



Faith in Action

"The Social Community"

"Be perfect, therefore, as your Heavenly Father is perfect"

Matthew 5:48

Lesson: Because we are equally precious in God's sight, Christ calls us, by Word and example, to be a living embodiment of the Divine Creator's love and grace to all people regardless of color, ethnicity, gender identity, religious beliefs, disability, age and/or socioeconomic status. As Christians, this means we are to afford every person the same respect and dignity as Christ gave when he was on earth. But our work doesn't stop at sentiment alone. Instead, God's restorative justice requires us to build communities where the vulnerable and oppressed are made whole through fair and equitable access to basic human rights, such as food, shelter, education, employment, judicial redress, and physical protection.

This week, put faith in action by...

One Step at a Time...

Called "The Two Feet of Love" by the Roman Catholic Church, the path to social justice is cut by both charitable acts and justice. The former addresses immediate needs, such as emergency food and temporary shelter, while the latter aims towards alleviating social ills, by eradicating their root causes through systemic change. Both steps are necessary, but only justice can provide permanent solutions.

This week, take your first step by talking to your child about the differences between charitable giving and justice and how they play out in the world and in our ministries. Foot tracings make a great template to show how your family plans to start walking the walk (with both feet).



Another Man who Dared to Dream

The world may have lost U.S. Representative, Baptist Minister and Civil Rights icon, John Lewis, but it can never forget the legendary example of courage, hope and faithful conviction this true American hero gave to us all.

This week, take some downtime with your family to get to know more about Lewis and his battle of nonviolent resistance against segregation, Jim Crow, and the disparity of human rights for African-Americans. A good place to start is <https://civilrightstrail.com/experience/rep-john-lewis/> This interactive virtual tour charts the Civil Rights movement through photos, video and text from the people who made history.

To keep the conversation about anti-racism, diversity and tolerance flowing at home, Good Housekeeping further suggests trying these age-appropriate books to read with your child <https://www.goodhousekeeping.com/childrens-products/g32753905/books-about-race-and-racism-for-kids/>



Did You Know...

That 567,715 people will sleep on the streets somewhere in the United States tonight?

Your family can put their charitable foot forward by making care bags for those suffering from lack of shelter. Socks, hygiene items, fast food gift cards, wet wipes, snacks, water, utensils, napkins, flashlights and can openers go a long way in meeting personal needs. Keep a few bags in your car for emergency distribution.

Use the time from packing to sharing to help begin to dismantle the stereotyping that stigmatizes those suffering from the effects of poverty, starting with your child's generation, by researching and talking about the *systemic causes* of homelessness instead of blame. Education and awareness are, after all, our best weapons in the war against injustice.

The Wisdom of Seuss

In 1961, the son of German immigrants, Theodor Geisel (AKA Dr. Seuss) sat down to write *The Sneetches* with the hope of helping children better understand the ill effects of discrimination and racism, which he himself knew from personal experience. Almost 60 years later, you and your family can still take advantage of Geisel's wisdom, experience and humor by setting some time aside to get to know his *Sneetches* better. YouTube offers the animation in its 12-minute entirety which means that your family will have plenty of time to discuss who the plain belly *Sneetches* are in your school, community, nation and world and the ways that you can start to break down the barriers...one star at a time.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PdLPe7XjdKc>

Someday We'll Find It...

From God's promise to Noah in Genesis to the encasement of God's throne in Revelation, the rainbow has always been a symbol of God's peace and reconciliation in the Bible.

What better way to celebrate God's vision of hope in the world then to revisit with your child the classical song, *The Rainbow Connection*, whose lyrics helped to put optimism for better times on countless lips and hearts? The song gives plenty opportunity to talk about how God's restorative justice for all people and creation isn't just a wish or a dream, but a tangible goal set in motion by Jesus and which we are called to pursue.

And While You're at It... Make a Prayer Connection Too

Paper chains not only help to illustrate our interconnectivity, they can also make a wonderful prayer tool. Have your family think of needs that could use some prayer. Before making a paper chain, write each intervention on each strip of paper. Every night before dinner or bed, have a family member tear off a link and offer up that person or need to God through prayer.

Rights Make Might

While the United States is one of the few countries in the world not to ratify the UN's Convention on the Rights of the Child, it's still a good idea to talk to your child about these natural rights. YouTube has a great, child-friendly video (complete with puppets) to help

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Z7lIXD9-8o>

After watching, try talking to your child about how these rights speak to children around the world, such as asylum seekers, child laborers, those with disabilities, in poverty, being bullied and/or even just girls.