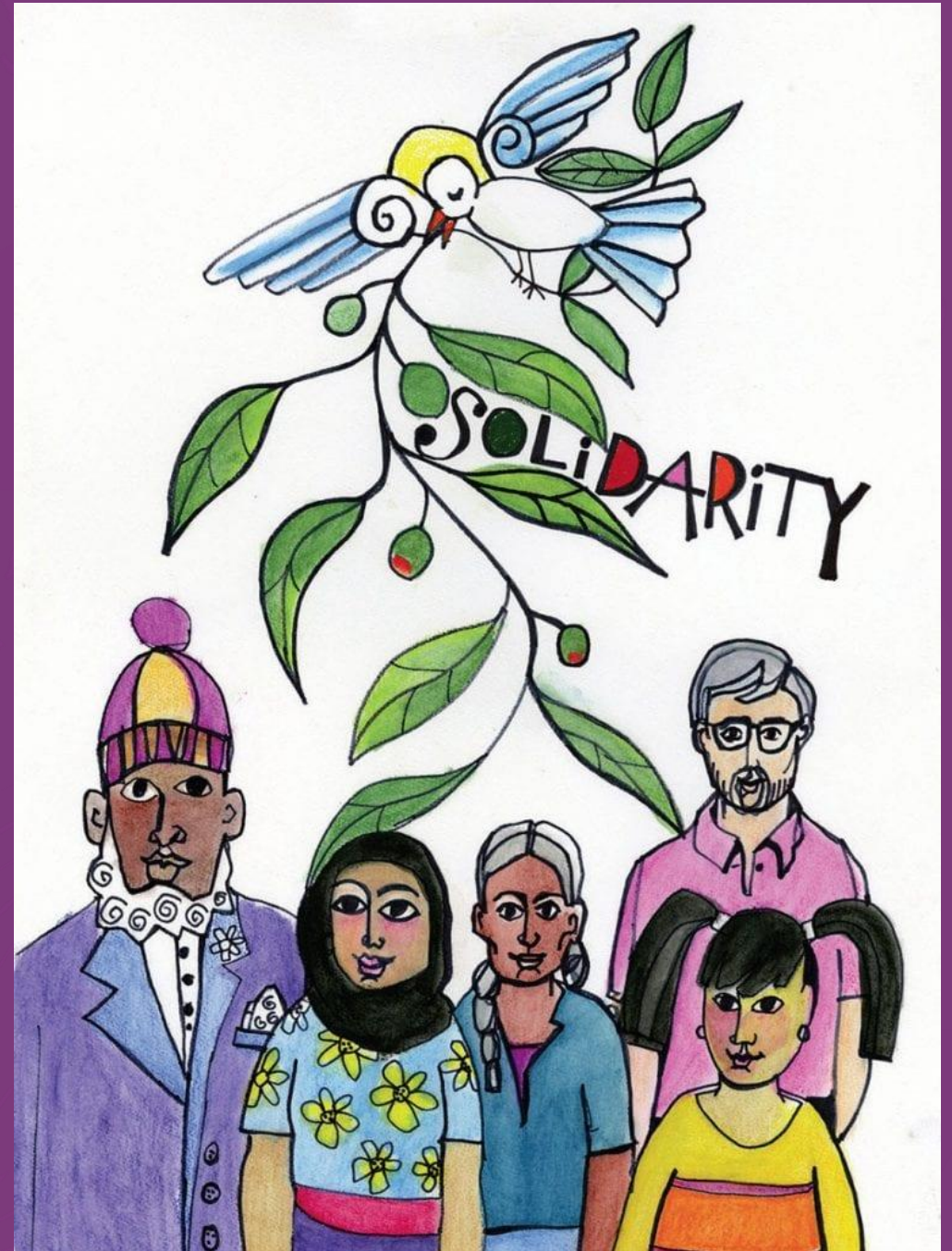
Solidarity

We are called:

- To build relationships that help us to understand what life is like for others who are different from us; what life is like for the poorest, most vulnerable, most overlooked, wherever they are in the world
- To experience spiritual woundedness and hunger for change when we observe the suffering of others

“Solidarity is also an authentic moral virtue, not a ‘feeling of vague compassion or shallow distress at the misfortunes of so many people, both near and far. On the contrary, it is a firm and persevering determination to commit oneself to the common good. That is to say to the good of all and of each individual.’”

St John Paul II, as quoted in the Compendium of Catholic Social Teaching



Rights & Responsibilities

We are called:

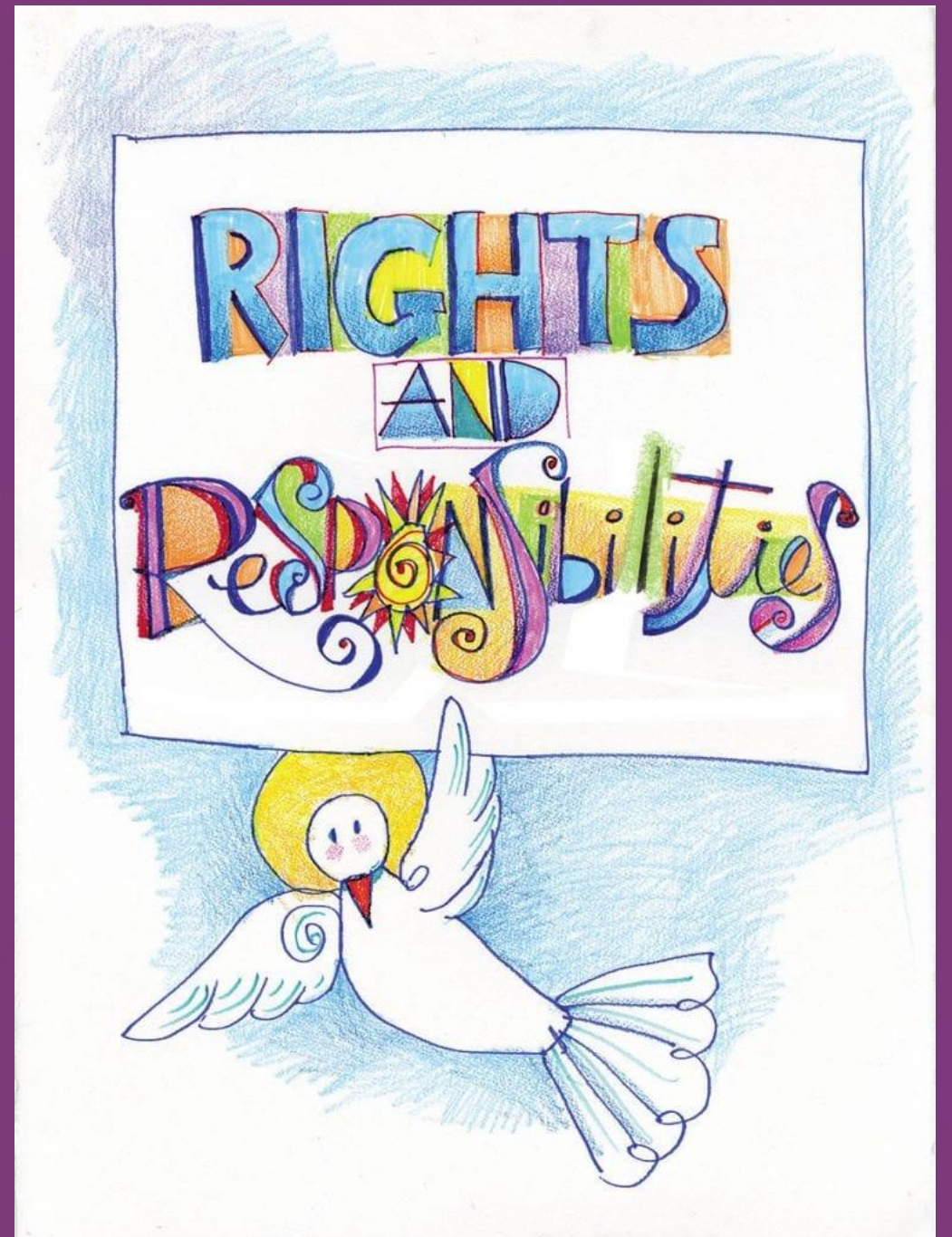
- To defend the rights of every person to life and to those things required for human decency (food, water, shelter...)
- To fulfill (and call upon our leaders to fulfill) our responsibilities to provide for these fundamental rights

“In human society one [person's] natural right gives rise to a corresponding duty in other [people]; the duty, that is, of recognizing and respecting that right...Hence, to claim one's rights and ignore one's duties, or only half fulfill them, is like building a house with one hand and tearing it down with the other.”

St. John XXIII, Pacem in Terris (30)

“As for the State . . . It has also the duty to protect the rights of all its people, and particularly of its weaker members, the workers, women and children. It can never be right for the State to shirk its obligation.”

St. John XXIII, Mater et Magistra (20)



Care for Creation

We are called:

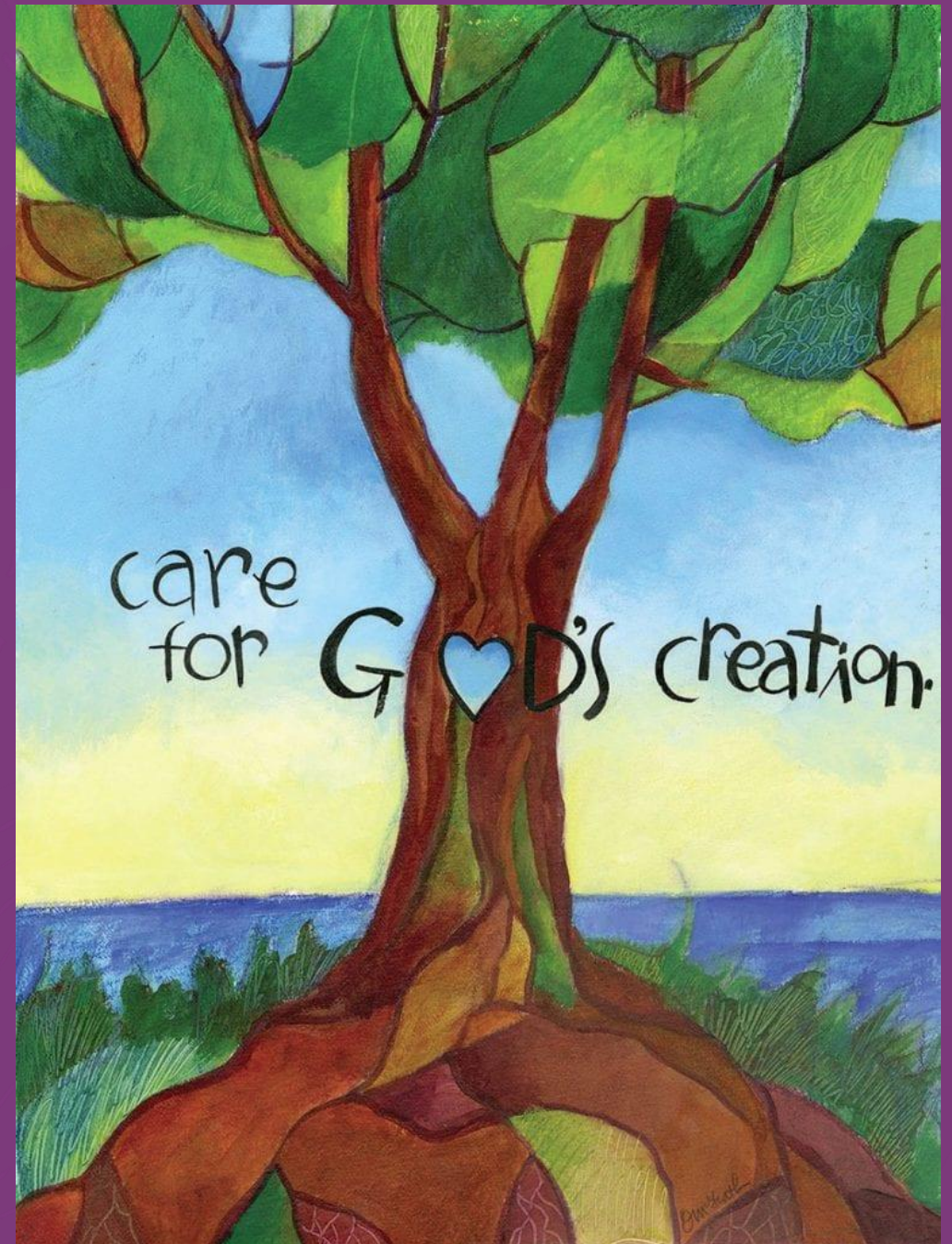
- To develop our sense of our kinship with the earth and all living creatures
- To learn to live in harmonious partnership with our earth community rather than to exploit its gifts
- To recognize our responsibility to leave a life-sustaining environment to future generations

“... [N]owadays we must forcefully reject the notion that our being created in God’s image and given dominion over earth justifies absolute domination over other creatures.”

Pope Francis, Laudato Si’ (67)

“We received this world as an inheritance from past generations, but also as a loan from future generations, to whom we will have to return it!”

Pope Francis, Ecuador, July 7, 2015



The BIG Idea:

All living creatures are deeply connected and loved by God.

We are not free to turn a blind eye to the suffering of others. Nor can we be free of pain unless all are free of pain.

We hold all good and bad experiences in common. Let us act for the common *good*.

The BIG Idea:

“So we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually we are members one of another.”

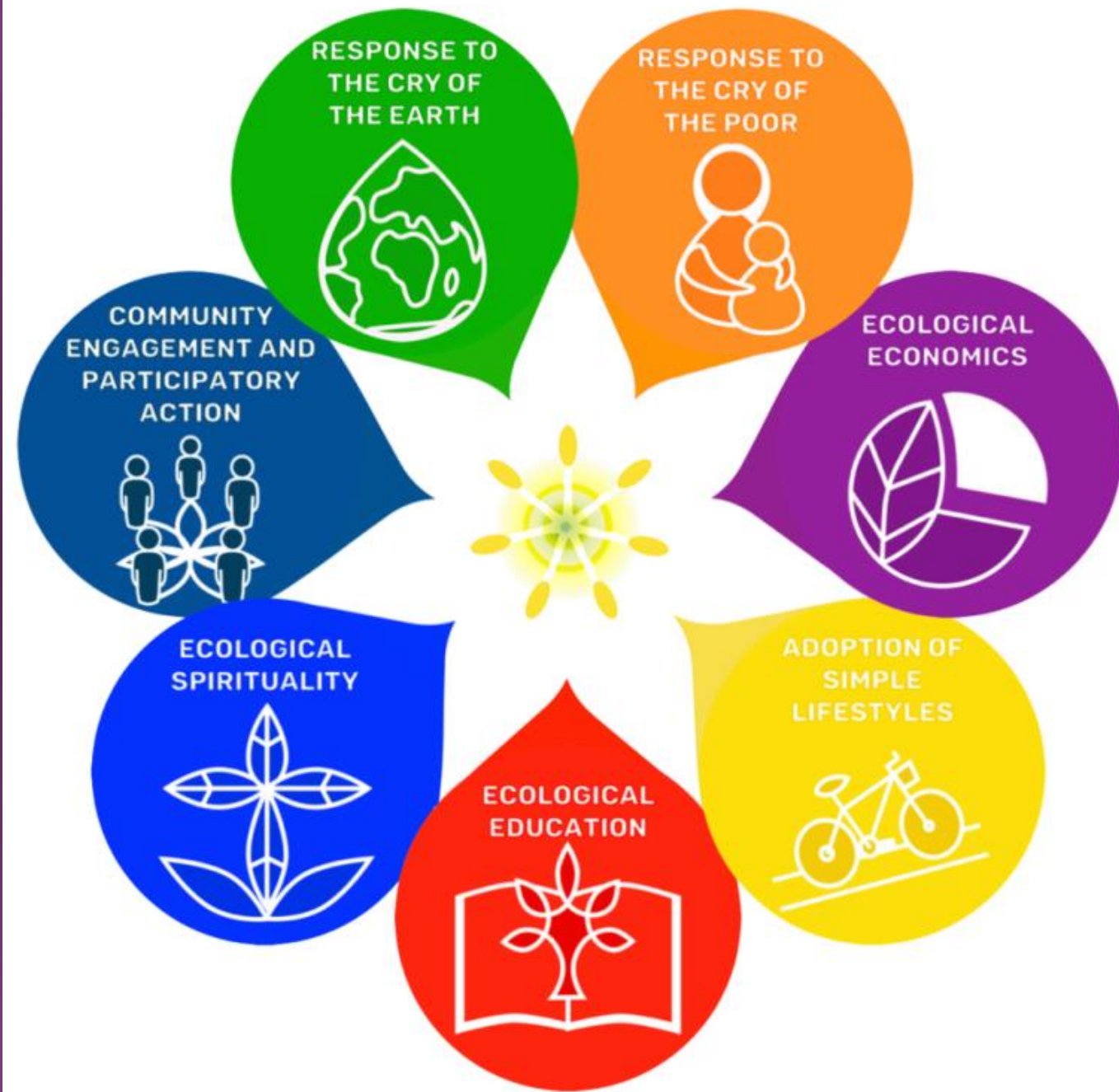
Romans 12:5

“The whole is greater than the part, but it is also greater than the sum of its parts... We constantly have to broaden our horizons and see the greater good which will benefit us all. But this has to be done without evasion or uprooting... We can work on a small scale, in our own neighbourhood, but with a larger perspective.”

Pope Francis, Evangelii Gaudium, #235, 2013



***Laudato Si'* Goals**



Laudato Si' Goals:

1. Response to the **Cry of the Earth** (greater use of clean renewable energy and reducing fossil fuels in order to achieve carbon neutrality, efforts to protect and promote biodiversity, guaranteeing access to clean water for all, etc.)
2. Response to the **Cry of the Poor** (defence of human life from conception to death and all forms of life on Earth, with special attention to vulnerable groups such as indigenous communities, migrants, children at risk through slavery, etc.)
3. **Ecological Economics** (sustainable production, Fair-trade, ethical consumption, ethical investments, divestment from fossil fuels and any economic activity harmful to the planet and the people, investment in renewable energy, etc.)
4. Adoption of **Simple Lifestyles** (sobriety in the use of resources and energy, avoid single-use plastic, adopt a more plant-based diet and reduce meat consumption, greater use of public transport and avoid polluting modes of transportation, etc.)

Laudato Si' Goals:

5. Ecological **Education** (re-think and re-design educational curricula and educational institution reform in the spirit of integral ecology to create ecological awareness and action, promoting the ecological vocation of young people, teachers and leaders of education etc.)
6. Ecological **Spirituality** (recover a religious vision of God's creation, encourage greater contact with the natural world in a spirit of wonder, praise, joy and gratitude, promote creation-centred liturgical celebrations, develop ecological catechesis, prayer, retreats, formation, etc.)
7. Emphasis on **Community involvement and participatory** action to care for creation at the local, regional, national and international levels (promote advocacy and people's campaigns, encourage rootedness in local territory and neighbourhood ecosystems, etc.)

Learn more at <https://www.laudatosi.org/laudato-si/laudato-si-goals/>