

**Opening Prayer**

**We beg you, God of grace and eternal life, increase and strengthen Hope in us.**

**Grant us this virtue of the strong, this strength of the confident, this courage of the unshakeable.**

**Then, we might boldly grasp, again and again, the challenges in our lives.**

**Then, we will be filled with cheerful confidence that our work is not in vain.**

**Then we can do our work and know that you, without us and where our own strength might fail, still work your glory and our salvation, according to your good purpose.**

**Lord, strengthen us in your Hope.**

*Adapted from the writings of Fr. Karl Rahner, SJ (d. 1984)*



**1.1**

Every prayer comes with an image, which might help you focus.

**Our First Meeting**

This session is just to plan the structure of the group and look at how subsequent meetings will be organised. We may also need some time between this meeting and the next to promote the group and gain support.

Throughout these session plans, we'll see photos and some optional documents in the outside bar which might help us visualise what we're doing. Check out **0.1** now for an example.

**Where, When, and For How Long?**

**Discuss for 1/4 of session time**

It will be very helpful if we decide on a stable time, place, and duration for subsequent sessions. This will give us some structure going forward.

We will need enough space to accommodate the initial group members, room to grow (if others might want to join), and some table or desk space. Try to find an environment that is reasonably quiet but not too out-of-the-way.

As for the time and duration, can we meet weekly, at least at the start? If not, can we meet every other week? Can we meet on the same day, for the same length of time? The sessions in this booklet are designed to last 40 minutes to an hour.

**Who?**

**Discuss for 1/4 of session time**

Who else might be interested in a group like this? Even if certain people might not be able to come to the meetings, can they help the group in any way? Do we have connections through our families, communities, school or parish which might be handy? Have we approached the parish priest, school chaplain, parish administrator, etc for their support?

Now would also be a good time to decide who will lead the group, at least for the first few sessions. The leader will be in charge of keeping us on schedule and making sure everyone is comfortable.

We may also want to have a designated note-taker. Though everyone should have their own notes, it is good to have someone take "minutes" of the sessions so the whole group has something to refer to later on. The minutes should especially include any decisions, plans of action, and record new members and absences. But they shouldn't include personal sharing or information which might make a person more vulnerable.

**Why?**

This is the hard question! Don't worry, we'll spend the initial sessions working out what our specific interests might be, and what we can do as a group to address them.

**Materials**

We will need to bring along some basic materials each time you meet. We should definitely have a Bible and a Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC). These are available online for free! You will also need some note-taking materials. Optionally, we can also use the YouCat and DoCat. You can buy these from **CTS**, or someone might have some you can borrow.



**0.1**

Sometimes you can find documents in the sidebar as well. You can click on the images, or look at the back of this booklet, for the full version.

The material in these sidebars is always optional, but it might be helpful!

“See, Judge, Act” is a method for examining justice and peace issues, helping us to move from noticing the problem (“see”), to reflecting on it (“judge”), and finally, to begin to do something about it (“act”). We’ll use this model in the next few sessions as a guideline and framework.

### Step One: Seeing

You may have heard the phrase “seeing is believing”. This comes from the gospel (**John 20:29**) where the risen Jesus appears to the apostle Thomas, sometimes known as “Doubting Thomas”. Thomas initially doesn’t believe that Jesus has risen from the dead, so Jesus comes to him personally.



The lesson of Thomas is twofold. Jesus says to Thomas, “Blessed are you that have not seen, and yet believed”. This means that, many times, we don’t always get to See things which are important. This applies to issues of Justice and Peace as well. The issue which is presented to us may be on the other side of the world, but our faith tells us that it still makes a difference to us. So too, we can make a difference to the people involved, even though they may seem remote and unknown.

But there is another side to the story of “Doubting Thomas”. Even though Thomas is sceptical, Jesus takes the time and effort to come before him and invite him to believe. This tells us that Jesus is always looking for us. Sometimes an issue of Justice and Peace can be right under our nose.

### Step Two: Judging

As Christians, it’s not enough for us to simply be aware of issues. We also have to make decisions and move towards change. Making choices about the world and our own lives requires “good judgement”. The Church helps us through the direction of our spiritual leaders, most notably, the Pope, and through documents, like the Catechism. We will also use scripture, tradition, and our own conscience and experiences as disciples of Christ.



In a group, the best way of making sure our judgements are accurate is by talking through our individual ideas until we reach a consensus. Sometimes consensus can be difficult to achieve, and many justice and peace issues are “controversial”. We’ll need to make sure that everyone’s ideas are respected and nobody feels excluded.

Sometimes, our “See” phase will generate a lot of ideas and feelings, and we will need to use the “Judge” phase to narrow them down and put them in a context. At other times, our “Seeing” will be harder and we will need to use the “Judge” phase to develop and expand our initial reactions.

### Step Three: Action

“What are we going to do about it?” Often, this is a hard question to answer. But if we’ve done the seeing and judging thoroughly, we may have some ideas.



What are our resources? How much time do we have?

How can we position ourselves to be most effective? These questions are going to be answered differently by different groups using the guidelines presented here. But, there are some ideas in **Looking for Justice**, and in **Session 4**. If you have time, have a look at the one on Refugees now, included with this pack. [[In a future draft!]]

### In the next session...

Next time we meet, we’ll use this model to find some issues which have meaning for us and our community. The group may or may not have decided on an issue already, but it’s important for us to focus and to understand what makes an issue important.



1.2

## Opening Prayer

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe, and in the smallest of your creatures.

You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty.

Fill us with peace, so that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one.

O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes.

We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love, and peace.

*Abridged from the Prayer for the Earth by Pope Francis, 2015*

**See: Opening Question**

Discuss for about 1/3 of session time

**“What have we seen recently in our community that we want to change?”**

Let's share with each other some recent experiences of **seeing** something that was “wrong” and wanting to make a difference. It could be something we've seen in our own experience, or maybe something we read, or saw on the news. We should talk about how it made us feel, and why it might have happened. Why does this issue affect us and our community in a special way?

If we have time, we can look at the two photos referenced on the right. They're very different, but they both portray important Justice and Peace issues and can inspire powerful feelings.

Each of us should identify and write down two or three **issues** each which have come up during the discussion. For example, the photos might call to mind issues like “poverty”, “homelessness”, “women's rights”, “education”, and so on. But rather than just using the photos, it's better to find something from our own experience.

**Judge: How can we, as Catholics, respond?**

Research for about 1/2 of session time

We might want to do something right away to help solve the issues we've just talked about. Or, we may be feeling powerless and remote. Either way, looking at how Catholics respond to issues like these will give us some focus and inspiration.

We'll start this by looking up a couple concepts in our books. If possible, we can assign a different text to each person in the group today.

- **Personhood:** John 13:34-35, Matthew 6:26, Docat 84-85 and 108, Youcat 288 and 370, CCC 1734
- **The Common Good:** Mark 3:1-6, Luke 17:20-21, Docat 87 and 275, Youcat 326-327, CCC 1903

“Personhood” helps describe the concept of **Justice**. So, to act “justly” to someone is to give them respect and love. To act “unjustly” is to withhold or inhibit that respect and love. Similarly, the idea of the “Common Good” is what we want when we're striving for **Peace**. Peace isn't just the absence of war or conflict. It is humanity living in harmony and happiness.

When we're confronted with great injustice, as with some of the issues we dug up earlier, it can be hard to respond. But the things we have read today should give us some idea.

**Act: Which issues are the most important?**

To consider individually before the next session

Each of us will take the issues they wrote down earlier, and decide which is the **most important** to them right now. For the next session, we'll each prepare a short statement on the theme of **“I think that [this issue] is the most important issue for Justice and Peace, because...”**

If we have time, we can also look at **2.4** and read the caption.



2.1



2.2



2.3



2.4

**Opening Prayer**

**Congratulations to the poor in spirit – theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**Congratulations to those who are mourning – they shall be consoled.**

**Congratulations to the gentle – they shall inherit the earth.**

**Congratulations to those who are hungry and thirsty for righteousness – they shall be satisfied.**

**Congratulations to the merciful – they shall be mercied.**

**Congratulations to the pure in heart – they shall see God.**

**Congratulations to those who create peace – they shall be called the children of God.**

**Congratulations to those who are persecuted because of righteousness – theirs is the kingdom of heaven.**

**Congratulations to you, when they reproach you and persecute you and talk all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because your reward in heaven is huge! You see, that is how they persecuted the prophets before you.**

*Matthew 5:3-11 (Tr. Nicholas King)*



3.1

**See: Feedback from the last Session**

**Share for about 1/4 to 1/3 of session time**

Last session, we went away thinking about which issues were **most important** to each of us. Each of us will say briefly why they chose the issue they chose. If we have a large group, we may need to pick a single spokesperson for each issue, to save time.

Delegate someone to write down these issues on individual pieces of paper or card, and place them so that the entire group can see.

**Judge: Solidarity and Subsidiarity**

**Research for about 1/3 of session time**

Divide the group into two or more smaller groups. Each small group will look up one of these two principles in the Catechism, the DoCat and YouCat (if we have them), the Bible (try to find a Bible with an index, or use the internet), and a normal Dictionary. Here are some suggested references:

- **Subsidiarity:** DoCat 95, YouCat 323, Mark 2:27, John 4:21, CCC 1883 and 1884
- **Solidarity:** DoCat 100, John 3:16, Galatians 3:28, YouCat 332, CCC 1940 and 1941



3.3

**Judge: Towards a common goal**

**Discuss for about 1/3 of session time**

While still in small groups, let's discuss and evaluate the definitions we've found. Let's also think about how they relate to the issues we identified at the start of this session, using this question:

**“We find ourselves on the path of peace when we work in justice and love towards a world that is ordered as God intended” (DOCAT 275). Together with what we've read today, what does this tell us about the issues we have written down? Does it challenge us to respond in a certain way? If so, how?**

For the last few minutes of your session, bring the entire group together again. Have a spokesperson from each small group feed back to the entire group. In particular, share your answers to the question in above.



3.2

**Act: How can we respond as a group?**

**To consider individually before the next session**

We should now have one or two or three issues which definitely stand out as being more important than the others. Now it's time to consider what each of us, and the group as a whole, can do to bring about change on these issues.

Before the next session, take a look at **3.2** and read the caption. Does the example of St. Francis of Assisi inspire us? How would he have approached the issues we face?

## Opening Prayer

God Our Father, how wonderful is your Creation. All that is created comes from your hand. I too have been called into being by you, and given a task for my life, a task no-one else can fulfil.

I have a mission in life. Maybe I don't recognize this mission on earth right now, but one day, it will be clear to me.

I have not come into being without worth or purpose, but as a link in a long chain, a bridge between people and generations.

Lord God, this is the good thing entrusted to me: To complete your work, to bring peace, to do good, to serve the truth, and to live your word, wherever I am, and wherever I go.

*A Fijian Prayer*

**See: Opening Question**

Discuss for about 1/3 of session time

**“How can we bring about positive change?”**

Last week, we went away thinking about how we can begin to act on the issues we find important.

We might have a lot of ideas right away, or we might be struggling. That's okay! We will use this session to refine our ideas and come up with some new ones. Here are some more questions which might help us focus:

**“What can we do individually, at home, or with friends and family?”**

**“How can we raise awareness of our issue(s) in our community?”**

**“Are there attitudes in our community which are harmful to moving on this issue? If so, how can we challenge those attitudes in a positive way?”**

**“Can we raise money, volunteer, and/or host an event on this issue?”**

**“Are there other projects or events in our community/area which we can join?”**

**Judge: A Positive Vision**

Activity for about 1/2 of session time

While we've been thinking about these questions, hopefully we're getting a picture in our mind about what positive change might look like. Let's try and verbalise or visualise that. We'll split into groups of 3-5 people each, where each group has its own sheet of paper and a Bible. If we can find some large sheets of paper (like A3), that might help.

Each group will draw or write some simple words, phrases, and pictures which contribute to a more just and peaceful vision of the issue we care about. [[A secondary resource is under development to offer some inspiration here]].

**Act: What are one or two things we can do today?**

We may have come up with some Actions that require long-term planning, like an event. If we know of a person who can help make that vision a reality, great! But there are probably one or two things we can do right now, right here, or when we go home. They don't have to be big things – just a small witness to help put us on the path to justice and peace.

One thing we all can do is pray. Prayer can seem hard, but often when we have a very specific thing we want to pray about – like the issue(s) we've chosen – it becomes a lot more natural and easy. Another thing we can do every day is to help energize our friends and family. If we are open and courageous about our passion for justice on the issues we care about, we will inspire and inform others.

**Act: Planning for future Sessions**

We can spend our next session planning a group activity or learning more about our issue(s). Remember, we can use the See-Judge-Act model again to make sure we have a balance of activity and reflection. For more, see: [www.westminsterjp.wordpress.com/resources](http://www.westminsterjp.wordpress.com/resources)



4.1



4.2



4.3



## 1. Identify Support & Resources

- **Identify** a place, time, and space to meet.
- If we haven't already, we'll talk to our Parish Priest, School Chaplain, School Head, R.E. Teachers, Safeguarding Officer, Parish Administrator, Parish Catechists - anyone who might be able to help us now or later on.
- In each session we'll need (1) a **Bible** (2) a **Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)** and (3) some **note-taking materials**.
- If we can, we'll also grab a **YOUCAT** and **DOCAT**. (If you're reading digitally, you can click on the links below for free online copies of the Bible and CCC, and the CTS shop where you can buy a **DOCAT** and/or **YOUCAT**.)



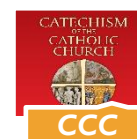
Bible



DOCAT



YOUCAT



CCC

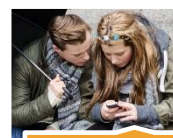
## 2. Meet!

- **Meet** with the group founders and any other people who might be interested in helping out.
- We can use **Startup Session 1** now to help us decide what our group might look like.
- We may be able to decide on a focus and an issue now, or even a major activity. But we might have more support and a better experience if we find other members first.



## 3. Promote!

- Next, let's **Promote** the group with as many people and in as many places in our community as we can find!
- We'll make sure the group leaders are visible and promoting the group at any other major events (such as liturgies, assemblies) even if they aren't J&P related.
- If this is a new group, promoting for anywhere from two to four weeks before the launch meeting might help generate some interest!



tell friends



present



leaflet

## 4. Launch!

- Finally, we can **Launch** the group with the time, place, and structure we have decided.
- If we don't have an issue or set of issues to focus on yet, we can use **Startup Sessions 2 and 3** to do that with our group.
- If we already decided on an issue or were given one, those sessions might still help put our issue in a bigger context.
- We can also use **Startup Session 4** to plan a major activity for the group.



## 5. Evaluate!

- After the group has been running for a time - say, 6 weeks or half a term - evaluate the progress.
- Make sure everyone in the group has had the chance to give feedback and suggestions.
- Do we need additional resources or support?
- Do we need be more specific with our goals? Or expand them?
- Do we need to refocus onto a different issue or set of issues?



1.1

**Mother Theresa**, photographed here in 1988, was recognized as “Saint Theresa of Calcutta” on the 4th of September, 2016. She was a Catholic nun from Albania who worked passionately and tirelessly to help the poor in her adopted home of Calcutta, India. Why would someone leave their home to care for people in a different part of the world? Why is she a “saint”?

Photo: (cc) Evert Oderkerken, Wikimedia Commons



## 1.2

**A woman watering crops in an agricultural cooperative in Guinea.** Many families in Africa and other parts of the world practice “subsistence farming”, meaning they might only produce just enough to feed themselves. It also means that they are especially vulnerable to the effects of disease, famine, and climate change. Imagine you had to grow all your own food. How hard would it be to produce what one of us eats in just a day?

Photo: USAID. Public Domain.





2.1

**St. James's Park in Westminster.** What sort of feelings does this image evoke? Does it make us think about "Home", or "Peace"? Why or why not?

Photo: (CC) Colin, Wikimedia Commons, 2012



2.2

**US President Barack Obama meets with Malala Yousafzai.** Malala was shot in the head by a terrorist for promoting education for girls in Pakistan. She survived and continues her work to this day. Note the portraits of former presidents Abraham Lincoln and George Washington in the background. How are the people in the foreground similar to those in the portraits? How are they different?

Photo: Pete Souza, The White House, 2013. Public Domain



2.3

**A homeless person in London.** Contrast this image with 2.2. What are the differences in the issues they represent? Which of those issues is closer to your experience? What is the message on the cardboard sign trying to say?

Photo: quinntheislander. Public Domain



2.4

**The Lampedusa Cross at the British Museum.** The small island of Lampedusa belongs to Italy, but it's much closer to the coast of Africa than to the Italian mainland. For refugees hoping to come to Europe, it's sometimes the closest and easiest European island to get to. Nonetheless, many boats are wrecked or capsized on the dangerous journey. This cross was made by a Lampedusan carpenter in 2013, from one of the wrecked boats. Why is this cross in the British Museum? What do we think it represents? What makes it important? Does the making of this cross, or the way we respect it, tell us how we might respond to the issue of Refugees?

Photo: © The British Museum, 2016. Republished for educational use.





3.1

**Youth play cricket in the Calais Jungle.** The “Calais Jungle” is a camp where many young people are seeking refuge in Britain or elsewhere in the world. But they have gotten stuck in the French port of Calais, sometimes for years, because they lack the necessary permissions to travel. Are the young people in this photo happy? Why or why not? Should they be “congratulated” for something? If so, what?

Photo: © Calais Youth Service, 2015. Permission sought



3.2

**St. Francis speaks to the birds.** St. Francis was known for his respect for animals and for all of creation. He encouraged his companions to eat no more than what they needed, and to beg for their food. By doing this he taught humility, solidarity with the poor, and respect for the environment. Is “sustainability” a social principle, like subsidiarity, or solidarity? How is it related? How is it different? (See DoCat 263-266).

Art: Giotto, “St. Francis Preaching to the Birds”, 1297-1299. Public Domain



### 3.3

**“Mother to All”.** This image was commissioned for the Australian Catholic Migrant and Refugee Office (ACMRO). What do we think it represents? Hint: it’s not meant to be the Blessed Virgin Mary!

Art: © Louis Barcelona; ACMRO. Permission sought





4.1

**Prince Harry plays Sitting Volleyball** along with movement-impaired persons and US Olympic Beach Volleyball gold medallist, Misty May-Treanor (foreground left). Many of these people have lost limbs in war. What does this picture tell us about disabled representation in sport? What do you think Misty and Prince Harry are trying to achieve by playing volleyball with them?

Photo: USMC, 2014. Public Domain

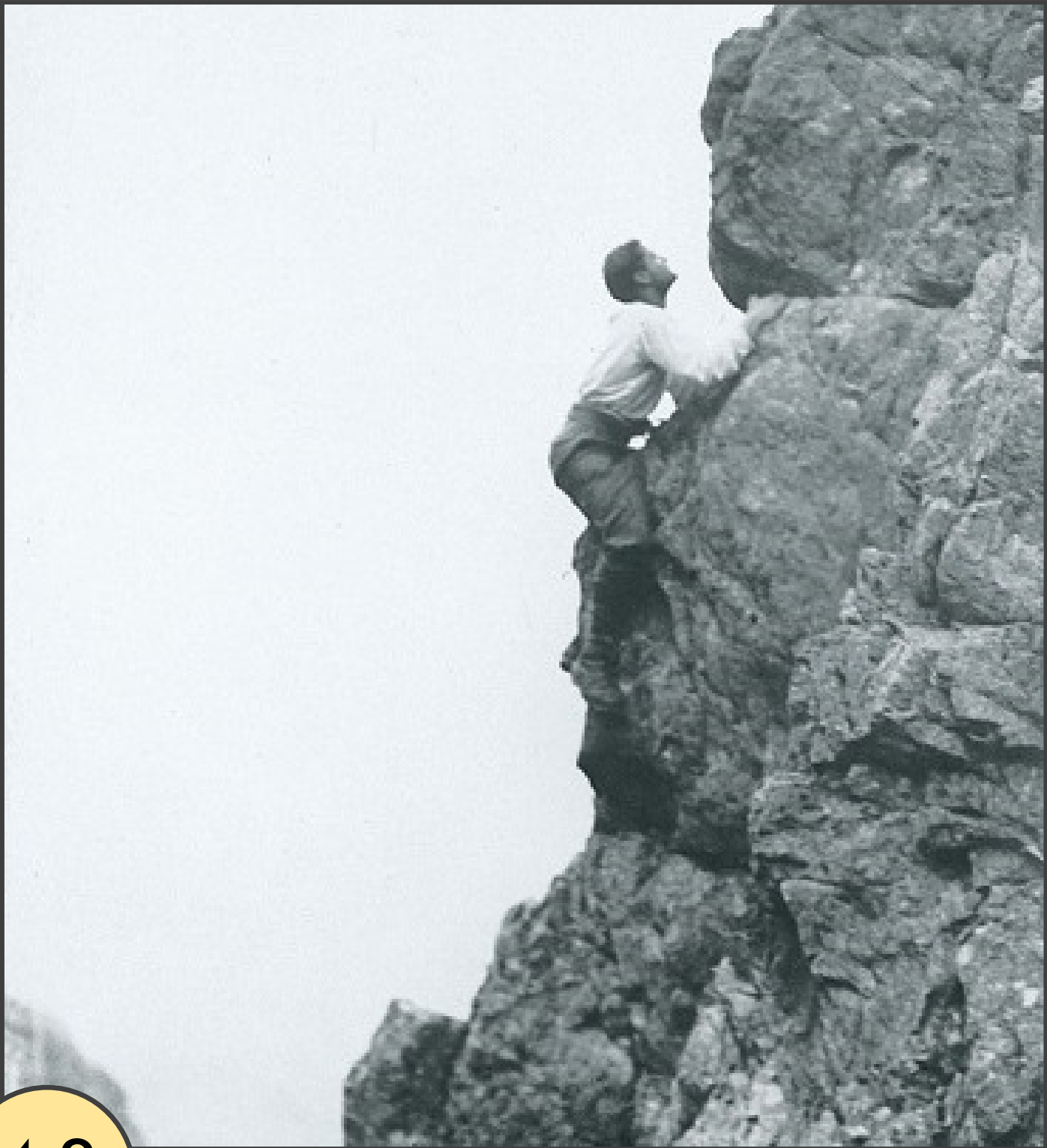


4.2

**Couples for Christ in Ireland.** This is a delegation of the Belfast Chapter of “Couples for Christ”, which is a mainly Filipino Catholic group for young families. Here, they are rallying in Dublin for pro-life values, and against abortion. Why is this issue important to them? What does the picture say about Catholic culture? Or Catholic action?

Photo: (cc) William Murphy, 2011

## 4.3



**Bl. Pier Giorgio Frassati** was a young Catholic student activist in Italy. In the 1920s, when Mussolini's Italy was becoming more and more authoritarian and violent, Frassati spoke out against the fascists. He also did much to help the poor, and was a member of the Society of Saint Vincent de Paul, among others. His motto was **"Charity is not enough... we need social reform."** He died of illness at the age of 24, but he is remembered today for his piety, generosity, and courage — and for his favourite hobby, mountain climbing! Is the pursuit of social reform a bit like mountain climbing? What kind of skills do you need for both?

Photo: Unknown, 1925. Public Domain