



# Breaking with Business as Usual:

Achieving the Millennium Development Goals



 **Caritas**  
Internationalis

“We will have time to reach the Millennium Development Goals – worldwide- and in most, or even all, individual countries – but only if we break with business as usual. We cannot win overnight. Success will require sustained action across the entire decade between now and the deadline. It takes time to train the teachers, nurses, and engineers; to build the roads, schools and hospitals; to grow the small and large businesses able to create the jobs and income needed. So we must start now. And we must more than double global development assistance over the next few years. Nothing less will help to achieve the goals.”

Former United Nations Secretary General, Kofi A. Annan

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## Preface

The publication of this booklet, **Breaking With Business As Usual**, is timed to coincide with the 40th anniversary of the publication of one of the great papal encyclicals of our time, **Populorum Progressio** (On the Development of Peoples). Pope Paul VI issued **Populorum Progressio** in 1967 and stresses that the Church<sup>1</sup> has the duty “of scrutinizing the signs of the times and of interpreting them in light of the Gospel (**Populorum Progressio**, 13).” As followers of Jesus Christ, Paul VI reminds us that we have the gospel obligation to pay constant attention to the social, political, and economic changes in our world and to respond fittingly to resolve the major issues of injustice in our times.

This booklet is written and published by **Caritas Internationalis** and by several **Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation (JPIC)** animators of various Roman Catholic Congregations of religious women and men based in Rome, Italy. There is an enormous body of literature available on the **Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)**. The authors of this booklet, however, offer readers an opportunity to study and examine the **MDGs** through the particular lens of **Catholic Social Teaching**<sup>2</sup>. In addition, the authors of this booklet provide readers with a simple study or theological reflection tool called “**See – Judge – Act**.” This tool is designed to help readers look deeply into a given situation of need or injustice, to analyze it and reflect on it in light of the gospel and Church Tradition; and to make a gospel response to the situation. In this booklet, the “**See – Judge – Act**” tool is designed to help readers learn more about how to work toward the achievement of the **MDGs** and how to hold themselves, governments and institutions accountable to meet the goals as promised.

The first section of the booklet introduces the reader to the **MDGs** and highlights some important statistics regarding the goals. The second section offers a critical look at the goals in light of the Church’s social teachings. The third section gives some practical suggestions for what individuals and communities can do regarding the achievement of the **MDGs** and making poverty a thing of the past. At the end of each section there are suggested questions for group reflection. The final section of the booklet includes a prayer for the achievement of the **Millennium Development Goals**, a suggested group evaluation process, and a list of Internet references related to the content in this booklet.

<sup>1</sup> In this booklet, the word “Church” refers to the Roman Catholic Church.

<sup>2</sup> Catholic Social Teaching is rooted in the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures as well as the writings of the early Church Fathers. Today, the term refers especially to the body of social teachings found in papal and conciliar documents in the Roman Catholic Church from the time of Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903).

# “See”

## Introduction

Section One invites readers to “see,” or to examine more closely the origin, history, role and importance of the Millennium Development Goals in the world today. As you read, you will find many references to various web links. These web links provide excellent, additional information which you may find helpful for your study of the MDGs.

## What are the Millennium Development Goals?

On September 6, 2000, 189 leaders from almost every country in the world gathered in New York City for the **United Nations Millennium Summit**.

When the Summit finished on September 8, 2000, the **UN Millennium Declaration**, was adopted by 189 nations and signed by 147 heads of states and governments who declared their “collective responsibility to uphold the principles of human dignity, equality and equity at the global level,” and “their duty to all the world’s people, especially the most vulnerable and in particular to the children of the world, to whom the future belongs.”<sup>3</sup>

Contained in this historic **UN Millennium Declaration** are **Eight Millennium Development Goals**. These eight goals are to be achieved by “all the world’s countries and all the world’s leading development institutions” by **2015**<sup>4</sup>: The goals address the fundamental right of every human being to adequate income, shelter, food, health care, education, and security. The goals aim especially to ensure gender equality, universal education, and environmental sustainability for all:

*Goal 1 – Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger*

*Goal 2 – Achieve universal primary education*

*Goal 3 – Promote gender equality and empower women*

*Goal 4 – Reduce child mortality*

*Goal 5 – Improve maternal health*

*Goal 6 – Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases*

*Goal 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability*

*Goal 8 – Develop a global partnership for development.*

The **Eight Millennium Development Goals** are interrelated and should be seen as a whole. In particular, they call for partnerships between developed

<sup>3</sup> UN Millennium Declaration I:2

<sup>4</sup> See <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/>

and developing countries to create a shared future for all based on our common humanity in order to eliminate poverty and to make globalization fully inclusive and equitable<sup>5</sup>. The eight goals break down into 18 quantifiable **Targets**, which in turn are measured by **48 Indicators** which are designed to help to monitor the achievement of the goals.<sup>6</sup> Progress reports on the achievement of the goals are documented and published regularly by the United Nations.

We don’t need more promises we need to start keeping the promises that have already been made. **Kofi Annan, Former Secretary General of the United Nations**

## Millennium Development Goals<sup>7</sup>

This section invites readers to look more closely at the Goals set by the MDGs and to “see” why the United Nations has called the world to galvanize “unprecedented efforts to meet the needs of the world’s poorest” by 2015<sup>8</sup>.

### Goal 1 Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

In the last few years, the international media has presented viewers with so many statistics and so many pictures of persons suffering from poverty and hunger around the world that many people, particularly those from rich countries, seem to accept poverty and hunger as an unfortunate but unalterable state of affairs.

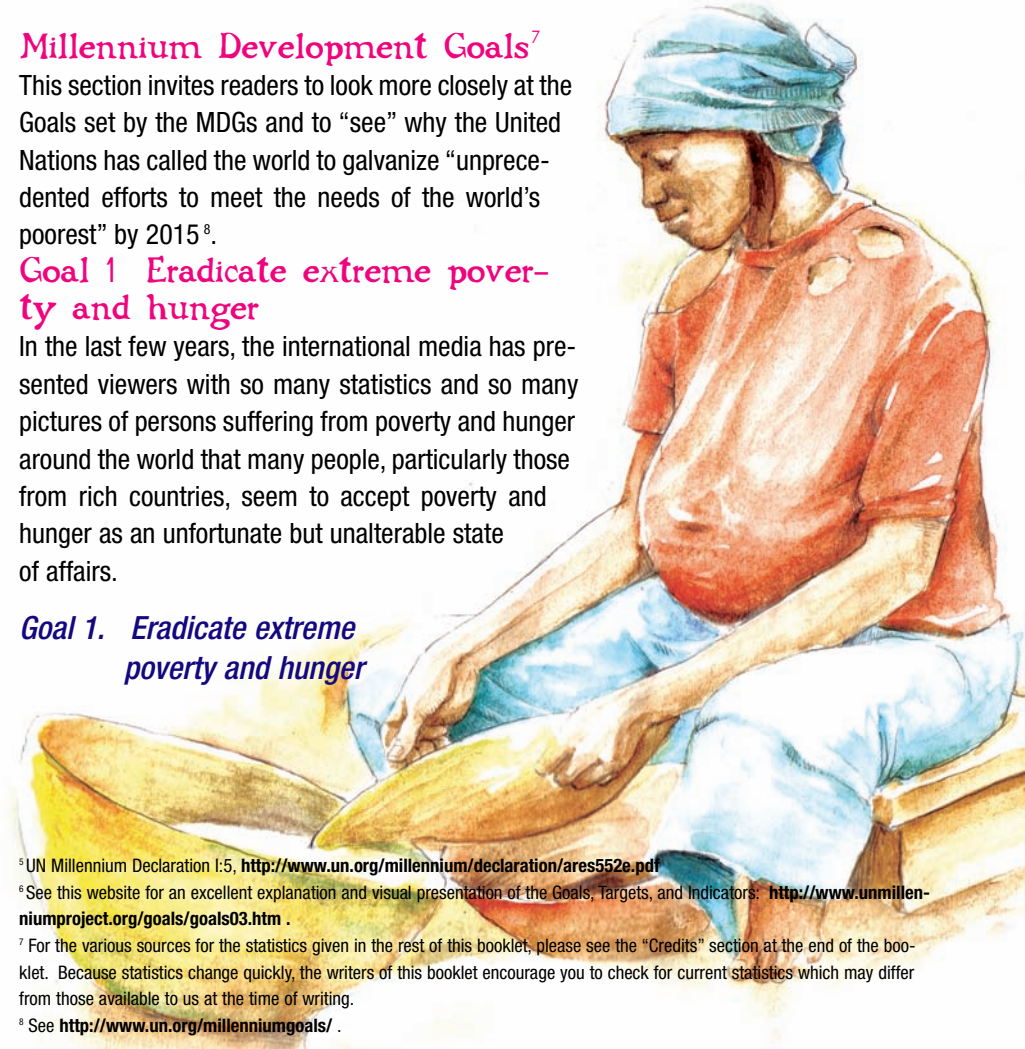
#### Goal 1. Eradicate extreme poverty and hunger

<sup>5</sup> UN Millennium Declaration I:5, <http://www.un.org/millennium/declaration/ares552e.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> See this website for an excellent explanation and visual presentation of the Goals, Targets, and Indicators: <http://www.unmillenniumproject.org/goals/goals03.htm> .

<sup>7</sup> For the various sources for the statistics given in the rest of this booklet, please see the “Credits” section at the end of the booklet. Because statistics change quickly, the writers of this booklet encourage you to check for current statistics which may differ from those available to us at the time of writing.

<sup>8</sup> See <http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/> .



### Today in our world:

- Over one billion people in the world live on less than \$1 a day.
- 800 million people in the world go to bed hungry every night.
- 28,000 children in the world die each day because of poverty-related causes.

### Goal 2 Achieve universal primary education

The goal of achieving universal primary education (UPE) has been on the international agenda since the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** affirmed in 1948 that elementary education was to be free and compulsory for all children in all nations (<http://www.un.org/Overview/rights.html>).

### Today in our world:

- 103 million children currently do not attend primary school -- 56% of them are girls
- 133 million adolescents cannot read nor write
- 46% of girls in the world's poorest countries have no access to primary education

### Goal 3 Promote gender equality and empower women

Countless studies around the globe indicate that poverty "has a woman's face." Similarly, statistics indicate that societies do not achieve sustainable development when women are not afforded the same rights as men.

### Today in our world:

- Of the 1.3 billion people living in poverty around the world, 70% are women.
- Two-thirds of the children in the world who are denied primary education are girls.
- 75% of the world's 876 million are illiterate adults.
- Women work two-thirds of the world's working hours and they produce half of the world's food, yet they earn only 10% of the world's income and own less than 1% of the world's property.

In an area where life is less hard than in other parts of Africa, a typical day for a woman in Sierra Leone involves the following:

- 4:00 am - 5:30 am fishing in the village pond
- 5:30 am - 6:00 am carrying water and firewood
- 6:00 am - 8:00 am lighting the fire to prepare breakfast and to heat water for washing clothes; washing up and sweeping the yard
- 8:00 am - 11:00am working in the rice field with one child on her back and another on her hip
- 11:00 am - Noon gathering berries, leaves and bark and carrying water
- 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm preparing lunch and washing up
- 2:00 pm - 3:00 pm washing clothes, carrying water, cleaning the house, smoking fish

- 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm working in the vegetable garden
- 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm fishing in the village pond
- 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm preparing the evening meal
- 8:00 pm - 9:00 pm washing up and bathing the children
- 9:00 pm - 11:00 pm chatting by the fire while shelling seeds and preparing the fishing nets

### Goal 4 Reduce child mortality

One of the darkest characteristics of poverty is that it seems to prey on the vulnerable and defenceless.

### Today in our world:

- About 29,000 children under the age of five die every day, 21 each minute, mainly from preventable causes.
- More than 70% of almost 11 million child deaths every year are attributable to six causes: diarrhoea, malaria, neonatal infection, pneumonia, pre-term delivery, or lack of oxygen at birth.

### Goal 5 Improve maternal health

In poor countries, the day a child is born is all too often the day that its mother dies. In high-fertility countries in sub-Saharan Africa, women have a one in 16 chance of dying in childbirth. In low-fertility countries in Europe, this number is one in 2,000, and in North America it is one in 3,500.

### Today in our world:

- More than half a million women die in pregnancy and childbirth every year – that is one death every minute.
- In the least developed countries, only 28 in 100 women giving birth are attended by trained health personnel

### Goal 6 - Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases

The challenges of malaria, HIV/AIDS, and TB are major public health issues that are undermining development in the poorest countries in the world.

### Today in our world:

- There are 42 million people living with HIV and AIDS worldwide. It is a global emergency claiming approximately 8,000 lives every day in some of the poorest countries.
- Malaria causes more than 300 million acute illnesses and at least one million deaths annually.
- An estimated two million deaths resulted from tuberculosis in 2002.

### Goal 7 - Ensure environmental sustainability

We cannot have sound economies, sustainable societies, and healthy people without a healthy planet. In recent years the uncontrolled and rampant use of natural resources

such as forests, land, water, and fisheries, often by the powerful few, has caused alarming changes in our natural world. For example, human activities are causing losses in biodiversity at a rate 50 to 100 times faster than would otherwise be expected.

**Today in our world:**

- Scientists tell us that if nothing radical is done now to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, global mean temperatures could rise possibly by as much as 5°C over the next century<sup>9</sup>.
- Physical signs of environmental change due to global warming are all around us: extreme weather conditions, melting ice, rising sea levels, spread of disease, drought, loss of biodiversity, and endangered food security. Up to 20% of the world's GDP<sup>10</sup> may have to be invested in efforts to counteract these consequences.
- Rainforests once covered 14% of the earth's surface and now they cover a mere 6%.
- Nearly half of the world's species of plants, animals and micro-organisms will be destroyed or severely threatened over the next quarter century due to rainforest deforestation

Many rickshaw drivers are members of the displaced urban poor who migrated to a city because floods and drought adversely affected their homes. They live in shantytowns by the polluted rivers. They pedal through intensely crowded and contaminated streets and carry up to 6 school children, piled high boxes, and even heavy furniture. Said one rickshaw driver: "The rich people drive around this district of Delhi one person to a car -- they are contributing to the pollution. We do not make any pollution yet we are banned from being allowed to work in this district." Corpwatch

**Goal 8 Develop a global partnership for development**

The **Millennium Development Goals** call for dramatic global partnerships for development. For poor countries to achieve the first seven goals, it is absolutely critical that rich countries deliver on their end of the bargain well in advance of 2015 with more and more effective aid, more sustainable debt relief, and fairer trade rules.

**Today in our world:**

**1. Trade**

- International trade is worth \$10 million US dollars a minute with 70% of this trade controlled by multinational corporations.
- The poorest 49 countries make up 10% of the world's population but they account for only 0.4% of world trade. Their share has halved since 1980.

<sup>9</sup> Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC): <http://www.ipcc.ch/>

<sup>10</sup> For a brief explanation of GDP (Gross Domestic Product) see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross\\_domestic\\_product](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gross_domestic_product).



**Goal 2. Achieve universal primary education**

- Rich countries spend \$100 billion US dollars a year to protect their markets with tariffs, quotas, and subsidies. This is twice as much as they provide in aid for developing countries.

**2. AID**

In 1970, 22 of the world's richest countries pledged to spend 0.7% of their national income on aid. By 2004, only 5 countries kept that promise. Is your country one of them?

**3. Debt**

- Seven million children die each year as a result of the debt crisis.
- For every £1 in grant aid to developing countries, more than £13 come back in debt repayments.
- The money spent on debt repayments could provide water for almost 1.3 billion people.

**What are some indicators of the achievement of the MDGs to date?**

While some progress has been made in achieving the **MDGs**, we cannot become complacent as so much remains to be done. The following facts are cause for celebration to date:

- ✓ In 1990, more than 1.2 billion people – 28% of the developing world's population – lived in extreme poverty. By 2002, the proportion decreased to 19%.
- ✓ Net enrolment ratios in primary education have increased to 86% in the

developing world, ranging from 95% in Latin America and the Caribbean to 64% in sub-Saharan Africa.

✓ More than 95 countries have now implemented either mandatory or voluntary measures to increase women's political participation. New constitutions in countries emerging from conflict have been especially effective in this regard.



*Goal 3. Promote gender equality and empower women*

✓ The share of people using drinking water from improved sources has continued to rise in the developing world, reaching 80% in 2004, up from 71% in 1990.

✓ The vaccination for measles of three quarters of the world's children has proven to be one of the most cost-effective public health interventions on record. Nevertheless, the disease killed 454,000 children in 2004, leaving others blind or deaf.

✓ Access to essential drugs, especially those for treating HIV, has expanded in the developing world. Between 2001 and 2005, the number of people on antiretroviral therapy in low- and middle-income countries increased fivefold, from 240,000 to 1.3 million. But the target set in 2003 of reaching at least half of those in need of therapy has been missed and antiretroviral drugs reach only one in five globally.

✓ Where debt has been cancelled, it has made a real difference:

- Mozambique has been able to introduce free immunizations for children.
- Tanzania has abolished primary school fees, leading to a 66% increase in attendance.
- In Uganda, debt relief led to 2.2 million people gaining access to clean water.
- Malawi is training 3,600 new teachers every year and has abolished school fees.

**Suggestions for Group Reflection: "See" Section**

1. Take some time alone and in quiet to ponder all you have read in the "See" section of this booklet. Next, in a small group, share with others what part of this section spoke to you most or seemed most significant to you in your ministry, and why.

2. Go over the material in the "See" section and list as many connections as you can find to action commitments of your Church, religious congregation, parish, or study group that try to respond to the call of the MDGs.

3. Make an imaginary "Report Card" for the response of your Church, parish, religious congregation, local community toward the achievement of any or all of the Eight Millennium Goals. Reflect together on what your data suggests or reveals to you.

4. Share and discuss with one another any gospel story or passage in the New Testament that comes to mind for you after reading the "See" Section of this booklet. Consider what action your study group might take to further the achievement of the MDGs?

# ” Judge ”

## Introduction

Section Two of this booklet offers readers a chance to examine the MDGs through the lens of the Christian Faith Tradition. In particular, this section gives a brief overview of Catholic Social Teaching so that readers can “Judge” or analyze how the MDGs can help us to make appropriate gospel responses to the urgent needs of the poor in our times. The MDGs are an attempt by the United Nations to call on all people to transform the world. Catholic Social Teaching emphasizes that participation in appropriate efforts at transforming the world are an essential element of gospel living.

## What is Catholic Social Teaching?

Modern Catholic Social Teaching has its primary roots in both the Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. More recently, the term “Catholic Social Teaching” refers to a vast body of literature on social issues that began in 1891 with the encyclical of Pope Leo XIII, *Rerum Novarum (The Condition of Labour)*<sup>1</sup>. Leo XIII wrote this momentous document in response to the conditions of the poor and exploited workers during the time of the Industrial Revolution. Since then, innumerable papal and episcopal documents have been issued to call the Church to respond to critical situations of injustice throughout the world.

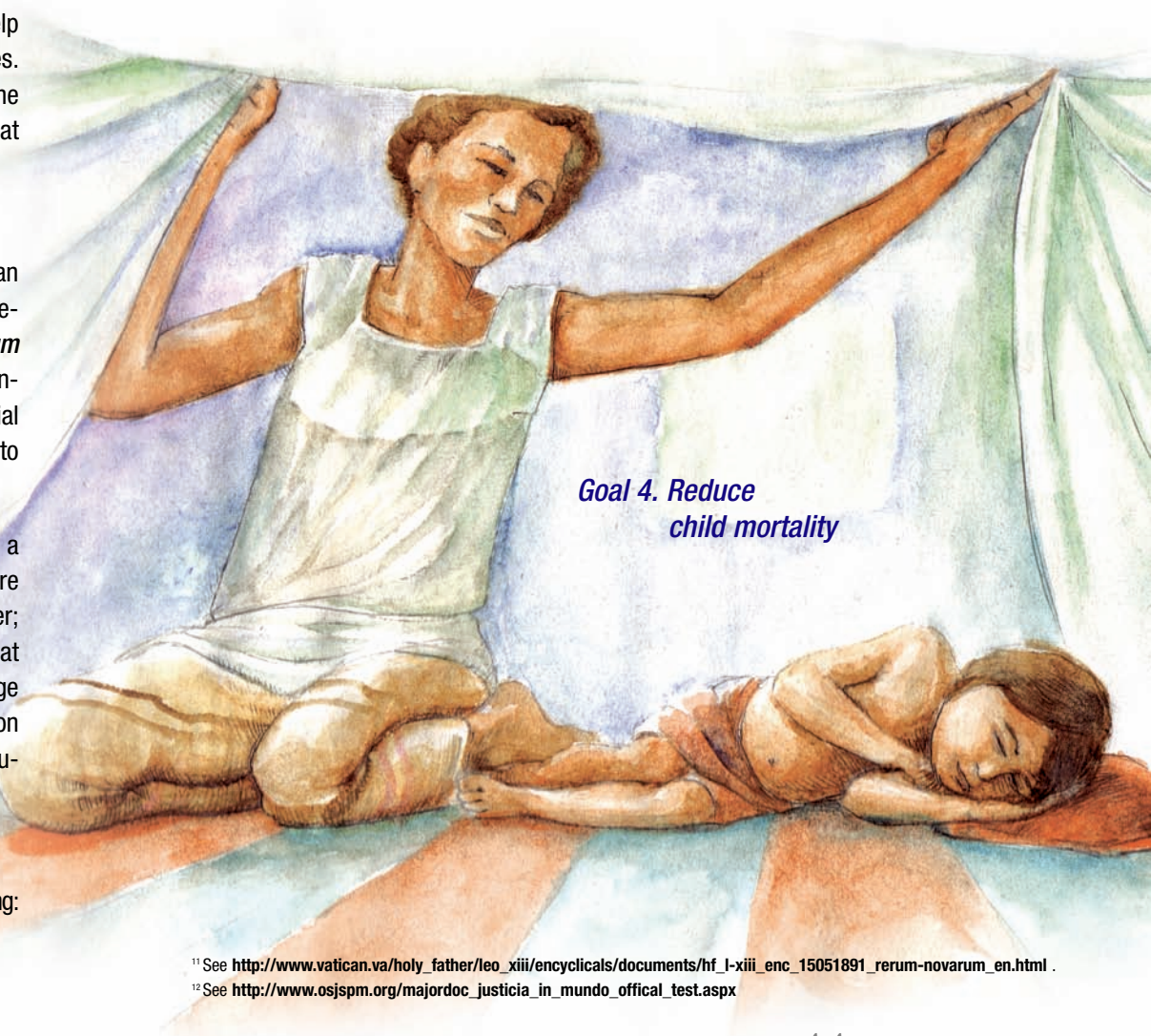
Catholic Social Teaching asks us first to “See” or look at social injustices that occur in a particular time and place and second to “Judge” or determine what gospel responses are needed. The Tradition does not call for the detached “seeing” of a neutral observer; rather it calls for the kind of “seeing” that evokes within one a kind of holy indignation at injustice – ethical indignation – indignation that generates within one a desire to change the situation of injustice. Catholic Social Teaching reminds believers that “action on behalf of justice and participation in the transformation of the world is a constitutive dimension of the preaching of the Gospel (**Justice in the World**, n.6).”<sup>12</sup>

## Key Themes of Catholic Social Teaching?

The following are the key – and interconnected – themes of Catholic Social Teaching:

1. *Human Dignity*
2. *Community*

3. *Rights and Duties*
4. *Option for the Poor*
5. *Participation*
6. *Economic Justice*
7. *Stewardship of Creation*
8. *Solidarity*
9. *Role of Government in Protecting Human Rights and Building the Common Good*
10. *Promotion of Peace*



Goal 4. Reduce child mortality

<sup>11</sup> See [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/leo\\_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_l-xiii\\_enc\\_15051891\\_rerum-novarum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/leo_xiii/encyclicals/documents/hf_l-xiii_enc_15051891_rerum-novarum_en.html).

<sup>12</sup> See [http://www.osjspm.org/majordoc\\_justicia\\_in\\_mundo\\_offical\\_test.aspx](http://www.osjspm.org/majordoc_justicia_in_mundo_offical_test.aspx)

## What do we mean by "Option for the Poor"?

One thread that draws all the *MDGs* together is concern for the eradication of poverty. In Catholic Social Teaching, concern for the eradication of poverty is expressed in terms of the "option for the poor". The idea of the "option for the poor" has its roots in every page of both Hebrew and Christian Scriptures. The God of these Testaments, the cries of the Prophets, Christ's revelation of the "Reign of God," and the radical community life of the early Church all point to Scripture's constant concern for the poor and vulnerable.

Modern impetus for the "option for the poor" can be traced particularly to Pope Leo XIII who exhorted the Church to tend to social ills, economic rights, and the sufferings of the poor in the modern world.

At the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), the Church openly declared its solidarity with the whole human family. In the **Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World** (n.1), the Church declared that the "joys and hopes, the griefs and

*Goal 5. Improve maternal health*

anguish of the people of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anguish of the followers of Christ as well."<sup>13</sup> The Church of the poor, especially in Latin America took this teaching of Vatican II to heart. From the late 1960s, theologians in Central and South America developed a lens or hermeneutic for interpreting the Christian Tradition called Liberation Theology. Although there are many understandings and interpretations of Liberation Theology, one principle seems common to all, namely, the principle of "preferential option for the poor". This principle invites the Church to radical conversion of heart and to sustained efforts to comprehend and challenge any sources that generate injustice and poverty.

There is a rich development to the Church's understanding of "the option for the poor." It moves from Pope Leo XIII's plea to care for poor and exploited workers to Pope John Paul II's admonishment that we make people poor by our human decisions and actions. One of the most dominant themes in Pope John Paul II's writings is that we must be in "solidarity" with the poor in their struggle to overcome destitution. In his 1981 encyclical, **On Human Work**,<sup>14</sup> Pope John Paul II challenges the Church to find concrete ways to be in solidarity with the poor and oppressed. The poverty of the majority of those who are poor today is not just a fact of life; it is the consequence of unjust decisions made by persons and institutions of power, past and present. Human decisions and actions have impoverished countless human beings and are destroying our planet and endangering all species. Our Catholic Social Tradition demands that we make decisions and carry out actions to reverse that impoverishment. The poor are not just objects of our concern and our work for justice.

The poor are also our teachers who proclaim the Good News by their very lives when they face insurmountable difficulties with constant courage, determination, creativity, celebration and hope.

In his World Day of Peace Message for 1990, **Peace with God the Creator, Peace with All Creation**<sup>15</sup>, Pope John Paul II stresses a deeply dramatic dimension of Catholic Social Teaching, namely that there is an intimate and direct relationship between "option for the poor" and our responsibility for the integrity of all of creation. John Paul II declared: "It is manifestly unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excess goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the very lowest level of subsistence. Today, the dramatic threat of ecological

<sup>13</sup> See [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_cons\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)

<sup>14</sup> See [http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0217/\\_INDEX.HTM](http://www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0217/_INDEX.HTM)

<sup>15</sup> See [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/john\\_paul\\_ii/messages/peace/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_mes\\_19891208\\_xxiii-world-day-for-peace\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace_en.html)

breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness - both individual and collective - are contrary to the order of creation, an order which is characterized by mutual interdependence (No. 8) ... [and] I wish to repeat that the ecological crisis is a moral issue (No 15)." With this profound message, the Church enters a whole new age of justice-making and "the poor" are not only from the human community. In the words of the Canadian bishops, "The cry of the earth and the cry of the poor are one." <sup>16</sup>

"After we left home (fled Darfur to Chad), we went to my mother's village, which was very far from the nearest school. So after two years I had to drop out," says 14-year-old Fathna. "I hope I can stay in school now...Once I know how to read and write, maybe I can become someone in a good position with a responsible job."

UNESCO

### How can we "Judge" the effectiveness of the MDGs as instruments of change?

As Christians we believe that we are called to work together for the common good of all our sisters and brothers in this world (1 Cor. 12). Who evaluates the achievement of the MDGs and what progress has been made to date? How do we "Judge" the outcome of the MDGs through the lens of our Catholic Faith Tradition? Two things are necessary if we are to "Judge" or discern the effectiveness of the MDGs as appropriate instruments to deal with the problems that we face in the world today. First we need to keep informed about the actual political achievement of the MDGs, and secondly we need to examine these achievements through the lens of our Catholic Faith Tradition.

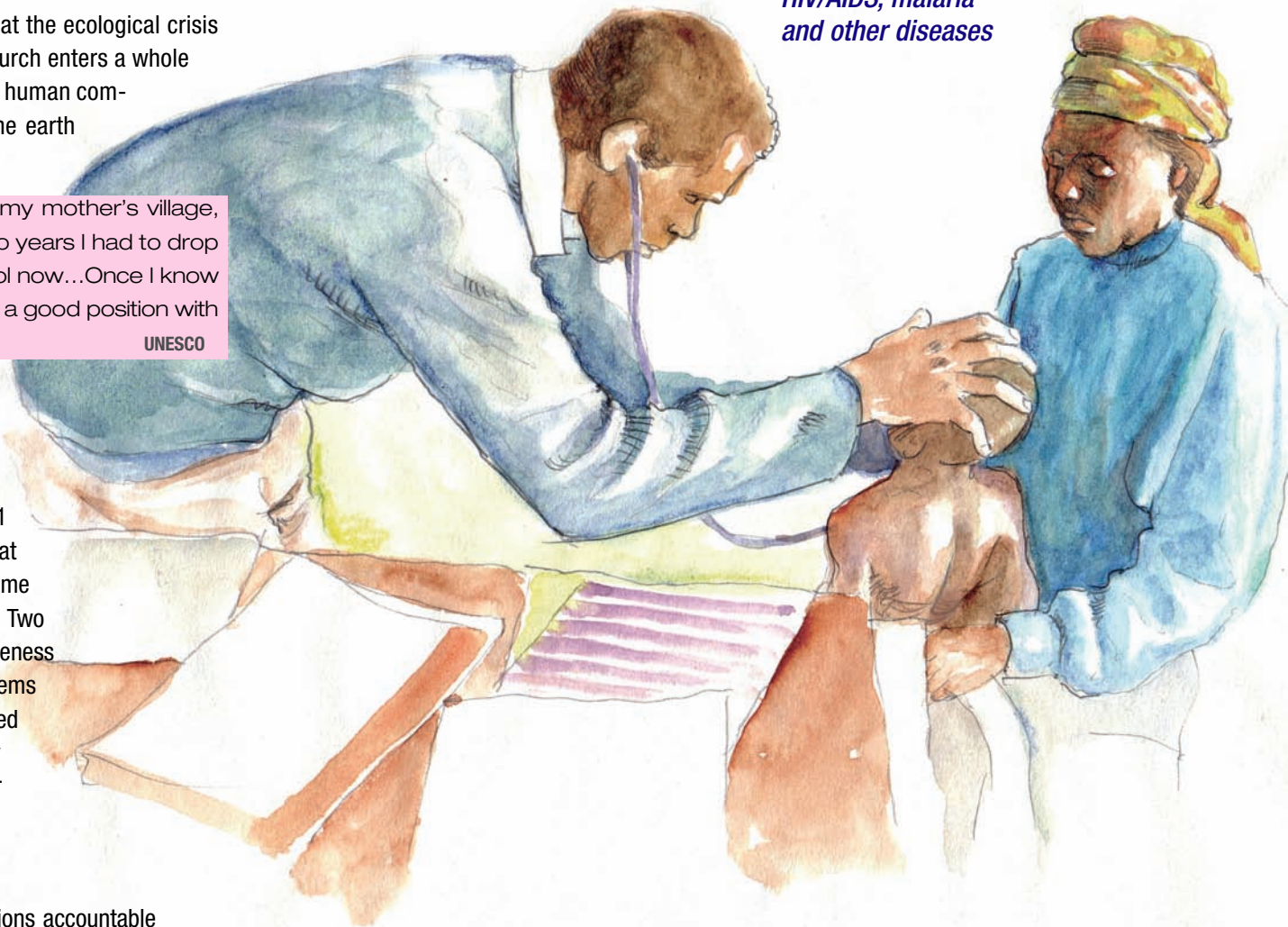
#### A. UN Progress Reports

The United Nations is committed to holding nations and institutions accountable for the accomplishments of the **MDGs**. One important way is to provide the world with data and statistics on the **48 Indicators** that measure the progress of the goals. In 2006 the UN published a major progress report which can be found at:

<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGReport2006.pdf>

<sup>16</sup> A Pastoral Letter on the Ecological Imperative (17), Social Affairs Commission, Canadian Council of Catholic Bishops (CCCC), October 4, 2004.

### Goal 6. Combat HIV/AIDS, malaria and other diseases



In general, results obtained through the year 2005 show a pattern of important advances accompanied by significant setbacks. This suggests that all parties need to be vigilant in their assessment of the results of the **MDGs**.

## B. Statements or Reports from Church Groups

A few minutes of searching on the Internet reveals the countless efforts of local and international church groups to further the achievement of the **Millennium Development Goals**. Five years after the **MDGs** were issued by the **United Nations, Caritas Internationalis** prepared a special report on them.<sup>17</sup> **Caritas'** report demonstrates how the **MDGs** can be judged or analyzed through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching. **Caritas** believes that the **MDGs** are (1) an important first step toward eradicating poverty; (2) a potent political sign of hope for the eradication of poverty; and (3) a key tool for global advocacy and accountability for the world's poor. They believe that the **MDGs** are achievable, politically feasible, and measurable. The **MDGs** reflect not only a concern for world justice and respect for human rights, but they are an essential condition for world security and national and international stability. When **Caritas** or other Church groups examine the **MDGs** through the lens of Catholic Social Teaching, they ask questions such as:

- Do the **MDGs** overshadow other causes of inequality and injustice at international and national levels (e.g., human rights standards)?
- Since development goals can be vague and very complicated, might the only thing to change be the discourse about poverty without any real action taking place?
- Will the achievement of the **MDGs** be accomplished by totalitarian practices or by means that ensure active participation of the poor in the political life of the country?
- Could the privatization of basic services for the poor be applied without taking into account the long-term impact on the equitable distribution of resources in poor countries?
- Will the implementation of the **MDGs** reinforce a "top-down, hand-out" approach to development?
- What needs to be done to ensure that along with financial aid there is also financial reform of commercial and political systems at both national and international levels lest an increase in aid lead to greater dependency of the poor on macro-economic prescriptions from international financial institutions?
- How can we accomplish the **MDGs** and remain true to the ethical imperatives of Church teaching?

## How do we go beyond the MDGs?

One critical concern for justice-makers is whether we can go beyond what the MDGs pro-

pose in order to address the systemic causes of poverty, gender inequality, climate change, social and economic disparity, and developmental inequities? Some commentators suggest that the MDGs may be contradictory in themselves.<sup>18</sup> Is our current economic system compatible with reaching the goals? Can the goal to reduce extreme poverty and hunger by half be reached if policies that generate poverty are not analyzed, denounced, and changed. Will the promotion of gender equality also transform the very real forces that oppose such equality? How will the commitment to ecological sustainability be matched by attention to the unethical causes of climate change and the contradictions inherent in our present models of global development. Many individuals, organizations and countries are expending considerable time, energy and resources to implement the MDGs. It is essential that we continue to monitor and evaluate the progress of the MDGs; to do all we can to hold governments and the major financial institutions of the world accountable for achieving the goals; and to continue to find ways to go beyond the work of the MDGs to respond fully to the urgent cries for justice in our time.

## Suggestions for Group Reflection: "Judge" Section

1. *Take some time to study various reports (available online) on the progress of the Millennium Development Goals from the UN and/or various church groups. Discuss and evaluate what you learned about the contributions of your country and/or your church community toward the achievement of the MDGs? What encourages or discourages you most about what you discovered? Why?*
2. *Create a lecture and discussion series for your community or parish to help them understand the role of Catholic Social Teaching in their everyday lives and its relationship to the Millennium Development Goals.*
3. *Plan a Retreat Day where participants have time for study, discussion, reflection, and prayer in order to understand the meaning of the term "option for the poor" and to discover ways that the MDGs help to make the "option for the poor" real and alive.*
4. *Take time to examine the MDGs and review them in light of what you can learn about the effect that climate change will have on the poor and future generations of the earth community?*

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.caritas.org/Upload/E/ENMDGkitforCaritasMOs\\_1.pdf](http://www.caritas.org/Upload/E/ENMDGkitforCaritasMOs_1.pdf)

<sup>18</sup> Samir Amin, "The Millennium Development Goals: a Critique from the South." <http://www.monthlyreview.org/0306amin2.htm>

# ”Act”

## Introduction

Many individuals and groups in the world today are convinced that "another world" is truly possible. They are deeply interested in justice concerning ecology, globalisation, education, economics, trade, healthcare, and so much more. They are searching for ways to create local and national responses to the urgent needs of our time. Without the help of individuals it is unlikely the goals will ever be met. Former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, said: *“Political will shifts only if there is national and local mobilization by the public, and only when leaders are held accountable. Appeals by international organizations are one thing. But what would really make a difference is if, at the local level, the Goals achieve a critical mass of support and even become ‘vote-getters’.”*<sup>19</sup>

Section Three offers readers a chance to become familiar with concrete ways **”to act.”** The writers propose a series of actions that can be taken by individuals or groups. Because the suggestions in this booklet are limited, the writers suggest that you visit [www.millenniumcampaign.org](http://www.millenniumcampaign.org) to register for regular updates and action alerts.

Let's give a helping hand and "try to reverse the course of history."

Ignacio Ellacuría, SJ

We bear witness that our Church will never abandon suffering people.

Archbishop Oscar Romero

## How can we ”Act” to accomplish the MDGs?

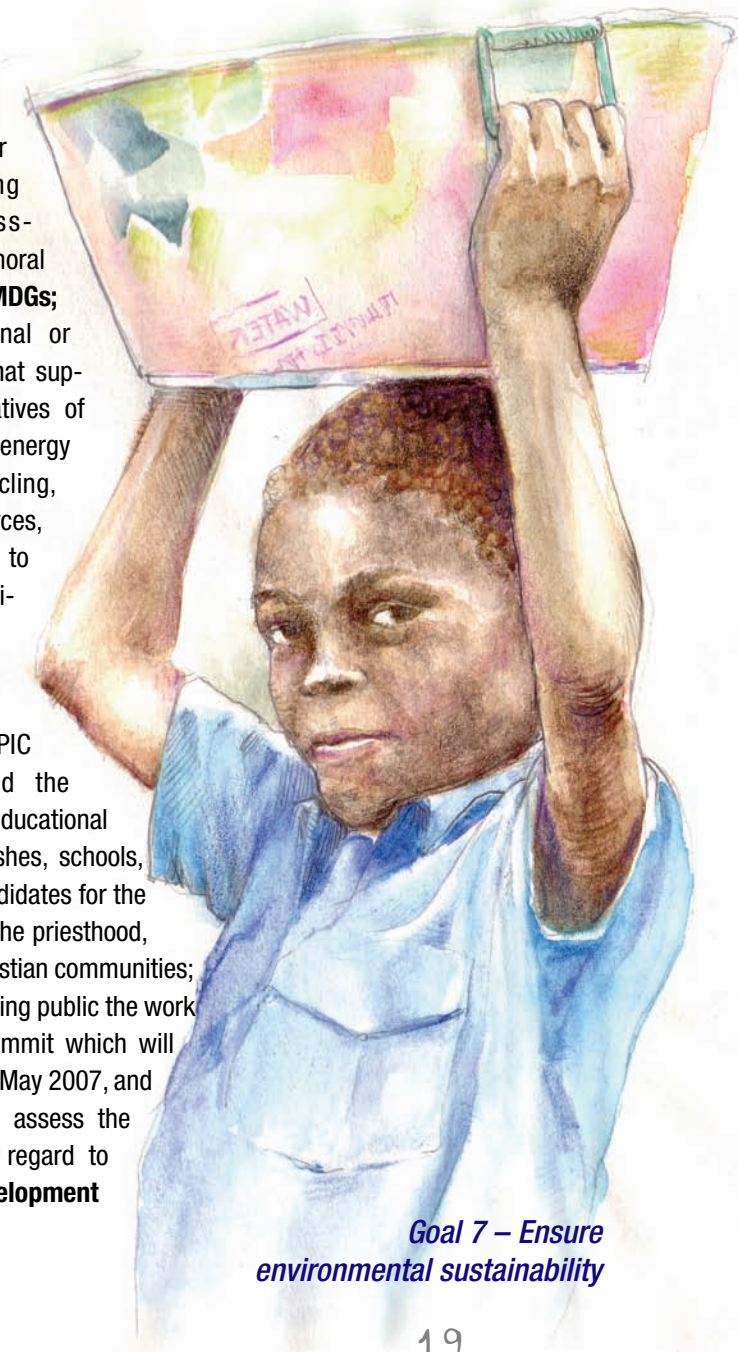
It is easy to find popular ways to work for the accomplishment of the **Millennium Development Goals**. The greater challenge presented in this booklet is to find ways to engage the **”See - Judge - Act” Theological Reflection Model** as an effective and faith-filled way to accomplish the **MDGs**. Therefore, as you read the action suggestions that follow, you might like to keep before you a list of the key themes of **Catholic Social Teaching** as well as some visual reminder of the need for an “option for the poor.” In this way the writers of this booklet hope that you

<sup>19</sup> Statement by Secretary-General to Civil Society Forum in Brazil, June 14, 2004 at: [http://www.unctadxi.org/templates/Press\\_\\_\\_929.aspx](http://www.unctadxi.org/templates/Press___929.aspx)

will find ways **”to act”** that are grounded in the riches of the Gospel and the best of the Christian Tradition.

## Become involved:

- by acquiring information and training for community organizing and consciousness-raising about the moral issues relating to the **MDGs**;
- by making personal or local commitments that support the global initiatives of the MDGs, e.g., low energy consumption, recycling, care of natural resources, freedom with regard to consumerism, solidarity-based economics;
- by developing on-going theological development and JPIC (Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation) educational programmes for parishes, schools, reflection groups, candidates for the consecrated life and the priesthood, and for leaders of Christian communities;
- by tracking and making public the work of the next World Summit which will take place in Rome in May 2007, and whose purpose is to assess the progress made with regard to the **Millennium Development Goals**.



*Goal 7 – Ensure environmental sustainability*

### Participate:

- in local and international projects aimed at achieving the eradication of poverty;
- in meetings of human rights groups, social forums, solidarity committees, awareness raising campaigns, and demonstrations against poverty;
- in ecumenical and inter-faith celebrations and prayer services for justice, peace, conversion, and solidarity.

### Support and promote:

- initiatives that help to eradicate poverty;
- processes that encourage participation, gender equality, open communication, and mutual collaboration;
- “grassroot groups” that hope to achieve social improvements, especially in the fields of education and healthcare.

### Help:

- to raise awareness among Roman Catholics that the **MDGs** and the Catholic Social Teaching are closely related and are an essential part of the Gospel;
- to promote distributive justice so that the “first world” shares its resources with the poorest countries rather than robbing them;
- to support the voluntary services and development projects of **NGOs** by offering your time, skills and/or money.

### Connect:

- with other groups to create solidarity networks that will collaborate for a common cause;
- establish links with civil institutions for any assistance and social promotion they can provide.

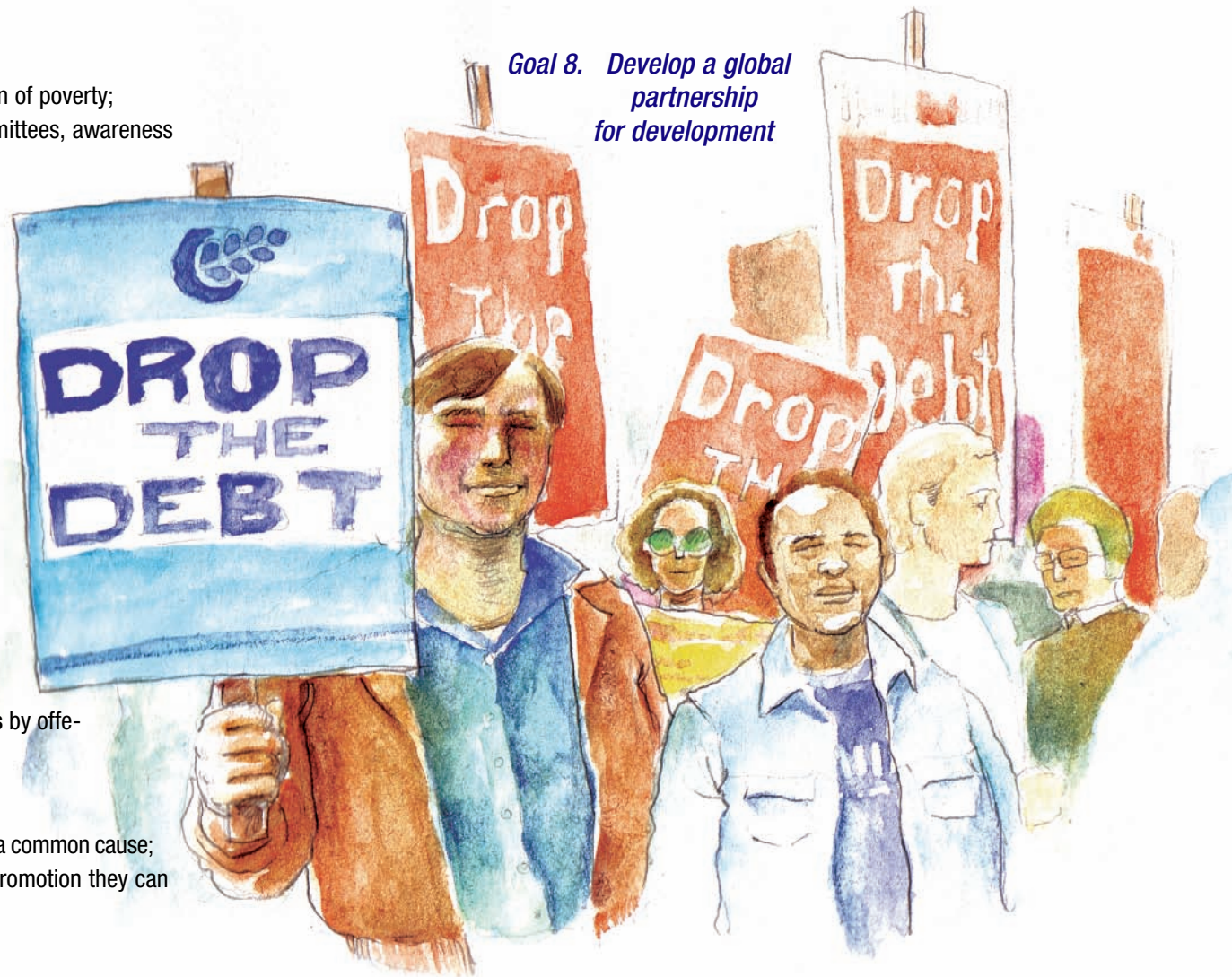
### Denounce:

- oppressive ideologies;
- global imbalances;
- corruption of governments, institutions and organisations.

### Lobby and Advocate for:

- the respect of human rights;
- the accountability of governments for their promises and actions;
- the achievement of the **MDGs** in your country by contacting appropriate government officials.

### Goal 8. Develop a global partnership for development



### Suggestions for Group Reflection: "Act" Section

1. Find ways to collaborate with two or three other groups in your area that are trying to help attain the achievement of the MDGs.
2. Spend time together in prayer and dialogue on how the Gospel and the Social Teachings of the Church provide you with a lens or vision for your work on the MDGs.
3. Write a group “creed” to show what you believe about the imperative, “Breaking with Business As Usual.”

# Conclusion

## From Promise to Fulfilment

The path to the eradication of extreme poverty is littered with unfulfilled pledges that could easily engender cynicism and despair. As Christians we do not operate out of naïve optimism, but rather we believe in the transformative power of good. Despite any shortcomings, the MDGs witness to the fact that people from very different cultures and religions can agree on basic values. We can agree on fundamental prerequisites for a dignified human life as well as the practical measures needed to overcome poverty and injustice in the world today. The MDGs are a fragile, but nonetheless valuable measure of global solidarity. For this reason it is essential that we engage with them.

Those who advocate for the MDGs must come to “See” and to “Judge” that the goals demand a personal as well as an institutional response. The goals of reducing poverty or moving toward sustainable communities are critical ones, but the achievement of the MDGs demands much more. We feel they are feasible and a good starting point towards the eradication of dehumanising poverty. However, the success of the MDGs requires a paradigm shift or inner awakening of the human community to the values of service and compassion. Without these values, history shows us that we cannot solve problems of poverty, water, sanitation, peace, violence, inequality, and development. Let us mobilize our financial resources, our political policies, our technologies, our faith, our compassion, our service, and our courage to “Act” and hold ourselves, our governments, and our institutions accountable to fulfilling the promises of the Millennium Development Goals.

## Suggestions for Evaluation

We recommend that you evaluate your efforts to implement some aspects of the MDGs, both as an individual, or as a member of a group or community. This could take place at regular intervals, but particularly on an annual basis. We offer these reflection questions.

1. What are some of the significant advances you have made with promoting the MDGs?
2. What are some of the difficulties you encountered?
3. Share with one another how you feel about your experience of working on the MDGs.
4. Share with others why you chose to work on the particular issue you selected and what your work on it has meant to you.
5. Describe any shifts you feel you have made concerning your beliefs about the work needed to achieve the success of the MDGs.
6. What do you believe you need to do now to continue working for the achievement of the MDGs?

The future of humanity rests with people who are capable of providing the generations to come with reasons for living and for hope.

*The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, 31.*

# Resources

## Prayer for the Achievement of the MILLENNIUM DEVELOPMENT GOALS

In a world where so many go hungry,  
Let us make the fruits of Creation available for all.  
In a world where one billion of our brothers and sisters do not  
have safe drinking water,  
Let us help the waters run clear.  
In a world where so many children die so young,  
and so many mothers die in child birth, and so many families are ravaged by disease,  
Let us bring health and healing.

In a world where women carry such heavy burdens,  
Let us recognize and restore the rights of all.  
Let us join together, with a new sense of global community,  
A new awareness of our need for one another  
And for this fragile planet,  
To meet the clear challenges of the Millennium Goals,  
To bring hope as substantial as bread,  
To make human dignity as visible as wheat in the fields.

Center of Concern

## Statistics

The statistics in this booklet are taken from the following sources:

Bread for the World:

[www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics](http://www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics)

CorpWatch:

<http://www.corpwatch.org/>

Country Reports on the Millennium Development Goals

[http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?cid=79&page=1&detailed=&basic=\\_m=all&sort=country&refreshprofile](http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?cid=79&page=1&detailed=&basic=_m=all&sort=country&refreshprofile)

Progress Report on MDGs

<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGProgressChart2006.pdf>

Human Development Report 2006 (<http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/>)

Millennium Campaign - (English) :

<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/>

Millennium Campaign - (Español) :

<http://spanish.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=8nJBLNNnGhF&b=308314>

State of the World's Children 2007

[www.unicef.org/sowc07](http://www.unicef.org/sowc07)

UNICEF:

<http://www.unicef.org/mdg/childmortality.html>

UNESCO:

[www.unesco.org](http://www.unesco.org)

World Development Indicators:

[www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org)

## General Resources

- Action Aid:  
[www.actionaid.org.uk](http://www.actionaid.org.uk)
- Bread for the World:  
[www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics](http://www.bread.org/learn/hunger-basics)
- Country Reports on the Millennium Development Goals:  
[www.undg.org/content.cfm?cid=79&page=1&detailed=&basic=\\_m=all&sort=country&refreshprofile](http://www.undg.org/content.cfm?cid=79&page=1&detailed=&basic=_m=all&sort=country&refreshprofile)
- Human Development Report 2006:  
<http://hdr.undp.org/hdr2006/>
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change:  
<http://www.ipcc.ch/>
- Oxfam:  
[http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what\\_you\\_can\\_do/campaign/mdg.htm?searchterm=mdg](http://www.oxfam.org.uk/what_you_can_do/campaign/mdg.htm?searchterm=mdg)
- Progress Report on MDGs:  
<http://mdgs.un.org/unsd/mdg/Resources/Static/Products/Progress2006/MDGProgressChart2006.pdf>
- Populorum Progressio:  
[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/paul\\_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_pvi\\_enc\\_26031967\\_populorum\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/paul_vi/encyclicals/documents/hf_pvi_enc_26031967_populorum_en.html)
- State of the World's Children 2007:  
[www.unicef.org/sowc07](http://www.unicef.org/sowc07)
- Stern Report:  
[http://www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/independent\\_reviews/stern\\_review\\_economics\\_climate\\_change/sternreview\\_index.cfm](http://www.hmtreasury.gov.uk/independent_reviews/stern_review_economics_climate_change/sternreview_index.cfm)
- UNICEF - (English, Français, Español):  
<http://www.unicef.org/mdg/childmortality.html>
- UNESCO - Education (English, Français, Español):  
<http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php>
- Water Aid - (English, Français, Español, Português):  
<http://www.wateraid.org.uk/>

## Millennium Development Goals

- “About the MDGs: MDG Basics – Are we on track to meet the MDGs by 2015.” (Esp, Français):  
[http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics\\_ontrack.shtml](http://www.undp.org/mdg/basics_ontrack.shtml)
- Campagna del Millennio (Italiano):  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.it/>
- Donal Dorr, Christian Mission and the Millennium Development Goals:  
<http://www.caritas.org/jumpNews.asp?idLang=ENG&idChannel=31&idUser=0&idNews=4627>
- Les Objectifs du Millénaire pour le Développement:  
<http://www.un.org/french/millenniumgoals/>
- Information about the MDG Campaigns in the countries of Europe:  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173898>
- Information about the MDG Campaigns in Latin America and the Caribbean:  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173894>
- Information about the MDG Campaigns in Africa:  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173893>
- Information about the MDG Campaigns in Asia:  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173897>
- Information about the MDG Campaigns in Oceania:  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173899>
- Information about the MDG Campaigns in North America:  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=grKVL2NLE&b=173895>
- Millennium Campaign: (English)  
<http://www.millenniumcampaign.org/>
- Millennium Campaign: (Español)  
<http://spanish.millenniumcampaign.org/site/pp.asp?c=8nJBLNNnGhF&b=308314>
- Objetivos de Desenvolvimento do Milênio:  
[http://www.pnud.org.br/odm/odm\\_vermelho.php](http://www.pnud.org.br/odm/odm_vermelho.php)
- Samir Amin, “The Millennium Development Goals: a Critique from the South.”  
<http://www.monthlyreview.org/0306amin2.htm>

## Roman Catholic Organizations

CAFOD: Catholic Agency for Overseas Development -  
(English, Cymraeg, Español, Français, Português):

<http://www.cafod.org.uk/>

Caritas Internationalis - (English, Français, Español) :

<http://www.caritas.org/jumpCh.asp?idUser=0&idChannel=31&idLang=ENG>

[http://www.caritas.org/jumpNews.asp?idLang=ENG&idChannel=](http://www.caritas.org/jumpNews.asp?idLang=ENG&idChannel=31&idUser=0&idNews=3317)

[31&idUser=0&idNews=3317](http://www.caritas.org/jumpNews.asp?idLang=ENG&idChannel=31&idUser=0&idNews=3317)

Catholic Relief Services (CRS) - (English) :

<http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/globalpoverty/MDGs.pdf>

Caritas Australia:

<http://ozspirit.info/index.html>

Center of Concern

<http://www.coc.org/>

CIDSE – (English and French)

[http://www.cidse.org/detail\\_page.phtml?page=tg2\\_mdg&lang=en](http://www.cidse.org/detail_page.phtml?page=tg2_mdg&lang=en)

Misereor - (Deutsch):

<http://www.misereor.de/>

Manos Unidas - (Español):

[www.manosunidas.org](http://www.manosunidas.org)

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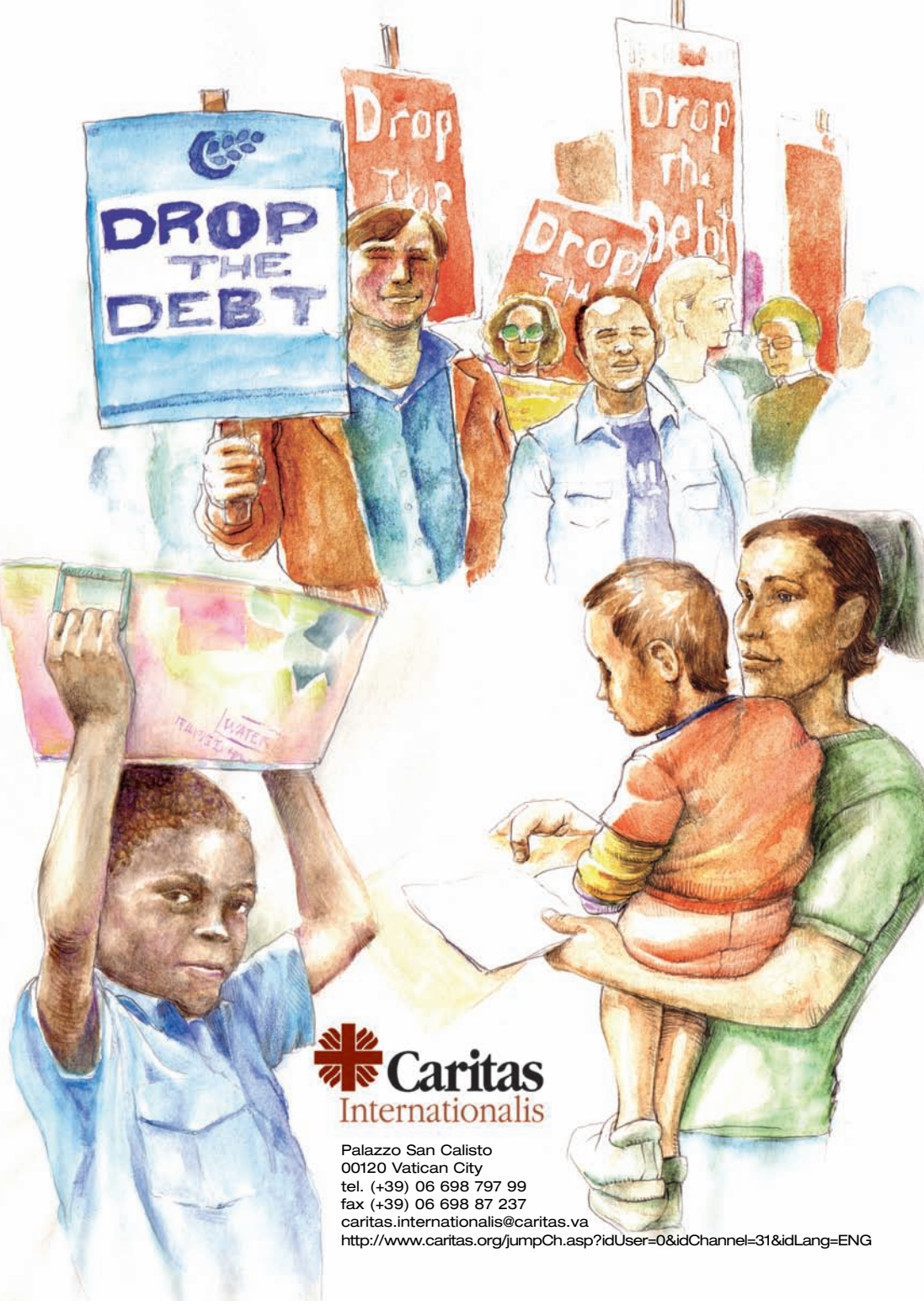
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