

Love cultivates compassion in our hearts and solidarity with our brothers and sisters in need, and moves us to respond in an ongoing and continuous manner. The “Two Feet of Love in Action” describe how love is concretely expressed in action. In the table below, first reflect on how the Social Justice and Charitable Works responses are different. Why are both types of responses necessary? Second, in the last row, choose an issue you are interested in and then write down some possible ways to respond. In the first column, focus on Social Justice actions that can help address root causes. In the second column, identify Charitable Works that can aid individuals.

| | Social Justice | Charitable Works |
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| General Responses | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focuses on the rights and duties of individuals, families and all creation. - Analyzes social situations and structures. - Works for long-term social change. - Addresses the underlying social causes of individual problems. - Seeks just laws, fair social structures, and peace. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Focuses on the basic needs of individuals, families and all creation. - Looks at individual situations of need. - Meets an immediate need. - Addresses painful personal symptoms of social problems. - Relies on the generosity of donors. |
| Example: Responses to Abortion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Extend legal protection to unborn children. - Adopt pro-family public policies that help families with children. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Provide prenatal care and medical services for poor women. - Offer crisis pregnancy services, e.g., counseling and transitional housing support. |
| Example: Responses to Homelessness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Raise the minimum wage so workers can afford housing. - Expand affordable housing. - Expand job training opportunities and education. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Volunteer at a homeless shelter. - Give fast food certificates to homeless persons who ask for help. - Donate to an organization that does outreach to homeless persons. |
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Case Studies: What Does Love in Action Look Like?

Social Justice

Our Lord Christ the King parish, in **Cincinnati, OH**, often hosts clergy studying at the nearby diocesan seminary. After a Ghanaian priest came to their parish, some parishioners began learning how U.S. policies affect Ghana. As a result, they were inspired to participate in Bread for the World's Offering of Letters to support increased aid to Africa in the U.S. federal budget. Parishioners wrote to their elected officials and also shared stories and photos of their friends in Ghana. Their senator subsequently co-sponsored legislation that allowed Ghana to receive a \$1.5 billion grant to be used for development. Parishioners were also inspired to reflect on their own attitudes toward the diverse populations in their local community, work to change perceptions, and make their own parish more hospitable.

Charitable Works

St. Mary of the Assumption parish in **Stockton, CA**, participates in a diocesan program of parish-based outreach to agricultural migrants. Teams of parishioners welcome new arrivals for the seasonal harvesting work with clothes, food, and basic hygiene products; booklets about organizations that assist migrants; and catechesis and sacramental programs for adults and children in the migrant camps. Parish priests celebrate Mass at the camps, and the team facilitates transportation and follow-up care for attendees of a diocesan medical clinic. At the end of the agricultural season, the Bishop celebrates a Mass where children and adults receive First Communion and Confirmation and some migrant couples marry. Parish teams provide food and warm clothes for migrants who stay in town during the winter.

Walking with Both Feet

When parishioners at St. Camillus parish in **Silver Spring, MD** became concerned about conflict over control of natural resources in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), they decided to walk with both feet. First, they invited Congolese members of the parish to make presentations about the reality of the situation in their country. Then, they organized an advocacy trip to share their concerns with members of Congress, engaging the **social justice** foot. This advocacy by St. Camillus parishioners and many other Catholics played an important role in passing new legislation in 2010 requiring companies to take steps, including regular audits, to ensure that the minerals used in their products are not financing militia violence in the eastern Congo.

Back at the parish, they stepped with the **charitable works** foot by holding a craft sale to benefit Catholic Relief Services programs that assist victims of war in the DRC.



Above, members of St. Camillus visit their Senator to share their concern about war in the DRC. Below, they sell crafts.

