

WHY DO WE VALUE HUMAN DIGNITY?

Human Dignity in Scripture



Learning Intention: To identify and understand biblical scripture that underpins the Catholic Social Teaching of upholding human dignity.

"So God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."

Genesis 1:27

- Explain what you think it means to be 'made in the image of God'. Discuss your answers as a class.
- If we are made in the image of God, what does it do to our relationship with God when we disrespect or de-value someone?

The Good Samaritan

Read the parable of The Good Samaritan by [clicking on this link](#), or [watch this video](#), then answer the questions below.

1. Summarise the passage in 3-5 short sentences.
2. Who is Jesus referring to when he uses the word 'neighbour'? Who do you consider your 'neighbours'?
3. When Jesus told this parable, Jews and Samaritans were not the best of friends during that time period. Why do you think Jesus used this example to teach us about upholding the dignity of others? (Think about who walked past the beaten man and did not stop to help. You may need to do some research.)
3. Think about times when someone is left out because of who they are. In small groups, role play what this situation would look like in modern-day society.

Can you think of any other parables or Bible passages that teach us about the importance of human dignity?

Bible scripture reference	Short summary of the passage

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The Views of Church Leaders



Learning Intention: To understand the views of Church leaders and other significant individuals on human dignity.

In Pope Francis' encyclical *Fratelli Tutti*, he writes:

81. Jesus asks us to be present to those in need of help, regardless of whether or not they belong to our social group. In this case, the Samaritan became a neighbour to the wounded Judean. By approaching and making himself present, he crossed all cultural and historical barriers. Jesus concludes the parable by saying: "Go and do likewise" (Lk 10:37). In other words, he challenges us to put aside all differences and, in the face of suffering, to draw near to others with no questions asked. I should no longer say that I have neighbours to help, but that I must myself be a neighbour to others.



Pope Francis: Peace depends on dignity
Source: Catholic News Service

How did Jesus uphold the dignity of others? What does Pope Francis say that we must do to follow in Jesus' footsteps?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church states:

Every person, from the first moment of his life in the womb, has an inviolable dignity, because from all eternity God willed, loved, created, and redeemed that person and destined him for eternal happiness. [1699-1715]

If human dignity were based solely on the successes and accomplishments of individuals, then those who are weak, sick, or helpless would have no dignity. Christians believe that human dignity is, in the first place, the result of God's respect for us. He looks at every person and loves him as though he were the only creature in the world. Because God has looked upon even the least significant child of Adam, that person possesses an infinite worth, which must not be destroyed by men. [YOUCAT #280]

Activity: Find three more quotes about the importance of upholding human dignity from Church leaders or significant individuals (E.g. Saints or Bishops).