



CONFIRM NOT CONFORM EPISCOPAL

SESSION 10

FAITH IN ACTION: HOW WE CAN HELP

Offered to the Diocese of Northern California for Lent 2017
as a companion to their book study: *Toxic Charity*

For more information about *Confirm not Conform*, please go to
confirmnotconform.com

NOTE FOR NORTHERN CALIFORNIA USERS

Welcome to this session of *Confirm not Conform!* CnC is a confirmation program that has been available for over 10 years to congregations throughout the United States and Canada, but Northern California is our home.

We were thrilled to see that the Diocese of Northern California is reading *Toxic Charity* as your spring and Lenten book. That book, among other resources, helped inform *Confirm not Conform* in our process of creating sessions that teach youth about how to put our faith in action, including the session you have right now.

We thought that you might find some of the activities and discussions in the session useful to you as you study the book together in your congregation. We are happy to be able to share this with congregations of the Diocese of Northern California free of charge.

We have made a few small changes to this session to make it easier for you to use, especially if you are unfamiliar with the CnC program. But we wanted to give you a little more information about how this session might be useful to you.

This might be a helpful tool for an intergenerational event. Since *Confirm not Conform* was designed as a youth confirmation program, the activities in this session are created with younger people in mind. However, we think these activities can be engaging for people of all ages.

You are welcome to pick and choose activities. Although we have this laid out as a 90-minute session, with a 60-minute option, you can simply choose one or more activities that you think tie in with the chapter or theme you are studying.

You are welcome to contact us with questions. If you have questions about this session or about the *Confirm not Conform* program in general, please don't hesitate to email us at info@confirmnotconform.com.

We wish you all the best and every blessing in your Spring and Lenten studies.

SESSION 10

FAITH IN ACTION: HOW WE CAN HELP

THEOLOGICAL STATEMENT

We are called to love God and our neighbor. We have learned from Jesus the lesson of who is our neighbor: one and all. It is perhaps more difficult to determine how we may best love our neighbor. What is aiding and what is enabling? What is caring and what is smothering? What is generosity and what is simply making ourselves feel better? And how can we tell?

This session is based on the premise that we are called to love our neighbor, that it is a basic Christian principle that we help one another in need. With that premise, however, is the further belief that just because we want to help doesn't mean we are being helpful. Sometimes our charitable impulses can lead us astray. Our good intentions are not enough. We need to be aware of what is actually helpful and what may simply make us feel good about ourselves.

We sometimes forget that those we seek to help are people with a will, a mind, and gifts to share. To love our neighbors means to connect with them. It is a lesson we learn in working with youth. It is in meeting with youth that we love them, not merely in giving them stuff. It is in talking with them that we learn about the issues they face, not merely by reading an article.

When we connect, we learn that youth have as much to offer us as we have to offer them. It is true of all those we seek to help. The road to Jericho down which the Good Samaritan walked is not a one-way street.

Life Lessons:

- **It's not about you**
- **You can change the world, but don't expect it to be easy**

Life Skills:

- **Asking for help**
- **Asking good questions**

PRE-SESSION CHECKLIST

Before the day of the session

- Review all the scripted and spoken parts of the session, paying particular attention to the things you should read aloud to the session. Remember, the provided text is merely a suggestion – improvise, add to it, or change it as you see fit.
- For the SWEDOW activity, you might want to bring in a guest actor who can ham it up while dispensing largesse. Who do you know who would be willing to look ridiculous in front of a group of people?
- Review the timeline for this session. The timeline is a suggestion only, and you should feel free to adapt it if more time is needed for an activity or a high-energy discussion.
- **Make sure you have the following on hand:**
 - Blank flip chart sheets
 - Markers and/or felt-tip pens
 - Pens or pencils
 - 8 ½ X 11 pieces of paper
 - Tape
 - Bible
 - Blanket or tarp
 - Cheap tennis balls, at least one per youth, preferably more
 - Bucket big enough to hold the tennis balls
 - Stopwatch or other watch that allows you to calculate seconds exactly
 - [If you do not have a guest actor] Some simple disguise: a wig, funny glasses, a hat
 - Some ridiculously awful piece of clothing that no one would like
 - An equally awful can of food that no one would want to eat
 - A truly awful old book, preferably ratty and out of date; an old science textbook would be ideal
 - Copies of the *Sustainable Development Goals* handout (found in the Session Materials)
 - Copies of the *Helping Homework* handout (found in the Session Materials)
 - Copies of the quotation from Teresa of Avila (found in the Session Materials)

On the day of the session

- **Set up the space [approximately 40 minutes]**
- Check the space you'll be using for the Gathering and other activities. Is there enough room for everyone? Enough chairs and floor space?
- Using a felt-tip pen, write on 8 ½ x 11" paper:
 - Strongly Agree
 - Strongly Disagree
- Tape the piece of paper titled "Strongly Agree" to one end of the room

- Tape the piece of paper titled “Strongly Disagree” to the opposite side of the room
- If you have a guest coming to help with the *SWEDOW* and *How to Help* activities, give that person the ugly clothing, bad food, and outdated book.
- If you are the “special guest,” have your props and disguise ready to go.
- Drape the blanket or tarp unobtrusively somewhere in the room.
- Post one sheet of flip chart paper and label it How To Help.
- Post another blank sheet of flip chart paper.
- Have the bucket of tennis balls hidden away so youth don’t get into it when they come in the room. (They can’t help it.)
- Have the copies of the *Sustainable Development Goals*, *Helping Homework*, and pens or pencils available.
- Have a table or flat surfaces available for youth to write on.
- Have a Bible handy and marked for *Luke 10:25-37*.

Timeline for a Ninety-Minute Session

-0:05-0:05	Gathering
0:05-0:20	Presentation: SWEDOW
0:20-0:35	Activity: How to Help
0:35-0:45	Activity: Problem or Symptom?
0:45-1:00	Discussion: Making a Difference
1:00-1:15	Activity: Do Your Homework
1:15-1:25	Discussion: Why We Help
1:25-1:30	Closing Prayer

Timeline for Sixty-Minute Sessions

-0:05-0:05	Gathering
0:05-0:20	Presentation: SWEDOW
0:20-0:35	Activity: How to Help
0:35-0:45	Activity: Problem or Symptom?
0:45-0:55	Discussion: Making a Difference
0:55-1:00	Closing Prayer

SESSION 10

GATHERING

~5 MINUTES

- Welcome everyone as they arrive.
- Explain that you will be asking them some questions. To answer, they will need to go to the spot in the room that best represents how they would answer.
- If they Strongly Agree with the statement, they will go to the end of the room marked with the “Strongly Agree” sign.
- If they Strongly Disagree with the statement, they will go to the end of the room marked with the “Strongly Disagree” sign.
- If they are somewhere in between, they should go to the spot they think best represents what they think or how they feel.
- Let them know there’s no right or wrong answer; they should simply express what they think.
- Clarify that this is not meant to be a time for discussion or talk; they don’t need to explain their answer. They should simply move quietly to where they feel they are on the continuum at this time.
- Ask if they have any questions.
- Then make the following statements, allowing a moment for everyone to notice (visually, not verbally¹) where people are standing.
 - I’m having a good day.
 - I like helping people.
 - I like it when people help me.
 - There is a cause or issue that’s important to me.
 - I know someone who needs my help.
 - I need help.
- If someone “strongly agrees” that he or she is in need of help, note this. Consider how you might need to follow up.
- Say, “Anyone who wants to, please check in with me after this session so we can talk about how we can help or support one another.”

PRESENTATION: SWEDOW

~15 MINUTES

- Invite everyone to sit.
- Say, using these words or your own,
 - As you might guess, given the focus of the continuum activity we just did, the focus of this session is on how we can help people.
 - First we have a special guest² who is here because s/he has some things to give to you.

¹ There may be times when you do this activity and need to have a debriefing. In general, we encourage you to keep it brief and not spend time in discussion. You can spend 90 minutes parsing “I had a good day.” Our goal here is to allow the youth to check in with you and one another without spending a lot of time.

² If you in fact have a guest to play the part, that would be ideal.

- Introduce the guest or put on the wig/glasses/hat—whatever you have for your character’s disguise.
- Bring out the ugly clothing.
- Use this elaborate fiction or your own:
 - [Address to children or youth:] You young people are always outgrowing your clothes; you’re growing so fast. So I thought you’d appreciate it if I gave you something new. This belonged to my Uncle Gastronomous who died of gout three years ago. I was just cleaning out his closet and found it. It’s practically new. I gave it to him just before he died, so I know he didn’t wear it much. I’m sure one of you could use it.
- Give the clothing to someone.
- Bring out the canned food.
- Use this elaborate fiction or your own:
 - [To anyone] Someone here is probably hungry. I was also cleaning out Uncle Gastronomous’s pantry and found this. It’s due to expire...well, actually, it has expired, but it’s in a can, so I’m sure it’s still good. Is anybody hungry? Here, have this can. Sorry I don’t have a can opener. I guess you can eat it later.
- Give the canned food to someone.
- Bring out the old textbook.
- Use this elaborate fiction or your own:
 - [Address to children or youth:] You know what’s really important for you young people? A good education. You’re not going to get anywhere unless you’re good at the 3 Rs: Reading, Writing, and ‘Rithmetic, which is actually only 1 R, which you would know if you were any good at your 3 Rs. So I was cleaning out Uncle Gastronomous’s bookshelves and found this book. The cover’s kind of bad, but you can’t judge a book by its cover. Of course it was written in 1950, but I’m sure not much has changed in the world since then. I know one of you will find it useful.
- Give the book to someone.
- Conclude with this elaborate fiction or your own:
 - I hope you’re grateful for these things I’m giving you. After all, I’m offering you food and clothing and an education to help you get ahead in the world.
 - I want you all to know that my heart is aching for the needs of the world today.³ I see things about you on television and the Internet and I just *knew* that I had to help you. That’s my ministry. I just want you to know how good it makes me feel to know that I can help you poor, tragic youth make your way in the world.
- Thank your special guest (if you have one) and encourage people to applaud, or remove your disguise and take a bow with a big flourish.
- Start the following discussion.

³ All the better if you can be moved to tears by their plight.

Discussion Question	Potential Follow-up Questions	Facilitator Notes
How did it make you feel to get these gifts?	How did it make you feel to be seen as a person who needs charity?	<i>Chances are they're not going to feel grateful. However, some people may try very hard to be grateful. Make sure to go beyond, "They were just being nice" to get at how they <u>actually</u> felt—and not what they feel they are supposed to feel.</i>
What did your benefactor get out of giving you these things?	How did this generosity benefit the giver?	<i>A couple of benefits people might notice:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Cleaning out closets and pantries</i> • <i>Not having to deal with unwanted stuff</i> • <i>Feeling good about being generous</i> • <i>The sense of being helpful, having a ministry</i>
How did your benefactor's generosity benefit you?	Are these things you can actually use? If someone gave these to you, what would you do with them?	<i>If people say, "It didn't benefit me," that's perfectly acceptable. Don't press them to find a legitimate benefit to the gifts. The desire to throw these things away is an appropriate response—in fact, feel free to have them do so at the end of the discussion.</i>
What are some things that would actually help you?	What do "you young people" actually need?	<i>They can go beyond basic necessities; they can ask for the outrageous. This is more to help them see that they have better ideas and a better sense for what they need than their benefactor does.</i>
Has anyone ever asked you what you want or need?	If so, what did you tell them? If not, what do you want to tell people who want to help you?	<i>It may have never occurred to them that someone should ask them what they want or need.</i>
How do you think this might apply to us when we try to help others?	What can we learn from this?	<i>It also may have never occurred to them to ask other people what they want or need.</i>
<p>Conclude, using these words or your own: What you experienced today with these useless donations has a name: it's known as SWEDOW, which stands for Stuff We Don't Want⁴ and people give away SWEDOW as charity all the time. Maybe they think, rightly or wrongly, that someone else will be able to use the things they don't need any more. Maybe they don't want to feel guilty about having more than others. Maybe they feel bad about throwing away things they never used. Maybe it's with the best of intentions, honestly believing the stuff will be helpful. But as we experienced, just because we have stuff to give away doesn't mean it's something people need. The donor may feel good, but all that may happen is that someone else has to deal with it.</p> <p>One of the things that's important to know as we help others is that it's not about what makes <u>us</u> feel good; it's about what will actually help. That's a little harder to figure out, but if we're really going to make a difference in the world, it's important for us to do the hard work of discovering what will actually change things.</p>		

⁴ The term SWEDOW was invented by an aid worker on the blog *Tales from the Hood* in 2010 and has since become commonly used in aid and development circles. Google SWEDOW for more discussions of the issue and examples of SWEDOW in action.

As mentioned in the set-up, have a blanket or tarp in the room. Do not point it out. Do not draw attention to it in any way. Just let it be there for youth to use for this activity if they think of it.

- Let people know that their next task is to help their guest [or another adult in the class] get from one side of the room to the other.⁵
- The trick is that your guest will be lying on the floor and won't be able to help them at all.
- They need to be careful not to hurt the person. Other than that, you leave it up to them as a group to figure out how to get this done.
- Have your guest lie on the floor.
- Tell people to get started finding a way to move your guest to the opposite side of the room.
- Watch and marvel.
- *If they get upset at one another*—don't interfere (unless it gets out of hand).
- *If anyone doesn't want to participate*—don't make him/her.
- *If someone asks you to help them*—do so!⁶
- Once people have managed to shift your guest to the other side of the room, have them come back for a debriefing.
 - This debriefing will vary depending on
 - How well or poorly the group worked together
 - What resources they used to solve the problem
- The basic question to ask is, "What did you learn about helping people from this activity?"
 - You may need to ask some leading questions, such as
 - What did you learn about resources?
 - What did you learn about working as a team?
 - What did you learn about the time and effort it takes?
 - If they did not ask you for help, ask them why they didn't.
- Conclude by saying, using your own words or these:
 - The essence of this activity was to show you that you don't have to help all on your own. You can work with other people as a team; you can use other resources than just the things you brought with you; you can even ask outsiders for help. And still with all that, it can take a lot of time and effort to make a change. For our next activity, we're going to try something that doesn't take a lot of time. Maybe.
- At this point, your special guest can leave if s/he wants—or can stay for the rest of the session. It may be very entertaining.

⁵ You're dubious. We know. But we have been doing this exercise for over 10 years and it works every time.

⁶ In the years we have been doing this exercise, the youth have *never* asked the other adults in the room for help.

ACTIVITY: PROBLEM OR SYMPTOM?**~10 MINUTES**

This activity requires quite a bit of...well, activity. Again, it would be great if everyone participates, but this may be more action than some people can do.

- Bring out the bucket of tennis balls and scatter the balls all over the room.
- Place the bucket in a far corner of the room and stand next to it.
- Explain to the group that their job will be to pick up all the tennis balls and put them back in the bucket in under a minute.
- Have them all line up at a designated spot.
- When you're ready, give them the signal to start.
- When they have collected all the balls and put them in the bucket, give them their time.
- Tell them you're going to give them a chance to beat their time.
- Once again, scatter the tennis balls throughout the room.
- Have them line up and, when you're ready, give them the signal to start.
- This time, as they drop the balls into the bucket, throw them back out into the room again.
 - If they tell you to stop, then stop.
 - If they hold you back, don't resist.
- Call time when a minute has passed.
- If there are any balls in the bucket, dump them back out.
- Then say, "What's wrong with you? You spent a whole minute and there still aren't any tennis balls in the bucket."
- Let them complain or respond.
- Then explain, using your own words or the following,
 - Sometimes when we try to help people, it's as easy as putting the tennis balls back in the bucket. But there are other times when there are other factors, where the system itself needs to be changed.
 - In order to get this task done, you needed to get me to stop dumping out the tennis balls. Otherwise, your work was pointless.
 - Sometimes the thing we want to fix is the problem, and sometimes it's just a symptom of the real problem.
 - We need to be aware when we're helping if we're working on fixing the problem or trying to take care of a symptom. And if it's just a symptom of a larger problem, what is the real problem, and how can we fix that?
 - The real problem here was that I kept dumping out the tennis balls.
- Ask, What are some ways you could have gotten me to stop dumping out the tennis balls? (or if they did stop you, ask what are some other ways they could have used)
 - Some possible solutions are
 - asking you to stop
 - persuading you to stop
 - inviting you to help be part of the solution
 - using force; holding you back (don't ignore this one!)
 - taking the bucket away from you
- Then ask them, one last time, to pick up all the tennis balls, and say you will help them do so.
- Put the tennis balls out of sight!

DISCUSSION: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

~15 MINUTES

- Have everyone sit down where they can see the flip chart paper
- Note that you have been talking about many ways in which we can be better at helping people.
- Ask if they can come up with some of the lessons learned so far.
- Jot them down on the flip chart paper titled “How to Help”:
 - Be aware of what people actually need (not SWEDOW)
 - Use all the resources you can
 - Ask for help yourself
 - Don’t hurt the people you’re trying to help
 - Sometimes helping people takes time
 - Find out the real problem and fix that
 - Sometimes you need to change the system in order to fix the presenting problem
- People may express them in different ways. Capture their ideas as best as possible.
- People may have learned more lessons; be sure to add those.
- It may be that some of these do not occur to the group; add them, asking, “What about X?” If they disagree, respect their opinion. We are asking them what they have seen and learned.
- Tell them that with those lessons in mind, they are going to start thinking about what they can do as a group to help others.
- Say:
 - Back in the year 2000, the UN came up with a list of 8 goals, called the Millennium Development Goals, to address some of the major issues of poverty, health, and well-being in the world, with the plan to meet certain targets by 2015. And, with a concerted effort, many of those goals were met.
 - However, there’s still more to be done.
 - In 2015, the UN came up with another set of goals, called the Sustainable Development Goals.
 - These 17 goals have been established with the desire “to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity for all.”
 - Among these 17 goals there is probably an issue that is important to you.
 - Let’s read through these goals together.
- Distribute the *Sustainable Development Goals* handout from the Session Materials and ask for one or more volunteers to read the goals (for the sake of time, do not read the descriptions aloud).
 - Are there any more that you want to add to our list?
- If you are doing the sixty-minute version of this lesson instead of the full version, skip ahead here to the closing prayer.

ACTIVITY: DO YOUR HOMEWORK

~15 MINUTES

[Omit this activity if you are doing a single sixty-minute session, and skip ahead to the closing prayer.]

- Say:
 - If we want to help, it’s important to know how. And often we won’t know how unless we do a little homework.
 - You’re going to spend about 10 minutes or so coming up with your own homework on how to make a difference on an issue that’s important to you, either from the Sustainable Development Goals or from your own experience.

- Distribute the *Helping Homework* handout (found in the Session Materials)
- Some things to point out:
 - The “issue” is a big topic. It can be one of the Sustainable Development Goals, but it can also be something else, such as bullying.
 - With “some problems,” individuals should focus on some specific things related to that issue. If the issue is hunger, the problem might be that some kids go to school hungry in the morning, which makes it hard for them to concentrate in school.
 - As people consider whether the problem is a symptom of a larger problem, it is ok for them to speculate or not to know. This may help them come up with their questions.
 - The two people they want to talk to don’t have to be people they know personally. They just need to be people they think will be able to talk about the issue that’s important to them. This can be anyone, even if they don’t know the name (for example, “The head of the local food pantry”). It can be someone who is experiencing the problem directly (for example, “someone who uses the food pantry”). It can even be someone famous who is involved with the issue. If they want to talk to Bono or Bill Gates or Archbishop Tutu, great!⁷ Even if they don’t reach that person directly, in the search they may find some important information. And you never know!
 - Encourage people to come up with questions that can’t be answered simply yes or no. For example, rather than asking, “Do you think we can do something to help those who are hungry?” ask, “What do you think we can do to help those who are hungry?”
- Give them 10 minutes to work on their homework. Assist as needed, but don’t come up with the questions for them!
- When the time is up, tell them that their homework is to track down the people they wrote on their sheet, ask them the questions they came up with, and write down the answers. Inform them that this will be due at their next session.⁸ Let them know the date and time.

DISCUSSION: WHY WE HELP

~10 MINUTES

- On another blank sheet of flip chart paper, write the heading “Why We Help”
- Say:
 - We’ve been talking a lot about how to help, but we haven’t ever really discussed why we should help at all.
 - What are some reasons you think we should help others?
- Write down their answers.
- Say:
 - We’re going to read a story that’s probably familiar to you.
 - I want you to listen to it and see if it answers the question of why we help.
- Ask someone to read *Luke 10:25-37*, the parable of the Good Samaritan.
- Ask how Jesus might answer the question of why we help others.
 - The answer will be something along the lines of “We need to love our neighbor.”

⁷ One time a certain CnC staffer might told another CnC staffer he was living on “Planet Zippy” when he suggested inviting Bono to speak at the church. But really, why not ask?

⁸ Time to review and utilize the homework is part of Session 11. Make adjustments as needed if you will be using a different session for your next meeting.

- Say:
 - A nun and mystic named Teresa of Avila had another answer to the question of why we help. Here's what she said:

Christ has no body now on earth but yours,

no hands but yours,

no feet but yours.

Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion to the world.

Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good;

Yours are the hands with which he is to bless people now.

CLOSING PRAYER

~5 MINUTES

- Invite everyone to join in the closing prayer.
- Give everyone a copy of the quotation from Teresa of Avila, which you might want to use as your prayer to end the evening, changing "yours" to "ours."
- Give each person a tennis ball as a reminder of the lesson before they leave!⁹

⁹ Oh, you noticed it's SWEDOW, did you? Busted. Give an extra tennis ball and a high five to any youth who points this out.

POST-SESSION REVIEW

Some things to consider:

- Overall, how did this session go?
- How was it able to illuminate or relate to the book *Toxic Charity*?
- How did people react to your guest for the SWEDOW activity?
- Did people seem to understand the concepts behind the activities? What was confusing or difficult?
- Were people able to come up with people to talk to or questions to ask for their homework?
- If you were presenting this session again, what would you do differently?
- What did you learn from leading this session?
- What affected you personally? What questions did this session raise for you? How will you address them?

SESSION MATERIALS

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In 2015, countries and citizens of the world came together to decide and embark on new paths to improve the lives of people everywhere.

In particular, they decided on 17 Sustainable Development Goals to determine the global course of action to end poverty, promote prosperity and well-being for all, protect the environment and address climate change.

The Sustainable Development Goals are:

Goal 1: End poverty in all its forms everywhere: Poverty is more than the lack of income and resources to ensure a sustainable livelihood. Its manifestations include hunger and malnutrition, limited access to education and other basic services, social discrimination and exclusion as well as the lack of participation in decision-making. Economic growth must be inclusive to provide sustainable jobs and promote equality.

Goal 2: End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture: If done right, agriculture, forestry and fisheries can provide nutritious food for all and generate decent incomes, while supporting people-centred rural development and protecting the environment.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages: Major progress has been made on increasing access to clean water and sanitation, reducing malaria, tuberculosis, polio and the spread of HIV/AIDS. However, many more efforts are needed to fully eradicate a wide range of diseases and address many different persistent and emerging health issues.

Goal 4: Ensure inclusive and quality education for all and promote lifelong learning: Basic literacy skills have improved tremendously, yet bolder efforts are needed to make even greater strides for achieving universal education goals. For example, the world has achieved equality in primary education between girls and boys, but few countries have achieved that target at all levels of education.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls: Gender equality is not only a fundamental human right, but a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous and sustainable world. Providing women and girls with equal access to education, health care, decent work, and representation in political and economic decision-making processes will fuel sustainable economies and benefit societies and humanity at large.

Goal 6: Ensure access to water and sanitation for all: Clean, accessible water for all is an essential part of the world we want to live in. There is sufficient fresh water on the planet to achieve this. But due to bad economics or poor infrastructure, every year millions of people, most of them children, die from diseases associated with inadequate water supply, sanitation and hygiene.

Goal 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all: Energy is central to nearly every major challenge and opportunity the world faces today. Be it for jobs, security, climate change, food production or increasing incomes, access to energy for all is essential.

Goal 8: Promote inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all: A continued lack of decent work opportunities, insufficient investments and under-consumption lead to an erosion of the basic social contract underlying democratic societies: that all must share in progress. . The creation of quality jobs will remain a major challenge for almost all economies well beyond 2015.

Goal 9: Build resilient infrastructure, promote sustainable industrialization and foster innovation: Investments in infrastructure – transport, irrigation, energy and information and communication technology – are crucial to achieving sustainable development and empowering communities in many countries.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries: To reduce inequality, policies should be universal in principle paying attention to the needs of disadvantaged and marginalized populations.

Goal 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable: Common urban challenges include congestion, lack of funds to provide basic services, a shortage of adequate housing and declining infrastructure. The challenges cities face can be overcome in ways that allow them to continue to thrive and grow, while improving resource use and reducing pollution and poverty. The future we want includes cities of opportunities for all, with access to basic services, energy, housing, transportation and more.

Goal 12: Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns: Sustainable consumption and production aims at “doing more and better with less,” increasing net welfare gains from economic activities by reducing resource use, degradation and pollution along the whole lifecycle, while increasing quality of life.

Goal 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts: Without action, the world’s average surface temperature is projected to rise over the 21st century and is likely to surpass 3 degrees Celsius this century—with some areas of the world expected to warm even more. The poorest and most vulnerable people are being affected the most.

Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources: Our rainwater, drinking water, weather, climate, coastlines, much of our food, and even the oxygen in the air we breathe, are all ultimately provided and regulated by the sea. Throughout history, oceans and seas have been vital conduits for trade and transportation. Careful management of this essential global resource is a key feature of a sustainable future.

Goal 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss: Deforestation and desertification – caused by human activities and climate change – pose major challenges to sustainable development and have affected the lives and livelihoods of millions of people in the fight against poverty. Efforts are being made to manage forests and combat desertification.

Goal 16: Promote just, peaceful and inclusive societies: Provide access to justice for all, and build effective, accountable institutions at all levels.

Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development: Review and monitoring frameworks, regulations and incentive structures that enable such investments must be retooled to attract investments and reinforce sustainable development. National oversight mechanisms such as supreme audit institutions and oversight functions by legislatures should be strengthened.

You can find out more about the Sustainable Development Goals at <http://www.un.org/sustainabledevelopment>

HELPING HOMEWORK

Use the worksheet below to help you discover some ways you can make a difference on an issue that's important to you.

The issue I want to address is:

These are some of the problems I see:

Are these problems symptoms of a larger problem? If so, what do I think is the larger problem?

Who are two people I could talk to who know about this issue:

On the back are five questions I want to ask them:

*Christ has no body now on earth but yours,
no hands but yours,
no feet but yours.*

*Yours are the eyes through which to look out Christ's compassion
to the world.*

*Yours are the feet with which he is to go about doing good;
Yours are the hands with which he is to bless people now.*

Teresa of Avila