

The Human Community

Catechism of the Catholic Church, Part III, Section 1, Chapter 2

Parent Handout for Sacramental Preparation

The Big Question: *How do we live well together?*

We are social by nature → participate in communities → authority serves the common good → social justice ensures dignity for all

The Person and Society

We are made for community — it's not optional, it's essential to who we are (CCC 1877-1889):

- **Social by nature:** Human beings need others to develop and flourish
- **The family is foundational:** It is the “original cell of social life”
- **Multiple communities:** Family, parish, neighborhood, nation — each has a role

Key Principle: Subsidiarity

Decisions should be made at the lowest competent level. Higher organizations should not take over what smaller communities can handle. The state shouldn't replace parents; parishes shouldn't replace families.

The Common Good

The common good is the sum of social conditions that allow people to reach their fulfillment (CCC 1905-1912):

Respect for Persons	Social Well-Being	Peace & Security
Fundamental rights and freedoms of every person must be honored	Development of the group: food, clothing, health, education, work	Stability and security that allows society to function

Social Justice and Solidarity

Social Justice

Ensures conditions that allow individuals and groups to obtain what is their due (CCC 1928-1933)

- Respects human dignity
- Promotes equal treatment
- Opposes sinful inequalities

Solidarity

We are responsible for one another as members of one human family (CCC 1939-1942)

- Sharing of spiritual goods
- Sharing of material goods
- Working for a just social order

The Family: School of Social Life

Your family is where children first learn to live in community. Every day you're teaching:

Through Daily Life:

- Sharing meals together
- Dividing household chores
- Resolving sibling conflicts
- Making decisions together

Through Outreach:

- Practicing hospitality
- Serving those in need together
- Participating in parish life
- Discussing news through faith lens

Questions for Reflection

1. How does your family function as a “little church”? What practices build your children’s sense of belonging to the faith community?
2. How do you help your children see themselves as part of a larger community beyond your family? What practices develop their concern for others?
3. In what ways does your family practice solidarity with those in need?

Connection to the Sacraments

- **Reconciliation:** Sin harms community; reconciliation restores our bonds with God and one another
- **Eucharist:** We gather as one Body, fed at one Table, sent to serve
- **Confirmation:** The Holy Spirit strengthens us to serve the Church and the world

Key Catechism References

- **CCC 1877-1889:** The Person and Society
- **CCC 1897-1917:** Participation in Social Life
- **CCC 1928-1948:** Social Justice

*Your family is the first school of Christian life and human enrichment.
— Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1657*