

2009 Multi-Media Youth Arts Contest

Leader's Guide

for Religious Educators, Youth Ministers and Catholic School Teachers

This year's theme:

Empowered People Can Uproot Poverty in Their Communities

You're Invited!

The Catholic Campaign for Human Development (CCHD) invites Religious Educators, Youth Ministers and Catholic School Teachers to help young people in grades 7-12 participate in its 2009 Multi-Media Youth Arts Contest. CCHD developed the contest in response to the United States Bishops' statement, [Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions](#), in which the bishops encouraged "new initiatives to integrate the social teachings of the Church more fully into educational and catechetical programs and institutions."

What We're Looking For

The goal of the contest is to help young artists understand how low-income persons themselves can effectively lead efforts to address the causes of poverty in their communities, and how all Catholics are called to act in support of such efforts as an integral part of their faith and the values of [Catholic social teaching](#).

Before young artists can come to such a realization, they need to be helped to understand the difference between **Charity** and **Justice** – both very important responses to our faith, but responses that are quite distinct. While charity provides direct social services that help individuals meet their immediate needs, justice involves working for systemic social change in communities. A special resource on Charity and Justice is now available to help you and your students to understand this important difference. (Please see email attachment for Charity and Justice resource)

It is also important for young artists to be familiar with the seven themes of [Catholic social teaching](#). Exposure to these themes can help young people understand how CCHD's work and mission is a response to our Catholic faith.

The ideal entry will:

Exhibit an understanding of the *root causes* of poverty, not just the symptoms. It should be clear that the artists know the difference between charity and justice. While CCHD recognizes the importance of charity, it seeks to support groups engaged in work for justice—those affecting long-lasting change to unjust structures.

Portray the poor as *empowered persons* capable of leading efforts for change in community, as opposed to portraying the poor as victims.

Illustrate that acting *with* empowered poor persons who are working for long-term change is a *response to our faith* and the values of *Catholic social teaching*.

Show a clear understanding of CCHD's work and mission.

Reflect both the thoughtfulness and the creative skills of the artist.

Important Requirements

Please visit the [Art Contest Rules](#) page to make sure you are aware of all the contest rules before beginning the contest. Also, a new requirement has been added for the 2009 contest in which entrants are required to have learned about at least one CCHD-funded group in order to enter the contest. Ideally, students will visit a funded group in their area or listen to a speaker from one of these groups. It is also possible for students

to learn about a group by watching one of the videos mentioned in the next section. Students will have to answer some short questions about what they have learned in the official [entry form](#).

Contest Resources

In order to promote creative, thoughtful entries, it is essential to spend some program or class time with your students exploring Catholic social teaching, the basic causes of economic poverty, and learning about how groups of low-income persons funded by the Catholic Campaign for Human Development are successfully working to address the root causes of poverty in their communities. The following is a list of ideas to make the contest an effective learning experience for the young people with whom you work:

Make the contest school-wide or parish-wide—something that all young people grades 7-12 can participate in. The contest is a *cross-discipline* program: it isn't just for art classes. English classes can write essays, poetry, or short stories. Theology classes and Religious education programs can use the contest as a response to Catholic social teaching and to teach about faith in action. Social studies, government, and sociology classes can learn about civic engagement by CCHD-funded groups and reflect on the role of community- and faith-based organizations, creating Power Point presentations or writing essays about what they have learned. Schools with service-learning requirements and Confirmation programs that require service hours can connect students with CCHD-funded groups and then use the contest as a means to educate others about their experiences. The contest is easy to integrate into what you are already doing. The links in the next section provide specific suggestions of how you can easily incorporate the contest into your existing classes or programs.

Create a "gallery" of student entries to the contest. Invite classes, parents, and community members to tour the gallery to learn about and be inspired by what low-income people in the U.S. are doing to respond to problems in their communities.

Before starting the contest:

Facilitate interaction by students with CCHD-funded groups. Coordinate student visits to a CCHD-funded site or invite a speaker from a group in your area to talk to students at a school assembly or in classes. Your [local CCHD diocesan directors](#) can provide the names of funded groups in your area. If in-person interaction cannot be coordinated, show one of the following videos:

[*Community in Action*](#)

[*Winds of Change*](#)

[*Among the People*](#)

Young people can also learn about what CCHD-funded groups are doing by reading [Portraits of Hope](#)—stories about what low-income persons in CCHD-funded groups have done to address poverty, or they can read excerpts from [Credible Signs of Christ Alive](#): Case Studies from the Catholic Campaign for Human Development.

Use activities from one of the many lesson plans already available on the CCHD website to educate students about the root causes of poverty in the U.S. The following resources include activities that can easily supplement what you are already doing in the classroom or parish program:

[Ending Poverty in Community \(EPIC\): A Toolkit for Young Advocates](#)

Two Feet of Social Action Worksheet and Explanation (please see email attachment)

[A Catholic Call to Justice](#) Activity Book for Raising Awareness on Social Justice Issues

[Poverty USA Education Center](#)

[Poverty in America Student Action Project](#)

[In the Footsteps of Jesus Video and Resource Manual](#)

[Other Catholic Social Teaching Resources](#)

Ideas for Educators by Discipline (please see email attachment):

Ideas for Youth Ministry Programs
Ideas for Theology and Religious Education Classes
Ideas for Service and Service Learning Programs
Ideas for Art Classes
Ideas for English Classes
Ideas for Government, Social Studies, and Sociology Classes
Ideas for Music Classes

CCHD Overview

The United States Catholic Bishops created the Catholic Campaign for Human Development to help poor people bring themselves out of poverty. CCHD provides money in the form of grants to groups in the United States that are changing the structures that cause poverty. CCHD also offers opportunities for "transformative" education. The goal of transformative education is to help people learn about the many causes of poverty and to create better relationships between the poor and the non-poor through interaction, discussion and personal reflection on experiences and scripture. The work of CCHD is supported by a collection taken up nationwide in most Catholic parishes the weekend before Thanksgiving.

More Information

Contact your CCHD Diocesan Director for more information on your local contest deadline. The deadline for the national contest is March 31, 2009.

All [Contest Materials](#) are available online.

View additional [Educational Activities](#).

Visit [CCHD's](#) homepage.

Learn more about [Poverty](#) in the United States.

Follow-up

The Multi-Media Youth Arts Contest is an ideal way to introduce young people to [Catholic social teaching](#) and fighting poverty. The contest aims to make "learners" into "educators". In effect the students may raise awareness among those who do not participate in the contest—both peers and adults. After entering the contest consider doing one or more of the following:

Help your students show their completed artwork to others in the parish, school, or community in order to express the wisdom gained about poverty, Catholic social teaching, and CCHD.
Facilitate student involvement with a CCHD-funded group on a regular basis in the form of service projects or advocacy around community issues of focus.
Invite students to lead efforts to help plan and lead such efforts and to invite their peers who did not take part in the contest to become involved.
Start a [Justice Walking](#) (or J-Walking) group to help interested students go deeper in their exploration of the social aspect of their faith.