



God and World Religions

Stage 2: Community and Remembrance/First Contacts

Stage 4: The Ancient World/Depth

Study 1-Investigating the Ancient Past/Depth

Study 2-The Mediterranean World/Depth

Study 3-The Asian World/Depth

Study 4-The Western and Islamic World/Depth

Study 5-The Asia- Pacific World/Depth Study 6-Expanding Contacts

Stage 5: Depth Study 2b-Asia and the World

Search for Truth and Wisdom (The Catholic Church preserving God's truth)

Throughout history, humanity has been intrigued by the wonder of life and the universe and from the earliest history of humanity, people have looked to the spiritual world for the answers to many unknown questions. The desire for God is written in the human heart, because every person is created by God and for God; and God never ceases to draw all people to himself (CCC 27).

God has revealed himself to humanity through different stages of history.

1. God revealed himself in the beginning through creation (the wonder of the universe) and to our first parents, Adam and Eve (CCC 54)
2. God revealed himself through his Old Testament covenants with Noah, Abraham and then the people of Israel (CCC 56, 59, 62)
3. God reveals himself perfectly through Jesus Christ and now all revelations of God have been finalised in Christ (CCC 65-66)

Many ancient religions have searched for God in many different ways. The Catholic Church considers all goodness and truth found in all religions as pointing to Christ. Other religions have limits and errors that are not an accurate portrait of God, who is love and truth itself (CCC 843-844).

People who through no fault of their own, do not know Christ or his Church but with a sincere heart try their very best to do good and do God's will based on their conscience, may spend eternity with God in heaven. God wants all humanity to be saved but each person has the freedom to cooperate with God (CCC 847).

War: Conditions for Military Action

Stage 4: Depth

Study 2-The Mediterranean World/Depth

Study 3-The Asian World/Depth

Study 4-The Western and Islamic World

Stage 5: Depth

Study 2b-Asia and the World/Depth

Study 3-The Asian World/Depth

Study 3-Australians at War/Depth

Study 5a-Popular Culture/Depth

Study 5c-Migration Experiences)

Community and Common Good /Freedom from Oppression

Many times throughout history, conflict and war has caused many lives to be lost. Due to the imperfect nature of humans, greed has been the instigator of many wars. Christ always taught a doctrine of love and peace. Due to the dignity of human beings and the sanctity of human life there are conditions when humans can be protected by military force.

Christ teaches through the Catholic Church that when all peace efforts have failed then the following conditions all must be met to allow for defence by military forces (CCC 2309). We refer to these as the conditions for a 'just war':

the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave and certain
all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective
there must be serious prospects of success
the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition

Suffering and the Black Death

Stage 4: Depth Study 6b-The Black Death in Europe, Asia and Africa)

Hope and Resurrection

God does not want humans to suffer and die. God's original idea was for everyone to live in paradise with no suffering, but because of original sin, death and suffering became a consequence (YouCat #66).

God does allow evil but only so as to get good from it. Evil in the world is a painful mystery. But God is 100% good and does not create evil. He created the world to be good but creation can be hostile to humans because original harmony between humans and creation has been broken through original sin.

In fact evil itself is not a positive force in the universe. Evil is best defined as 'an absence of good'. Evil is a 'falling short' of what should be there - good. Evil can be both moral and physical. Moral evil is what is called 'sin'. A person who commits the evil of murder is lacking necessary respect for human life. To lack this respect for human life is to fall short of being fully human. Blindness is an example of a physical evil because the physical good of sight is lacking.

Terrible tragedies like the Black Death in Asia, Europe and Africa occur because humanity and the whole universe are journeying towards its perfected state, which will occur at the end of the world. (YouCat #51, CCC 400)

We must remember even though suffering and death does occur in this life, God does promise heaven to the faithful where God will dwell and no more death, suffering or pain will occur anymore (CCC 1044).

When we study History, with all of its triumphs and tragedies, it is important to remember that Jesus Christ is the Lord of History and that he has a plan for the salvation of each human person.

Teacher Formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This video explains how suffering is evident in the world and how a Christian should view it.

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[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com), or enable JavaScript if it is disabled in your browser.

Teacher Formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This short video is about the journey of life leading to our ultimate home which is heaven.

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Renaissance Italy

Stage 4: Depth Study 4b-Renaissance Italy

Search for Truth and Wisdom (Sacred Art)

Catholic sacred art was revitalised in the Renaissance period. The Catholic Church teaches that sacred art is true and beautiful when it evokes and glorifies, in faith and adoration, the transcendent mystery of God. The invisible truth and beauty of God is visible in Christ and the spiritual beauty of God is reflected in the most holy Virgin Mary Mother of God, the angels, and saints. Genuine sacred art should draw people to adoration, prayer and love for God (CCC 2502).

Sacred Art and Renaissance Period

Teacher formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This video gives a tour of St Peter's Basilica, which is a Renaissance church.

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[Try watching this video on www.youtube.com](#), or enable JavaScript if it is disabled in your browser.

[Website: Renaissance Artwork](#)

Right and Freedom

Stage 5: Depth Study 5-Rights and Freedoms (1945-present)

Positive View of Life/ Freedom from Oppression

All human persons are equal in God's eyes as everyone has the same origin in the one creative love of God, and therefore all men and women are brothers and sisters in the one big human family. All of humanity are destined to find their true happiness and eternal blessedness in God. Christians should practice solidarity not only with other Christians but with everyone and forcefully oppose racist, sexist, and economic divisions in the one human family (YouCat # 61).

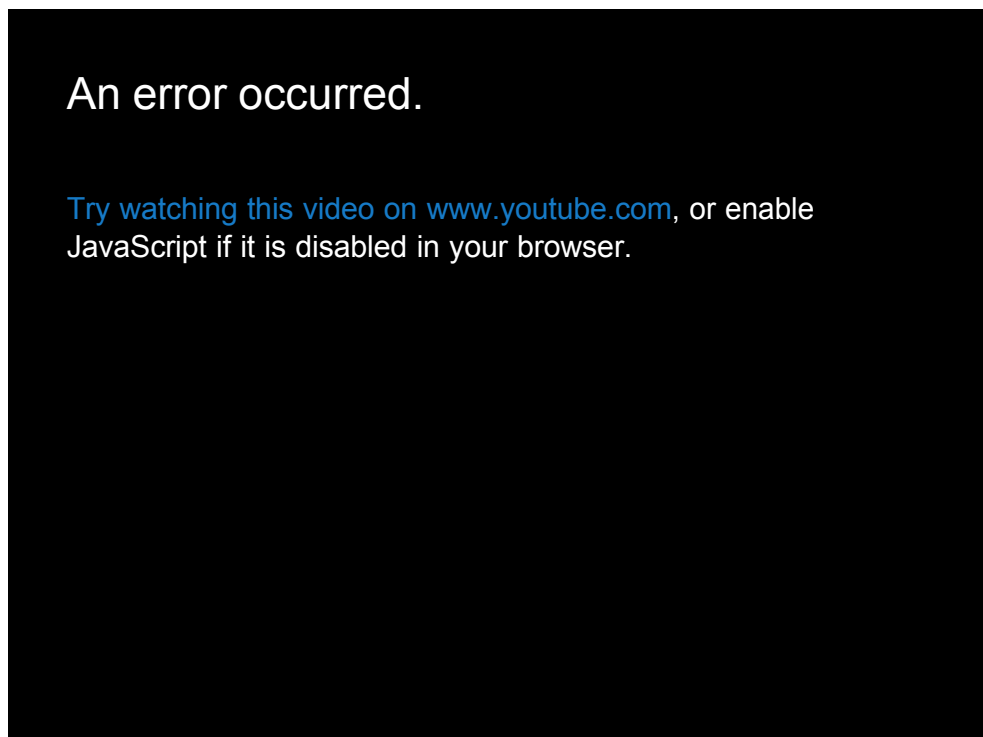
Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR)

Jesus Christ teaches through the Catholic Church that every single person has a special dignity, because as sacred scripture proclaims, all humans

are created in the 'image and likeness of God' (Genesis 1:26-27). Pope John XXIII praised the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, in his encyclical *Pacem in Terris* (Peace on Earth) (1963), but added that the human dignity mentioned in UDHR, was because human persons were created in God's image and likeness. The Second Vatican Council then further focused on human rights in its document *Gaudium et Spes* (Joy and Hope) (1965) which outlines the Catholic Church's social teachings. It emphasised how all humans were not created to live by themselves but to develop society and community.

Teacher Formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This short video gives highlights of the 60th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights at the Vatican



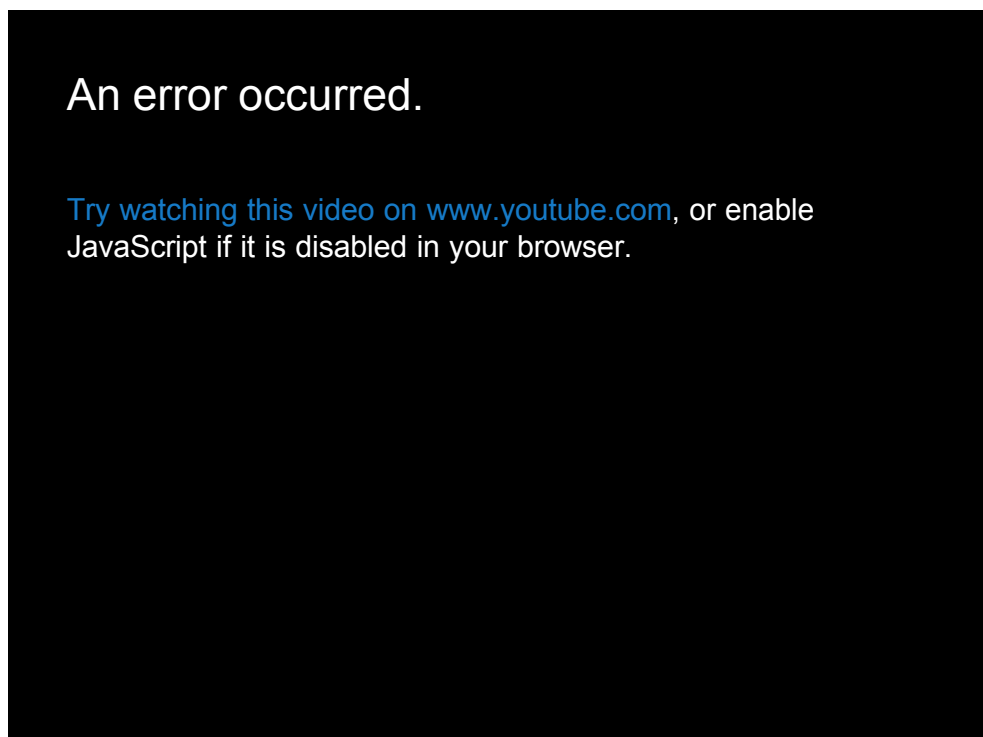
Civil Rights and Freedom

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1990) and the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) are two initiatives that the Catholic Church have strongly supported because the spirit of both initiatives are driven towards acknowledging the human dignity of all peoples.

God created humans as rational beings with free will and the ability to control their own actions. Human dignity is the foundation for every person deserving to exercise their freedom. An individual's freedom should only be curtailed by the state, through just and legal means, if their actions are detrimental to the freedom of others. All governments should protect the liberties of all citizens (freedom of religion, freedom of assembly and association, freedom of opinions etc) (YouCat #289).

Teacher Formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This short video gives highlights of Pope Benedict XVI speech on the Twentieth anniversary of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child



Migration

Stage 5: Depth Study 5c-Migration Experiences

Freedom from Oppression (Migration)

The Catholic Church has always promoted the vulnerable to be protected and looked after and this is the focus of Catholic Social Teaching. Migration to

Australia took place post World War II and many migrants were in need of support in their new country. The Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, Social Justice Statement for 2015/16 outlines the support and care that should be directed to the numerous numbers of migrants, asylum seekers and refugees entering Australia.

 [Australian Catholic Bishops Conference: Social Justice Statement, For Those Who've Come Across the Seas, 2015](#)

Pope Francis also challenged everyone to put themselves in the shoes of refugees and migrants and spoke of the inherent dignity of every person, in his 2016 message for the World Day of Migrant and Refugees;

"Migrants are our brothers and sisters in search of a better life, far away from poverty, hunger, exploitation and the unjust distribution of the planet's resources which are meant to be equitably shared by all. Don't we all want a better, more decent and prosperous life to share with our loved ones?"
"Welcoming others means welcoming God in person! Do not let yourselves be robbed of the hope and joy of life born of your experience of God's mercy, as manifested in the people you meet on your journey! I entrust you to the Virgin Mary, Mother of migrants and refugees, and to Saint Joseph, who experienced the bitterness of emigration to Egypt"

[Message of Pope Francis for the World Day of Migrants and Refugees, 2016](#)

History allows students to reflect on the dignity of every person and to learn some of the stories of people who migrated to Australia. Many migrants in Australia's history have used their God given talents to make significant contributions to this country and have helped shape Australian society.

Teacher formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: Some key messages from Pope Francis' address on the pastoral care of migrants

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Crusades

Stage 4: Depth Study 4b-Medieval Europe

Freedom from Oppression/Reconciliation

Document: [Bringing Balance to the Crusades](#)

CROSS CURRICULUM PRIORITIES- CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Histories and Cultures

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have lived on this land, called Australia, for thousands of years. The Catholic Church teaches that all people demand respect because all humans are created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:26-27). All people, no matter what religion, are bonded because they are all from the one human race. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, have a rich culture but unfortunately, one which was adversely affected by early European settlers in Australia. Pope St. John Paul II raised this important point in his homily to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when he visited Alice Springs in 1986;

"The culture which this long and careful growth produced was not prepared for the sudden meeting with another people, with different customs and traditions, who came to your country nearly 200 years ago. They were different from Aboriginal people. Their traditions, the organization of their lives, and their attitudes to the land were quite strange to you. Their law too was quite different. These people had knowledge, money and power; and they brought with them some patterns of behaviour from which the Aboriginal people were unable to protect themselves.

The effects of some of those forces are still active among you today. Many of you have been dispossessed of your traditional lands, and separated from your tribal ways, though some of you still have your traditional culture. Some of you are establishing Aboriginal communities in the towns and cities. For others there is still no real place for camp-fires and kinship observances except on the fringes of country towns. There, work is hard to find, and education in a different cultural background is difficult".
[Address of Pope John Paul II to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, Alice Springs, 1986](#)

It is important for people to understand the richness of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture prior to British colonisation and the subsequent challenges that this culture has had to overcome due to European settlement in Australia. Historically, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have had a major impact in Australian society as well as the global context.

Asia and Australia's Engagement with Asia

The Asian region has a rich culture with many of its unique values embedded in Asian society. Pope John Paul II recognised this richness of culture and pride in its strong values and way of life. He writes in his Apostolic Exhortation "Ecclesia in Asia" in 1999:

"The people of Asia take pride in their religious and cultural values, such as love of silence and contemplation, simplicity, harmony, detachment, non-violence, the spirit of hard work, discipline, frugal living, the thirst for learning and philosophical enquiry.¹⁰ They hold dear the values of respect for life, compassion for all beings, closeness to nature, filial piety towards parents, elders and ancestors, and a highly developed sense of community.¹¹ In particular, they hold the family to be a vital source of strength, a closely knit community with a powerful sense of solidarity.¹² Asian peoples are known for their spirit of religious tolerance and peaceful co-existence. Without denying the existence of bitter tensions and violent conflicts, it can still be said that Asia has often demonstrated a remarkable capacity for accommodation and a natural openness to the mutual enrichment of peoples in the midst of a plurality of religions and cultures."

[\(Pope John Paul II, Ecclesia in Asia, Apostolic Exhortation on Jesus Christ the Saviour and his mission of love and service in Asia, 1999\)](#)

Throughout history, individuals from the community of Asia, have used God's gift of human intellect, to make many positive contributions to the local Asian region as well as Australia and many countries around the world, in many different fields.

"All citizens and all governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war" (CCC 2308) but because of humanity's fallen nature, wars have occurred and the Asian region have been impacted many times throughout history, which has forced many people to seek refuge in countries like Australia.

Because of its common origin the human race forms a unity for "from one ancestor (God) made all nations to inhabit the whole earth" (CCC 360). Australia and many of the Asian countries have shared a common unity throughout history and formed many positive relationships, which have impacted both regions.

Sustainability

Stage 5: Depth Study 5b-The Environment Movement

God's presence in the world (Principle of Stewardship)

In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labour, and enjoy their fruits. The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race (CCC 2402).

The dominion granted by the Creator over the mineral, vegetable, and animal resources of the universe cannot be separated from respect for moral obligations, including those toward generations to come (CCC 2456).

The Catholic Church encourages an awareness of environmental issues, as the physical environment is part of God's gift of creation. Humanity is the pinnacle of creation and it is only humans that are created in the image and likeness of God, but humans do have a responsibility to look after creation. God does command humanity to be good 'stewards' and ensure that all of mankind have access to these valuable resources.

The study of History, allows sustainability to be investigated from a historical perspective, which includes how different cultures and eras have impacted the environment both positively and negatively.

Teacher Formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This video focuses on Pope Francis' encyclical 'Laudato Si' and its connection to Australia

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Teacher Formation Video/Classroom Resource Video

Description: This video emphasises humanities obligation to be good stewards of all Earthly resources, as these are a gift from God to humanity.

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Try watching this video on www.youtube.com, or enable JavaScript if it is disabled in your browser.

GENERAL CAPABILITIES-CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Critical and Creative Thinking

Humans are created in God's image and likeness (Gen 1:26-27). God has gifted humans the ability to attain knowledge and ultimately to serve and love God and to offer all creation back to him (CCC 356, 358). Through the gift of human intellect, all human beings have the ability to be critical and creative in their thinking. Critical thinking allows actions by peoples and governments throughout history to be objectively judged according to the "voice of God which urges humans to do what is good and avoid what is evil. Everyone is obliged to follow this law, which makes itself heard in conscience and is fulfilled in the love of God and of neighbour" (CCC 1706). Creative thinking not only allows for people to construct historical explanations when limited sources are available, but also to formulate correct actions to difficult situations, which uphold the moral law in all circumstances and learn from humanities terrible mistakes throughout history.

Ethical Understanding

Moral Decision Making

Human acts can be morally evaluated as good or bad. A good human act must satisfy three conditions.

1. The Act itself (CCC 1755)

A bad act can never be morally good, no matter how good the intention is. Some acts are wrong no matter what, such as murder, stealing, lying and cheating.

2. The Person's intention (CCC 1752, 1753)

The intention for the act is important. A good act, can be considered bad, if the intention is not good.

3. The Circumstances (CCC 1754)

The circumstances, which includes the consequences of the act, can make an act better or worse. However, the circumstances cannot change an act from good to bad or bad to good.

God has given humans the moral law. Humans have the ability through reason to understand and discern. The moral law is for the good of human beings and its origins come from God (CCC 1950-1951). Throughout history there have been many instances that the dignity of human person has not been upheld, such as treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, slavery, child labour, world wars, invasion of countries, treatment of

women and many other unfortunate examples.

It is crucial to look for guidance to the Catholic Church, as God's truth is preserved through the gift of infallibility given to the Magisterium (teaching office) of the Catholic Church. In all situations, there must be unconditional respect for the moral law (CCC 2294).

Information and Communication Technology Capability

Information and communication technology (ICT) is a very valuable tool for students to conduct historical investigations. ICT offers many benefits and Pope Benedict XVI reiterates this important point in his message for the 43rd World Communication day.

"These technologies are truly a gift to humanity and we must endeavour to ensure that the benefits they offer are put at the service of all human individuals and communities, especially those who are most disadvantaged and vulnerable"

(Message of Pope Benedict XVI for the 43rd World Communication day, "New Technologies, New Relationships", 2009)

Pope Benedict also makes the point in his message for the 43rd World Communication day, that the dignity of the human person has to be upheld in all endeavours.

ICT can assist in the research and analysis of historical information. It is crucial that ICT is used not as a tool to divide and separate the human family but technological applications such as wikis, blogs, spreadsheets and online forums draw everyone together and highlight past and current social evils, and plan for new ways to grow in love for God and neighbour.

Intercultural Understanding

All humans form a unity with each other, as they originate from the one God (CCC 360). All people are created unique, which makes cultures very diverse.

Pope Benedict XVI in his address at the meeting with the World of Culture in 2010, stresses the importance and beauty of valuing the cultures around the world. He states;

"Given the reality of cultural diversity, people need not only to accept the existence of the culture of others, but also to aspire to be enriched by it and to offer to it whatever they possess that is good, true and beautiful"

(Pope Benedict XVI Address at the Meeting with the World of Culture, Bélem, Lisbon, 12 May 2010)

The study of History allows students to appreciate the many contributions of different cultures throughout history. Many cultures have rich traditions steeped in history, which value the dignity of the human person. Such traditions should be celebrated, as they point to the infinite loving God.

Literacy

Literacy is a very important skill, as reading, communication and comprehension of texts is essential for humans, to function successfully in society. Pope Paul VI emphasises the importance of literacy, in his encyclical letter on the development of peoples "Populorum Progressio", stating;

"literacy is the first and most basic tool for personal enrichment and social integration; and it is society's most valuable tool for furthering development and economic progress."

(Pope Paul VI, Populorum Progressio, Encyclical Letter on the Development of Peoples, 1967).

Literacy skills for students are essential, to allow for the proper use and understanding of historical language and texts. Literacy in the historical domain, allows historical information and perspectives to be communicated effectively, which makes good use of God's gift of human intellect, especially when it is ordered towards the good of humanity.

Numeracy

Numeracy is the ability to apply mathematics in the world. Being numerate in the field of History allows quantitative historical data to be analysed which aids the understanding of the past.

The Vatican's Congregation for Catholic Education 1998 document "The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School" points out that students should not only be exposed to the negative history of humanity but also explore the positive contribution that many people have made throughout history:

"the teacher should help students to see history as a whole. Looking at the grand picture, they will see the development of civilisations, and learn about progress in such things as economic development, human freedom, and international cooperation. Realising this can help to offset the disgust that comes from learning about the darker side of human history."

(Congregation for Catholic Education, The Religious Dimension of Education in a Catholic School, 7 April 1988)

Use of time lines, graphs and tables, maps, scales and statistics are ways that historical investigations can be conducted and the positive and negative events of human history can be explored.

Personal and Social Capability

History presents many occasions where the sins of individuals or groups of people have dehumanised many people and not respected the dignity they deserve, being made in the image and likeness of God. The followers of Christ are called to empathise with people past and present who have suffered affliction such as indigenous groups, refugees, people forced into slavery and victims of wars.

"The joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the men of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well" (YouCat #438).

All of humanity are called to God and the call of love of neighbour is inseparable from love for God (CCC 1878). All interactions with people, have to be grounded in 'love of neighbour' which would foster positive relationships and benefit society.

Reflecting on past errors of the human race, people should build a determination to avoid such tragedies and live a life focused on God and loving neighbour.

OTHER AREAS-CATHOLIC PERSPECTIVE

Civics and Citizenship

All human persons need to live in society as this is a requirement, inherent in the nature of human beings. Through dialogue, interactions and service of others, humans develop their potential (CCC 1879). God has gifted talents to each person and each person should contribute to society, as they owe loyalty to the community they are part of and respect those in authority who are in charge of the common good (CCC 1880).

For a society to flourish, those responsible to govern must always look to the common good of all. Pope Leo XIII stresses the moral responsibility of governments in his encyclical *Immortale Dei* (Christian Constitution of States) (1885). He states;

"Government should, moreover, be administered for the well-being of the citizens, because they who govern others possess authority solely for the welfare of the State. Furthermore, the civil power must not be subservient to the advantage of any one individual or of some few persons, inasmuch as it was established for the common good of all"

(Pope Leo XIII, Immortale Dei, Encyclical Letter on the Christian Constitution of States, 1885)

Australian citizens should have an understanding of the history and development of democracy in Australia. History allows an exploration of how different societies have organised themselves over time and how different groups of people have struggled for rights and responsibilities. In all societal work, the dignity of human persons must be upheld.

Difference and Diversity

God has made each person unique and the differences and diversity of peoples have to be respected.

All humans are equal in God's sight insofar as all have the same Creator, all were made in the same image of God with a rational soul, and all have the same Redeemer. Every person possesses the same dignity and are entitled to the same human rights. Hence every kind of social, racist, sexist, cultural, or religious discrimination against a person is unacceptable (YouCat #330).

Over the course of history, people around the world have lived according to their local customs and traditions, such as: the ancient Greeks and Romans, Vikings, Ottomans, Polynesian societies and cultural groups in Australia. History can aid to highlight the negative and positive contributions that different groups have made to society.

In all human actions, the human dignity of persons must be respected and the moral law must be upheld.

Work and Enterprise

Humans are created in the image of God and are called to prolong the work of creation by subduing the earth and hence work is a duty not an option (CCC 2427). Work does honour the gifts and talents freely given by God and also does allow for providing financially for each family as well as serving the human community (CCC 2427, 2428).

History allows the struggles for rights and freedoms in the workplace to be studied from the the early years of the Industrial Revolution, the slave trade and convict life in Australia.

Teacher Formation Video

Description: This video focuses on the dignity of work. Pope Francis emphasises the importance of creating opportunities for people to work and always put the dignity of human persons before economic value.

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