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# See. Judge. Act. Training Manual





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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Executive Summary

The *See, Judge, Act* (SJA) Training Manual, developed by Cardijn Community Australia, is a transformative resource designed to revitalise parish life by fostering active engagement and faith formation. Rooted in Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's methodology, the manual guides participants through three key steps:

1. **See:** Examine the realities and challenges within the local community.
2. **Judge:** Reflect on these observations through the lens of Scripture and Catholic teachings.
3. **Act:** Develop and implement actions to address identified needs.

By adopting this methodology, parishes can strengthen community connections, deepen faith formation, and align with themes such as those of Jubilee 2025, embracing their role as "pilgrims of hope" and bringing faith to life in practical and impactful ways.

The manual offers practical tools, enquiry modules (e.g., *My Community, My Work*), and prompts for Gospel reflection and group discussion, serving as a catalyst for renewal and active engagement within the parish and the wider community.

For more information and to access the manual, visit the Cardijn Community Australia [website](#).

## 1.2 Cardijn for Adults

Cardinal Joseph Cardijn's exhortation – "You can make a difference!" - and his "See Judge Act" method empowered generations of youth around the world in the twentieth century. In the post-war period Melbourne had one of the biggest Young Christian Worker movements in the world. Although their histories are not widely known, Cardijn youth movements made significant marks on Australian society.

Cardijn's major mission was youth. The period of youth, Cardijn knew, was a critical life-stage, when the "personality, moral, social and civil sense, are being formed." At this same time, he noted, the young person was for the first time separating from parents, teachers, and priests to enter and be influenced by the secular environment of work.

However, Cardijn was also conscious of "the urgent need for an apostolate among adults" without which, he said, "all the efforts of the young people will lead to a dead-end".<sup>1</sup> While Cardijn's ideas were incorporated into some Vatican II documents and

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<sup>1</sup> Joseph Cardijn, *Laymen Into Action*, Geoffrey Chapman, London, 1964, p.103



continue to be incorporated in official church statements to the present time, there naturally lingers a strong association of Cardijn with youth. There have been limited attempts to form groups of adult lay Catholics to put his ideas into practice.

### 1.3 A Training Manual

This manual is a first attempt to adapt the Cardijn's methods, famously used for youth in the Young Christian Workers (YCW) and Young Catholic Students (YCS) movements, for adults. Cardijn's basic method has been interpreted differently in different eras, and in different Australian states, so as well as re-interpreting it for adults in the modern era, we have had to come to grips with the historical variants of the method.

It seems Cardijn himself would not be concerned about the challenges he has created in leaving us a mission without a blueprint:

*“In the organisation of these methods it is useless to try to follow an artificial and preconceived plan, with a superficial appearance of simplicity. We must have the courage to centre these methods on the very plan of Providence and start from real life, which is so rich and indestructible.”<sup>2</sup>*

Cardijn has two raw materials: the real circumstances of our lives; and our lives that were created in God's image. His method of 'Inquiries' calls us to systematically question the former ('see') in the light of the latter ('judge'), and to then 'make a difference' ('act') to both our personal lives and to our own societies and culture, the people with whom we share the world.

The details of this method are for us all to work out. The sample 'Enquiries' in this manual, and the variations provided, are presented as a guide. They will have been successful when groups adapt them to their own circumstances.

### 1.4 Who Was Joseph Cardijn?

Born in 1882 in Schaerbeek, Belgium, Joseph Cardijn grew to maturity amid the industrial revolution that swept nineteenth century Europe.

As a boy, he watched child workers tramping to work in factories. And he learnt from his father about the efforts of social reformers to improve their living and working conditions.

Inspired by concerned priests like Fr Adolf Daens and by Pope Leo XIII's iconic encyclical, *Rerum Novarum*, Cardijn entered the minor seminary in 1897. When his

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<sup>2</sup> Cardijn, *Laymen Into Action*, p.53

father died prematurely in 1903, he made a private vow to consecrate his life to the cause of workers.



Studies at the University of Louvain introduced him to many of the leading social movements of the day including the Sillon in France and the trade union movement in England.

At Easter 1912, after five years teaching Latin at another minor seminary, he was finally named to the parish of Our Lady of Laeken. Within a year he had organised groups for over one thousand women including the first young workers groups. The same year he met young Fernand Tonnet, who would become one of the famous “founder trio” of the embryonic YCW movement.

Imprisoned by the occupying German forces during World War I, Cardijn took the opportunity to draft what would become the manual of the future YCW.

Once the war was over, he was back in action with Tonnet, who had also survived the war as a soldier. Together with Paul Garcet and Jacques Meert, they launched the *Young Trade Unionists*, which in 1924 adopted the name *Young Christian Workers*.

But the emerging YCW was controversial – it both resembled the Sillon movement that had been closed under Pope Pius X and it reeked of socialism with its worker orientation. Malines-Brussels Cardinal Desire Mercier was on the point of banning it, but Cardijn convinced him to allow an appeal to Pope Pius XI.

To the surprise of many, Pius XI backed Cardijn and the YCW. In 1935, he declared it an “authentic model” of Catholic Action.

Meanwhile, the YCW had already crossed borders in Europe spreading to other francophone countries. By the mid-1930s, small movements existed already in North and South America, Africa, and Asia.

In Australia, Catholic Action proponents Paul McGuire and Kevin T. Kelly were also promoting the YCW. In 1939, Kelly published a short pamphlet which led to its foundation in Australia, particularly under the dynamic leadership of Fr Frank Lombard and lay leaders Ted Long and Frank McCann.

By the 1950s, Cardijn was a recognised international figure, touring the world. He gave the keynote address at the first international lay apostolate congress in Rome in 1951.

In 1957, he brought 32,000 young workers to Rome for a World Assembly at the Vatican followed by the first International YCW Council.

In a meeting with Pope John XXIII, Cardijn proposed the writing of an encyclical to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*. This became the encyclical *Mater et Magistra* which also formally recognised the See Judge Act method.



Pope John also named Cardijn to the Commission on Laity preparing Vatican II. In 1965, Pope Paul VI made him a cardinal enabling him to participate fully in the last session of the Council where he gave three speeches.

In 1958, Cardijn made his first visit to Australia speaking at public rallies in Melbourne, Adelaide and elsewhere. He came again in 1966, this time as a cardinal, in one of his last international trips before his death at the age of eighty-four on 24 July 1967.

## 1.5 The Role of the Laity

Joseph Cardijn often told the following story:

*“Pope Pius XI once said to me with a smile, ‘I write encyclicals, and I’m very glad to do it, but it’s impossible for me to transmit all that they contain to the workshops and factories, because I’m just not there!’ The onus to do this is on the laypeople who work there. Neither the Bishops nor priests can do it because they aren’t in these environments.*

*The people who are actually living and working in the ordinary circumstances of everyday life are the laypeople, and it is up to them to carry out Christ’s mission in all the different temporal sectors of life and to make the whole church present there. I can never repeat this often enough: the lay apostolate is irreplaceable.”*

Cardijn was a pioneering crusader for the ‘apostolate’ of the laity. “The lay apostolate, working in the world,” he said, “is building the city of men (people) which must also be the city of God; it is transforming the earth into a better dwelling place.” His messages of the laity’s unique potential “to restore all things in Christ,” and “consecrate the world,” were reflected in statements of the Vatican Council:

*“Secular duties and activities belong properly although not exclusively to laypeople. ... Let the layperson not imagine that his/her pastors are always such experts, that to every problem which arises, however complicated, they can readily give him/her a concrete solution, or even that such is their mission. Rather, enlightened by Christian wisdom and giving close attention to the teaching authority of the Church, let the layperson take on his/her own distinctive role.”*

*(Gaudium et Spes, ‘The Church in the Modern World,’ Pope Paul VI, 1965)*

*“Laypeople should take up as their own proper task the renewal of the temporal order. If the role of the Hierarchy is to teach and to*



*interpret authentically the norms of morality to be followed in this matter, it belongs to the laypeople, without waiting passively for orders and directives, to take the initiative freely and to infuse a Christian spirit into the mentality, customs, laws and structures of the community in which they live.”*

(Pope Paul VI, 'Apostolic Letter to Cardinal Maurice Roy, President of the Council Of The Laity,' 1971)

*“Their primary and immediate task is not to establish and develop the ecclesial community -- this is the specific role of the pastors -- but to put to use every Christian and evangelical possibility latent but already present and active in the affairs of the world. Their own field of evangelizing activity is the vast and complicated world of politics, society, and economics, but also the world of culture, of the sciences and the arts, of international life, of the mass media. It also includes other realities which are open to evangelization, such as human love, the family, the education of children and adolescents, professional work, suffering.”*

(*Evangelii Nuntiandi*, Pope Paul VI, 1975)

“This lay apostolate is as different from the priestly apostolate as the lay state and lay life are different from the priestly state and life,” said Cardijn.<sup>3</sup> This “specifically lay apostolate of the laity” ... “must act on life itself.” “The priest’s and the layperson’s mission differ from each other not only because of the kind of apostolate they exercise, but because of their fields of action. The layperson’s apostolic field is civic, cultural, economic, and social life, the family, work – the whole of secular life.”

“Experience proves,” Cardijn never tired of repeating, “that the discovery of the apostolic dimension of daily life produces incredible results in the simplest Christian lives: both in the radical transformation of environments and as an irresistible impetus towards personal perfection.” “We can demand sanctity, perfection, discernment and competence of laypeople in the world” (“just as we demand them of religious”), he said, and we obtain “unheard-of-results.”

The primary field of work for the laity is not in the church, but in the world.

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<sup>3</sup> Cardijn, *Laymen Into Action*, p.39





## 1.6 Further Readings and Resources

1962: *The essential and irreplaceable apostolate proper to lay people.*

The 1962 article "The Essential and Irreplaceable Apostolate Proper to Lay People" highlights the distinctive role of laypersons within the Catholic Church. It emphasises that laypeople, due to their secular position, are uniquely called to engage with temporal affairs and align them with God's plan. This mission, distinct from the clergy and religious, focuses on sanctifying the world from within. The article stresses the importance of lay involvement in evangelisation, charitable activities, and social justice, foreshadowing the themes later formalised in the Second Vatican Council's decree, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.

Available at: [1962: The essential and irreplaceable apostolate proper to lay people – The lay apostolate](#)

2020: *Bishop Robert McElroy – A roadmap for the Synodal process.*

On February 6, 2020, Bishop McElroy of San Diego, gave a lecture, title "A Roadmap for the Synodal Process." In that lecture, Bishop McElroy highlights the Synodal process's use of the See, Judge, Act method. In the *See* phase, the Church listens to the lived experiences of the faithful, identifying challenges and opportunities. The *Judge* phase involves reflecting on these realities through the lens of the Gospel and Church teachings to discern God's will. Finally, the *Act* phase focuses on implementing actions that reflect this discernment, fostering a more inclusive, participatory, and mission-driven Church in alignment with the Synodal vision.

Available at: [2020: Robert McElroy: A roadmap for the synodal process - See Judge Act](#)

### Enquiries

Recent enquiries developed by Cardijn Community Australia is available at <https://cardijncommunityaustralia.org/enquiry/>.

### Cardijn Community Australia

Cardijn Community Australia (CCA) is an organisation committed to empowering laypeople to engage in social transformation, drawing inspiration from the life and work of Joseph Cardijn. Central to CCA's mission is the promotion of the "See-Judge-Act" method, which encourages individuals and groups to observe social realities, reflect on them considering the Gospel and Catholic Social Teaching, and take concrete actions to address identified issues.



CCA provides various resources, including the Joseph Cardijn Digital Library, the *See, Judge, Act* Training Manual, and enquiry modules designed to support structured reflection and action on contemporary social challenges. The organisation also collaborates with allied movements and offers training to foster communities that actively reflect on the Gospel and respond to social issues.

Individuals can join CCA by downloading a membership form from the [website](#) and contacting the organisation for further information. Through these efforts, CCA aims to build a community that actively participates in the Church and society, contributing positively to the common good.

### The Joseph Cardijn Digital Library

The Joseph Cardijn Digital Library is an invaluable resource for enriching the "See, Judge, Act" Training Manual by Cardijn Community Australia. It contains over 500 original documents by Joseph Cardijn, including many of his most renowned speeches and writings, collectively referred to as the Cardijn Classics. These resources provide both historical context and practical insights into the "See, Judge, Act" methodology.

#### Key Resources:

1. **The Study Circle and its Methods (1926):**

This document presents the first systematic exposition of the "See, Judge, Act" method, as featured in the inaugural edition of the Girls' YCW Manual.

2. **Social Formation by the YCW:**

Authored by Fr Joseph Arendt SJ, a collaborator of Cardijn, this article explores the "See, Judge, Act" methodology and its practical application within the Young Christian Workers movement.

3. **Cardijn Reflections:**

This section offers bi-weekly reflections on Cardijn's teachings, including the "See, Judge, Act" approach, highlighting its continued relevance to contemporary issues.

4. **The YCW (1938):**

In this article, Cardijn provides a concise overview of the YCW method, encapsulating its principles and practices.

The library's comprehensive collection ensures a deeper understanding and effective implementation of the "See, Judge, Act" methodology. It serves as a rich repository for training, reflection, and action inspired by Cardijn's vision.

It is available at <https://josephcardijn.com/en/home>

## The Australian Cardijn Institute



The Australian Cardijn Institute (ACI), established in Melbourne in 2018, is dedicated to promoting the vision and methods pioneered by Joseph Cardijn, founder of the Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement.

### Aims and Objectives:

ACI focuses on:

1. **Research and Studies:** Advancing research based on Cardijn's principles.
2. **Education and Training:** Organising programmes for community leaders and church workers interested in the Cardijn approach.
3. **Resource Development:** Creating activities and materials aligned with Cardijn's vision.
4. **Collaboration:** Partnering with groups and movements committed to the Cardijn methodology.

### Membership and Activities:

ACI comprises members from Victoria, South Australia, Western Australia, Queensland, and New South Wales.

The institute regularly conducts webinars, publishes newsletters, and engages in various projects to further its mission. Through these efforts, ACI continues to foster the Cardijn legacy, empowering individuals and communities to engage actively in social and ecclesial transformation. The link is [Australian Cardijn Institute](#).

## Cardijn Research

Cardijn Research is a blog curated by Stefan Gigacz, dedicated to sharing articles, information, and resources related to the life and work of Joseph Cardijn, founder of the Young Christian Workers (YCW) movement. The blog delves into various aspects of Cardijn's legacy, including the movements he inspired, such as the Specialised Catholic Action movements.

### Content Highlights:

- **Historical Insights:** The blog explores significant milestones in the development of the YCW, such as the transition from "La Jeunesse Syndicaliste" to "La Jeunesse Ouvrière" in April 1924.
- **Theological Discussions:** It examines the influence of Cardijn's methodologies on contemporary theological thought, including reflections on the "see-judge-act" approach and its relevance to modern ecclesial practices.

- **Synodality and Lay Movements:** The blog discusses the role of lay movements in fostering a synodal church, highlighting the contributions of figures like Cardinal Pierre and their perspectives on Pope Francis's application of the "see-judge-act" method.



By subscribing to Cardijn Research, readers can stay informed about ongoing research and discussions related to Joseph Cardijn's enduring impact on social and ecclesial movements. The link is <https://cardijnresearch.org/>



## 2 The Cardijn Method

### 2.1 The Fundamentals

The fundamentals of the Cardijn style of formation program include:

- That we meet in small groups.
- We engage in See. Judge. Act.
- We are formed through action.
- A Mission of Christians in the world
- Dignity of the human person
- Dignity of human work

Small groups consist of:

- One or two experienced leaders
- Six to eight people (ideally) per group
- Weekly (if possible) meetings
- Meeting for eight- or twelve-week terms, suggested three times per year.

Items of the basic Cardijn Community Australia meeting agenda are:

1. Welcome and Opening Prayer
2. Gospel Reflection
3. Social Enquiry
4. Review of Life
5. General Business
6. Closing Prayer

### 2.2 The Enquiry

Cardijn also pioneered exposure of the laity to scripture, and participation in liturgy. His meetings began with reading and discussion a gospel passage. These gospel reflections remain an important part of the practice of Cardijn groups and are often called 'Gospel Enquiries.'

Another part of Cardijn's approach entailed what he called the 'Review of Life.' Many people have applied this to their everyday lives, using the 'See. Judge. Act.' method to help them find the path through their personal and professional challenges. Or, in a group, the sharing of personal circumstances or observations might be found to be something that others have also experienced, and it may thus become a starting point for a group response to a wider social issue.



The third and the major type of Enquiry in Australian YCW and YCS practice has been the 'Systematic Enquiry,' now more often called the 'Social Enquiry.' Systematic Enquiries explore aspects of life which all members encounter in some way or other, for example budgeting, binge drinking, road safety, or mental health issues. They can either be written by a higher level of a Cardijn organisation for use in its branches, or they can be written by the small groups themselves.

A great advantage of the Social Enquiry as a means of examining our worlds and issues of justice, is that they are indeed 'systematic.' Firstly, the set method provides discipline on meeting dynamics and increases the likelihood that meetings will be conducted efficiently. It also entails accountability, wherein members are encouraged to take some personal or group action, be it practical works, or in the first instance just further Enquiry into a subject. Secondly it improves the likelihood that investigation of social issues will indeed be 'systematic' and thorough. The concrete questions help us to 'see' our world; we then make sure that we really know, or find out about, a subject which we are considering acting or speaking upon. For example, one parish Enquiry of 'My Community' revealed aspects of family dysfunction in the neighbourhood that would not have been suspected by most churchgoers.

This Manual includes a Sample Enquiry for use by adults in parishes. The topics echo the themes of 'family,' 'work' and 'leisure' that Cardijn identified as key to the lives of the youth he was working with. They are: -

- 'My Community'
- 'My Home'
- 'My Work'

The Sample Enquiry provides four weeks to look at each of these areas. This means it is very condensed, with many more questions that would usually be included in the 'See' section, for the sake of demonstrating the type of questions that can be used. It is unlikely that all the questions could be adequately considered in the number of weeks provided. Each of these three topics – community, home, work – would best be the subject of an 8- or 12-week Enquiry.

As stated previously, Joseph Cardijn provided principles rather than a detailed blueprint for the structure of Enquiries, and consequently many different approaches have been and are being used. To demonstrate this, several examples of Inquires used by the Australian YCW are included in Appendix A. Appendix B is a page from Charles Rue's *Let the Son Shine*, an on-line investigation into climate change using the See Judge Act model.



## 2.3 The Small Group

A fundamental element of the Cardijn method is that it is undertaken in small groups.

Such a formation would always be “a personalizing one which developed personal conscience and personal resources,” as in the ‘Review of Life.’ At the same time, “the apostolate of each layperson must be essentially communal, a collaboration with all his neighbours” said Cardijn. The dimension “of a concerted, group apostolate” - of group action - was important.

This manual is designed to be used by small groups in parishes.

In Cardijn’s view “the parish community, which is the Church present and immediate, on the spot, is an essentially apostolic and missionary institution.”<sup>4</sup>

*“Each parish is, and must be, a missionary parish,” he said, “because it is in each parish here, as well as beyond the seas in some Asiatic or African country, that the problem has to be faced.”*

While he had started the YCW “in the very heart of parish activity,” and always wanted it to be on a parish basis, Cardijn’s vision also extended beyond parishes. CCA hopes to consider the applications of Cardijn’s method beyond parish (such as in Church organisations, or religious orders) in future editions of this Manual.

In the working of small groups, Cardijn advocated a principle which he called ‘like to like.’ He found, for example, that people preferred to meet with others of similar age group - youths, retired, middle aged. Similarly, those in similar situations, for example, students, young adults, those in similar employment, or neighbours. While a ‘like to like’ group is best, it is less likely to be possible with adults, especially at an early stage, and is not essential.

Cardijn was also concerned that members be on “a completely equal footing” and warned that such groups must “... never form cliques cut off from the world, shut up in ivory towers which are a pretext for self-satisfied judgements on those who do not share the same outlook.”<sup>5</sup>

## 2.4 See. Judge. Act.

The Cardijn method is intensely practical, beginning with the material and immediate circumstances of our own life, and the lives of those around us. For Cardijn, our own environment, the world on our doorsteps, is also a

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<sup>4</sup> Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, p.123

<sup>5</sup> Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, pp.152-4



missionary field, a place that can be made whole through individual and collective action. “We must start with life itself if we want laypeople to transform and consecrate it” he said.<sup>6</sup>

To achieve this Cardijn developed the system known as ‘See. Judge. Act.’ “Laypeople are formed first of all by the discovery of facts, followed by a Christian judgement, resulting in the actions they plan or plans they carry into effect, the responsibilities they shoulder,” he said.

It was a method that was later endorsed by the second Vatican Council, and which continues to appear in ecclesiastical statements around the world.

*“There are three stages which should normally be followed in the reduction of social principles into practice. First, one reviews the concrete situation; secondly, one forms a judgment on it in the light of these same principles; thirdly, one decides what in the circumstances can and should be done to implement these principles. These are the three stages that are usually expressed in the three terms: look, judge, act... Knowledge acquired in this way does not remain merely abstract but is seen as something that must be translated into action.”*

*Mater et Magistra* (‘On Christianity and Social Progress’), Pope John XXIII, 1961

This manual is based on the Australian YCW expression of this method:

See	Judge	Act
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What is happening?</li><li>• Why is this happening? (<i>the cause</i>)</li><li>• Who is being affected (<i>the consequences</i>)</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What do you think about all of this? (<i>Why</i>)</li><li>• What do your values, beliefs and faith say?</li><li>• What do you think should be happening?</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• What would you like to change? (<i>Long term</i>)</li><li>• What action are you going to take now? (<i>Short term</i>)</li><li>• Whom can you involve in your action?</li></ul>

<sup>6</sup> Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, p.149





## 2.5 Doing an Enquiry

The Enquiry applies to facts, on a specific question, which members of a group discover for themselves. The 'see' questions invite members to be observant, to hold their heads up and to look around them.

The items to be discussed are factual. For example, on the subject of 'single fathers,' the Enquiry might ask 'Am I a single father,' or 'Do I know any single fathers? We start with facts rather than opinions or generalisations. We are not part of a discussion group, speculating on issues. Instead, we start with a real, concrete, question with the intention of going through the process with a view to the possibility of taking some action.

The 'Act' section can be one person taking an action alone. Or the group may decide to act together; for example, organising a function at the local school that would enable single fathers to come together with their children.

This action is then reflected upon at a later meeting to consider the success of the action, and whether further action needs to be taken.

### 2.5.1 Role of Leaders, or Group Convenors

Becoming trained in the method is critical. "They always have to be trained," said Cardijn. "I have never found a ready-made militant."

There have been a variety of names given to leaders in the Cardijn movement over the years, from "militants" to simply "leaders." The word "convenor" has also been used. The dictionary definition of the word – 'gather, assemble, bring together, call, come together, congregate, convoke, meet, muster, rally, summon' - speaks powerfully to Christians who have had a Cardijn formation.

The experienced convenor is the key person in the group. Ideally, he or she is like the coach of a sporting team who demonstrates, observes, corrects, disciplines, encourages, and inspires. He or she is keen to train the group, to pass their knowledge and experience on.

Some fundamental elements of being trained in the Cardijn method include:

- commitment to the meetings.
- honouring the repetitive format of the enquiries.
- supervision by a person with experience in the method.

CCA appreciates that to bring a modern adult Cardijn movement to life, it will need to provide resources and support for convenors of adult groups. Initially convenors might work at a regional rather than local parish base, training



groups of interested veterans and recruits. They might also visit parish groups who wish to know more about the Cardijn method.

### 2.5.1.1 Personal Sensitivities

Some matters in an enquiry might touch on personal matters that are difficult for a person to discuss in a group. Nobody is needed or expected to talk. But listening to other people discussing this issue may nonetheless lead to that person thinking about it for the first time, or in a new way. Or it may inspire the person to talk later, in a more private way, to one of the members of the group.

### 2.5.2 Creating an Enquiry

It is likely that the sample Enquiries provided here will lead to further Enquiries regarding some of the issues discovered. After having practised the basic samples provided here, groups are encouraged to create such further Enquiries. It is by this method that real situations will be addressed, and Enquiries become more effective.

There are many other questions that participants will find themselves asking about the sample Social Enquiries provided. Enquiries are dynamic, and anyone can add to the questions. Any of the questions in the samples provided could be the beginning of another Enquiry. For example, the question of whether there are single parents in 'My Community' may raise further questions for some people. So, a new Systematic Enquiry could be written simply by asking questions (the 'See' section of the Enquiry) about the circumstances of single mothers in the locality, or the life situations fathers separated from their children.

The first thing to be done in developing a Social Enquiry is writing some questions for the 'See' sections. This can usually be done by one or two people sitting at a kitchen table.

The 'See' questions aims to get the facts. It should seek concrete information about the lives of the participants rather than opinions, generalisations, or theories.

It is a good idea, if possible, to construct Enquiries in such a way that they can be effective both to an individual in the shaping of their own personal responses to an issue, and to a group in directing their consideration of a broader social issue. Where possible, questions should be constructed to ask not only whether I am affected by a particular situation, but whether it affects someone I know. For example, 'Am I unemployed, or do I know someone who is unemployed?' This encourages us to go beyond our individual situation, and to consider the circumstances of another person I know. This may lead to further Enquiries of that person, or from government statistics or reports. It improves the possibility that the Enquiry will become a social, rather than just a personal, Enquiry. The possibility for action regarding that situation is also improved.



While it is possible and can be advantageous to also customise the 'Judge' and the 'Act' questions (see YCW examples in Appendix A), the three standard questions also work well for all Enquiries.

Additional statements, such as extracts from Catholic Social Teachings, can be added to inform our judgements.

Even in the 1950s and 60s Cardijn appreciated the limitless potential for Social Enquiries in the future. And, that such activism would present many challenges, and raise many points of contention.

- “What a vast number of investigations must be carried out concerning vocational guidance, automation, the unemployment of young people and adults, travelling and migration, the life of the big cities, the rural world and its relation to the industrial world, ecumenism and the lay apostolate, missionary problems and inter-racial relations. And think of what the lay apostolate can do in international fields!”
- “Everyday experience has made us aware than an apostolate orientated in this way will stir up a whole series of questions and concrete problems: What is the layperson’s apostolic responsibility towards the temporal aspects of life? Is the layperson’s presence in the Church and in the world a responsibility of the Church? How far is the layperson dependent in his apostolate, and how far is he autonomous? What methods of organisation are most suited to the development of an adult apostolate? How can the ecclesiastical character of these methods be reconciled with the incarnation that must be carried out in secular spheres? Each of these questions, and many others, must be carefully studied, while considering doctrine, experience, and particular needs. The answers will doubtless involve many differences of opinion, but they should never lose sight of the fact that the lay apostolate is a way of life which grows unceasingly while adapting itself to the human condition. This growth cannot be hindered or paralysed by ready-made solutions or abstract discussions.”

(Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, pp. 102, 106)



## 3 Part C: Example

### 3.1 Week One: My Community

#### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

#### GOSPEL REFLECTION

Then Jesus turned to the crowd and said, "When you see clouds beginning to form in the west, you say, 'Here comes a shower.' And you are right. When the south wind blows, you say, 'Today will be a scorcher.' And it is. You hypocrites! You know how to interpret the appearance of the earth and the sky, but you can't interpret these present times. Why can't you decide for yourselves what is right?" (Luke 12: 54-57)

#### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: 'My Neighbourhood.'

*See*

- Where do I live? (A dormitory suburb, an inner suburb, an industrial area, a small town, a farm?)
- Is housing affordable for average income families? Is there any inadequate accommodation, or homelessness, within the district?
- Are there shopping, health, or educational services within a reasonable distance? What about social and recreational facilities: parks, sporting facilities, hotels, and clubs?
- Are people able to access public transport?
- What are the natural features of the area, the fauna, flora, creeks, forests etc? Are there opportunities for involvement?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Can you involve anyone else in your action?

#### REVIEW OF LIFE

Observations on personal issues and ongoing actions that occurred during the past week, and information regarding other events or points of interest of the past week.

#### GENERAL BUSINESS

Record of the Previous Meeting (Attendance & Resolutions)

#### CLOSING PRAYER



“However, if one looks at the regions of our planet, one realizes immediately that humanity has disappointed the divine expectation. Above all in our time, man has unhesitatingly devastated wooded plains and valleys, polluted the waters, deformed the earth’s habitat, made the air unbreathable, upset the hydrogeological and atmospheric systems, blighted green spaces, implemented uncontrolled forms of industrialization, humiliating -- to use an image of Dante Alighieri ("Paradiso," XXII, 151) -- the earth, that flowerbed that is our dwelling.

It is necessary, therefore, to stimulate and sustain the "ecological conversion," which over these last decades has made humanity more sensitive when facing the catastrophe toward which it was moving. Man is no longer "minister" of the Creator. However, as an autonomous despot, he is understanding that he must finally stop before the abyss. "Another welcome sign is the growing attention being paid to the 'quality of life' and to 'ecology', especially in more developed societies, where people’s expectations are no longer concentrated so much on problems of survival as on the search for an overall improvement of living conditions" (*Evangelium Vitae*, 27).”

Pope John Paul II, *General Audience Address*, January 17, 2001

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“A vision of man and things that is sundered from any reference to the transcendent has led to the rejection of the concept of creation and to the attribution of a completely independent existence to man and nature. The bonds that unite the world to God have thus been broken. This rupture has also resulted in separating man from the world and, more radically, has impoverished man's very identity.

Responsibility for the environment, the common heritage of humanity, extends not only to present needs but also to those of the future.

Care for the environment represents a challenge for all of humanity. It is a matter of a common and universal duty, that of respecting a common good, destined for all, by preventing anyone from using “with impunity the different categories of beings, whether living or inanimate — animals, plants, the natural elements — simply as one wishes, according to one's own economic needs.

The attitude that must characterize the way man acts in relation to creation is essentially one of gratitude and appreciation; the world, in fact, reveals the mystery of God who created and sustains it. If the relationship with God is placed aside, nature is stripped of its profound meaning and impoverished. If on the other hand, nature is rediscovered in its creaturely dimension, channels of communication with it can be established, its rich and symbolic meaning can be understood, allowing us to enter into its realm of mystery.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)



## 3.2 Week Two: My Community

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

The tax collectors and sinners were all drawing near to listen to Jesus, but the Pharisees and scribes began to complain, saying, “This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.”

So, Jesus addressed this parable to them. “What man among you having a hundred sheep and losing one of them would not leave the ninety-nine in the desert and go after the lost one until he finds it? And when he does find it, he sets it on his shoulders with great joy and, upon his arrival home, he calls together his friends and neighbours and says to them, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found my lost sheep.’ I tell you, in just the same way there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance.

“Or what woman having ten coins and losing one would not light a lamp and sweep the house, searching carefully until she finds it? And when she does find it, she calls together her friends and neighbours and says to them, ‘Rejoice with me because I have found the coin that I lost.’ In just the same way, I tell you there will be rejoicing among the angels of God over one sinner who repents.”  
(Luke 15: 1-8)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘My Neighbours & Community’

*See*

- Who lives in the neighbourhood (e.g. young families with children, single parents, older families, singles, migrants, refugees, retirees, the elderly)?
- Who are my immediate neighbours, in the street, in the units, in the apartment block?
- Would you say there is a strong sense of community?
- Is my local parish well provided for with facilities (e.g. schools, church)? Do many attend Sunday Mass? Are there social and spiritual activities and groups? Do we provide services to the wider community?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Can you involve anyone else in your action?

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### GENERAL BUSINESS

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## CLOSING PRAYER



“The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ.”

(*Gaudium et Spes*, ‘The Church in the Modern World,’ Pope Paul VI, 1965)

“The message of the Church's social doctrine regarding solidarity clearly shows that there exists an intimate bond between solidarity and the common good, between solidarity and the universal destination of goods, between solidarity and equality among men and peoples, between solidarity and peace in the world.

It translates into the willingness to give oneself for the good of one's neighbour, beyond any individual or particular interest.

The unsurpassed apex of the perspective indicated here is the life of Jesus of Nazareth, the New Man, who is one with humanity even to the point of “death on a cross” (Phil 2:8). In him it is always possible to recognize the living sign of that measureless and transcendent love of God-with-us, who takes on the infirmities of his people, walks with them, saves them, and makes them one. In him and thanks to him, life in society too, despite all its contradictions and ambiguities, can be rediscovered as a place of life and hope, in that it is a sign of grace that is continuously offered to all and because it is an invitation to ever higher and more involved forms of sharing.

Jesus of Nazareth makes the connection between solidarity and charity shine brightly before all, illuminating the entire meaning of this connection: “In the light of faith, solidarity seeks to go beyond itself, to take on the specifically Christian dimensions of total gratuity, forgiveness, and reconciliation. One's neighbour is then not only a human being with his or her own rights and a fundamental equality with everyone else, but becomes the living image of God the Father, redeemed by the blood of Jesus Christ and placed under the permanent action of the Holy Spirit. One's neighbour must therefore be loved, even if an enemy, with the same love with which the Lord loves him or her; and for that person's sake one must be ready for sacrifice, even the ultimate one: to lay down one's life for the brethren (cf. 1 Jn 3:16)”.

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)

- “How could we be content with a Church most of whose members were prompted by a purely passive docility? This sheep-like mentality, this lack of personally based conviction, is almost certainly the reason why so many lose interest in the Church and then fall away.
- ‘The Church is not a ghetto, set apart from the outside world, which preserves her members from its influence. We live among men.
- If layperson do not have an apostolic spirit, the Church will be driven out of secular life, both public and private ... she will no longer be able to pour out the spirit of Christ on every creature ...”

(Joseph Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, 1962)

### 3.3 Week Three: My Community



#### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

#### GOSPEL REFLECTION

And now a lawyer stood up and, to test him, asked, 'Master, what must I do to inherit eternal life?' He said to him, 'What is written in the Law? What is your reading of it?' He replied, 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind, and your neighbour as yourself.' Jesus said to him, 'You have answered right, do this and life is yours.' But the man was anxious to justify himself and said to Jesus, 'And who is my neighbour?'

In answer Jesus said, 'A man was once on his way down from Jerusalem to Jericho and fell into the hands of bandits; they stripped him, beat him and then made off, leaving him half dead. Now a priest happened to be travelling down the same road, but when he saw the man, he passed by on the other side. In the same way a Levite who came to the place saw him and passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan traveller who came on him was moved with compassion when he saw him. He went up to him and bandaged his wounds, pouring oil and wine on them. He then lifted him onto his own mount and took him to an inn and looked after him. Next day, he took out two denarii and handed them to the innkeeper and said, "Look after him, and on my way back I will make good any extra expense you have."

Which of these three, do you think, proved himself a neighbour to the man who fell into the bandits' hands?' He replied, 'The one who showed pity towards him.' Jesus said to him, 'Go, and do the same yourself.' (Luke 10: 25-37)

#### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: 'Families'

##### *See*

- Would you say that family life is strong in your locality? Is there evidence of families breaking up?
- Are there single parent families?
- Is there financial stress on some families because of pokies, easy access to credit cards, or alcohol or drug abuse?
- Are there services or community groups to help families or individuals in need?

##### *Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

##### *Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Can you involve anyone else in your action?





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## GENERAL BUSINESS

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## CLOSING PRAYER

“Therefore, the council focuses its attention on the world of men, the whole human family along with the sum of those realities in the midst of which it lives; that world which is the theatre of man's history, and the heir of his energies, his tragedies and his triumphs; that world which the Christian sees as created and sustained by its Maker's love, fallen indeed into the bondage of sin, yet emancipated now by Christ.”

(*Gaudium et Spes*, ‘The Church in the Modern World,’ Pope Paul VI, 1965)

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“Coming down to practical and particularly urgent consequences, this council lays stress on reverence for man; everyone must consider his every neighbour without exception as another self, taking into account first of all His life and the means necessary to living it with dignity, so as not to imitate the rich man who had no concern for the poor man Lazarus.”

(*Gaudium et Spes*, ‘The Church in the Modern World,’ Pope Paul VI, 1965)

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“In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbour of every person without exception and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old person abandoned by all, a foreign labourer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child born of an unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a hungry person who disturbs our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord, “As long as you did it for one of these the least of my brethren, you did it for me” (Matt. 25:40).

(*Gaudium et Spes*, ‘The Church in the Modern World,’ Pope Paul VI, 1965)

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One of them, an expert in the law, tested him with this question: ‘Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?’

Jesus replied: “‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbour as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments.”

(Matthew 22: 36-40)

## 3.4 Week Four: My Community



### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

Jesus said to his disciples: “You are the salt of the earth. But if salt loses its taste, with what can it be seasoned? It is no longer good for anything but to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.

You are the light of the world. A city set on a mountain cannot be hidden. Nor do they light a lamp and then put it under a bushel basket; it is set on a lamp stand, where it gives light to all in the house. Just so, your light must shine before others, that they may see your good deeds and glorify your heavenly Father.”  
(Matthew 5: 13-16)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Neighbourhood Life’

#### See

- Do people feel safe as they move about the streets? Are there any unsafe locations in the area (e.g., speeding traffic or dangerous railway crossings, poor lighting, crime or vandalism, youth delinquency, alcohol or drug abuse, graffiti)?
- Do there appear to be unemployed people in the area?
- Are there many disabled people within the area? Or people with depression or psychological problems?
- Do any people appear to be living alone or isolated?
- Are there retirement villages in the area, do we know people living in them, living alone?

#### Judge

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

#### Act

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Can you involve anyone else in your action?

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### CLOSING PRAYER



“The elderly constitute an important school of life, capable of transmitting values and traditions, and of fostering the growth of younger generations, who thus learn to seek not only their own good but also that of others. If the elderly are in situations where they experience suffering and dependence, not only do they need health care services and appropriate assistance, but — and — they need to be treated with love.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*,  
2004)

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“The political community is responsible for regulating its relations with civil society according to the principle of subsidiarity. It is essential that the growth of democratic life begin within the fabric of society.

The activities of civil society — above all volunteer organizations and cooperative endeavours in the private-social sector, all of which are succinctly known as the “third sector”, to distinguish from the State and the market — represent the most appropriate ways to develop the social dimension of the person, who finds in these activities the necessary space to express himself fully.

Co-operation, even in its less structured forms, shows itself to be one of the most effective responses to a mentality of conflict and unlimited competition that seems so prevalent today. The relationships that are established in a climate of cooperation and solidarity overcome ideological divisions, prompting people to seek out what unites them rather than what divides them.

Many experiences of volunteer work are examples of great value that call people to look upon civil society as a place where it is possible to rebuild a public ethic based on solidarity, concrete cooperation and fraternal dialogue. All are called to look with confidence to the potentialities that thus present themselves and to lend their own personal efforts for the good of the community in general and, in particular, for the good of the weakest and the neediest.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*,  
2004)

.....

“From day to day, in every group or nation, there is an increase in the number of people who are conscious that they themselves are the authors and the artisans of the culture of their community. Throughout the whole world there is a mounting increase in the sense of autonomy as well as of responsibility. This is of paramount importance for the spiritual and moral maturity of the human race. This becomes more clear if we consider the unification of the world and the duty which is imposed upon us, that we build a better world based upon truth and justice.”

(*Gaudium et Spes*, ‘The Church in the Modern World,’ Pope Paul VI, 1965)



## 3.5 Week One: My Home

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

“Then his mother and his brothers came; and standing outside, they sent to him and called him. A crowd was sitting around him; and they said to him, ‘Your mother and your brothers and sisters are outside, asking for you.’ And he replied, ‘Who are my mother and my brothers?’ And looking at those who sat around him, he said, ‘Here are my mother and my brothers! Whoever does the will of God is my brother and sister and mother.” (Matthew 12: 46-50)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Accommodation & Location’

*See*

- What type of housing do I live in (house, villa, flats, units, high rise, other)?
- How many people do you share your house with?
- What distances do I travel to my work, activities, and amenities? Does this impact on my life outside of work?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?

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### CLOSING PRAYER



“The demands of the common good are dependent on the social conditions of each historical period and are strictly connected to respect for and the integral promotion of the person and his fundamental rights. These demands concern above all the commitment to peace, the organization of the State's powers, a sound juridical system, the protection of the environment, and the provision of essential services to all, some of which are at the same time human rights: food, housing, work, education and access to culture, transportation, basic health care, the freedom of communication and expression, and the protection of religious freedom.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)



## 3.6 Week Two: My Home

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

“When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. “Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord, and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. I tell you most solemnly, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, happiness will be yours if you do them.

I give you a new commandment: love one another; just as I have loved you, so you must love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another.”  
(John 13, 12-17, 34-35)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Relationships’

#### *See*

- Do you live with family, or friends?
- Do you live alone, or have you lived alone? Do you know anyone who lives alone?
- Do you and your extended family visit each other?

#### *Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

#### *Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?

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### CLOSING PRAYER



“Love is also expressed in the generous attention shown to the elderly who live in families: their presence can take on great value. They are an example of connections between generations, a resource for the well-being of the family and of the whole of society:

“Not only do they show that there are aspects of life — human, cultural, moral and social values — which cannot be judged in terms of economic efficiency, but they can also make an effective contribution in the workplace and in leadership roles. In short, it is not just a question of doing something for older people, but also of accepting them in a realistic way as partners in shared projects — at the level of thought, dialogue, and action.” As the Sacred Scripture says: “They still bring forth fruit in old age.” (Ps 92:15).

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)



## 3.7 Week Three: My Home

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

“Now as they went on their way, he entered a certain village, where a woman named Martha welcomed him into her home. She had a sister named Mary, who sat at the Lord’s feet and listened to what he was saying. But Martha was distracted by her many tasks; so, she came to him and asked, ‘Lord, do you not care that my sister has left me to do all the work by myself? Tell her then to help me.’ But the Lord answered her, ‘Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part, which will not be taken away from her. “

(Luke 10:38-42)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Relationships’

*See*

- How does your household get along?
- What are mealtimes like at your place? Do children retreat to bedrooms for entertainment?
- How are tasks shared in your home?
- How are costs shared in your house? Do working members of the household contribute to the costs?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?

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### CLOSING PRAYER





“The family, in fact, is born of the intimate communion of life and love founded on the marriage between one man and one woman. It possesses its own specific and original social dimension, in that it is the principal place of interpersonal relationships, the first and vital cell of society. The family is a divine institution that stands at the foundation of life of the human person as the prototype of every social order.”

“The family is present as the place where communion — that communion so necessary for a society that is increasingly individualistic — is brought about. It is the place where an authentic community of persons develops and grows, thanks to the endless dynamism of love, which is the fundamental dimension of human experience, and which finds in the family the privileged place for making itself known.”

“In the work of education, the family forms man in the fullness of his personal dignity according to all his dimensions, including the social dimension. The family, in fact, constitutes “a community of love and solidarity, which is uniquely suited to teach and transmit cultural, ethical, social, spiritual and religious values, essential for the development and well-being of its own members and of society.” By exercising its mission to educate, the family contributes to the common good and constitutes the first school of social virtue, which all societies need. In the family, persons are helped to grow in freedom and responsibility, indispensable prerequisites for any function in society. With education, certain fundamental values are communicated and assimilated.”

“The family, then, does not exist for society or the State, but society and the State exist for the family.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)

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“... the Christian family, in fact, is the first community called to announce the Gospel to the human person during growth and to bring him or her, through a progressive education and catechesis, to full human and Christian maturity.”

(*Familiaris Consortio*, ‘The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World,’ Apostolic Exhortation, Pope John Paul II, 1981)



## 3.8 Week Four: My Home

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION (Matthew 18: 21-35)

Then Peter came to Jesus and asked, “Lord, how many times shall I forgive my brother when he sins against me? Up to seven times?”

Jesus answered, “I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times. That is why the kingdom of heaven is like a king who wanted to settle accounts with his servants. As he began the settlement, a man who owed him ten thousand talents was brought to him. Since he was not able to pay, the master ordered that he and his wife and his children and all that he had be sold to repay the debt. “The servant fell on his knees before him. ‘Be patient with me,’ he begged, ‘and I will pay back everything.’ The servant’s master took pity on him, cancelled the debt, and let him go.

“But when that servant went out, he found one of his fellow servants who owed him a hundred denarii. He grabbed him and began to choke him. ‘Pay back what you owe me!’ he demanded. “His fellow servant fell to his knees and begged him, ‘Be patient with me, and I will pay you back.’ “But he refused. Instead, he went off and had the man thrown into prison until he could pay the debt.

When the other servants saw what had happened, they were greatly distressed and went and told their master everything that had happened. “Then the master called the servant in. ‘You wicked servant,’ he said, ‘I cancelled all that debt of yours because you begged me to. Shouldn’t you have had mercy on your fellow servant just as I had on you?’ In anger his master turned him over to the jailers to be tortured, until he should pay back all he owed. “This is how my heavenly Father will treat each of you unless you forgive your brother from your heart.”

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Environment, Wellbeing, Spirit’

*See*

- What is the environmental impact of your home?
- Are there any threats to peoples’ health and wellbeing in your house?
- What are the visual signs of faith in your house.

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?



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## CLOSING PRAYER

“Where would the Church be without completely Christianised families?”

(*Joseph Cardijn, Laymen into Action, 1962*)

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The underlying cause of these problems can be seen in man's pretension of exercising unconditional dominion over things, heedless of any moral considerations.

Serious ecological problems call for an effective change of mentality leading to the adoption of new lifestyles, “in which the quest for truth, beauty, goodness and communion with others for the sake of the common good are the factors that determine consumer choices, savings and investments.” These lifestyles should be inspired by sobriety, temperance, and self-discipline at both the individual and social levels.

As regards the ecological question, the social doctrine of the Church reminds us that the goods of the earth were created by God to be used wisely by all. They must be shared equitably, in accordance with justice and charity. This is essentially a question of preventing the injustice of hoarding resources: greediness, be it individual or collective, is contrary to the order of creation.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church,* 2004)

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"Since the Creator of all things has established the conjugal partnership as the beginning and basis of human society," the family is "the first and vital cell of society."

The family has vital and organic links with society, since it is its foundation and nourishes it continually through its role of service to life: it is from the family that citizens come to birth, and it is within the family that they find the first school of the social virtues that are the animating principle of the existence and development of society itself.

Thus, far from being closed in on itself, the family is by nature and vocation open to other families and to society and undertakes its social role.”

(*Familiaris Consortio, 'The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World,'* Apostolic Exhortation, Pope John Paul II, 1981)



## 3.9 Week One: My Work

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

Jesus said to his disciples:

"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Stop judging and you will not be judged.

Stop condemning and you will not be condemned.

Forgive and you will be forgiven.

Give and gifts will be given to you;

a good measure, packed together, shaken down, and overflowing,  
will be poured into your lap.

For the measure with which you measure  
will in return be measured out to you."

(Lk 6:36-38)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: 'Employed in the Paid Workforce'

*See*

- Where do you work? How much time do you spend travelling to and from work? Could better public transport improve this?
- Is it a safe workplace?
- Is your pay sufficient for you to support yourself and your family?
- Do you work long hours? Do your workmates work long hours? Do you have a good work-family time balance?
- Do you know any of the Catholic Church's teachings on work, or workers & employers, or the economic system?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?

### REVIEW OF LIFE

Observations on personal issues and ongoing actions that occurred during the past week, and information regarding other events or points of interest of the past week.

### GENERAL BUSINESS

Record of the Previous Meeting (Attendance & Resolutions)

## CLOSING PRAYER



“Where would the Church be without work and without the sanctification that comes from work and through it?”

(Joseph Cardijn, *Laymen into Action*, 1962)

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“The ancient world introduced its own typical differentiation of people into classes according to the type of work done. Work which demanded from the worker the exercise of physical strength, the work of muscles and hands, was considered unworthy of free men, and was therefore given to slaves. By broadening certain aspects that already belonged to the Old Testament, Christianity brought about a fundamental change of ideas in this field, taking the whole content of the Gospel message as its point of departure, especially the fact that the one who, while being God, became like us in all things devoted most of the years of his life on earth to manual work at the carpenter's bench. This circumstance constitutes in itself the most eloquent "Gospel of work", showing that the basis for determining the value of human work is not primarily the kind of work being done but the fact that the one who is doing it is a person.”

“The modern unions grew up from the struggle of the workers-workers in general but especially the industrial workers-to protect their just rights vis-a-vis the entrepreneurs and the owners of the means of production. Their task is to defend the existential interests of workers in all sectors in which their rights are concerned. The experience of history teaches that organizations of this type are an indispensable element of social life, especially in modern industrialized societies.”

“This truth, which is part of the abiding heritage of the Church's teaching, must always be emphasized with reference to the question of the labour system and with regard to the whole socioeconomic system. We must emphasize and give prominence to the primacy of man in the production process, the primacy of man over things.”

(*Laborem Exercens*, 'On Human Work,' Pope John Paul II, 1981)

“In order to protect this relationship between family and work, an element that must be appreciated and safeguarded is that of a family wage, a wage sufficient to maintain a family and allow it to live decently. Such a wage must also allow for savings that will permit the acquisition of property as a guarantee of freedom.

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)

“Women now work in almost all spheres. It is fitting that they are able to assume their proper role in accordance with their own nature. It will belong to all to acknowledge and favour the proper and necessary participation of women in the cultural life.”

(*Gaudium et Spes*, 'The Church in the Modern World,' Pope Paul VI, 1965)



## 3.10 Week Two: My Work

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

Jesus said to his disciples:

“Ask and it will be given to you;

seek and you will find;

knock and the door will be opened to you.

For everyone who asks, receives; and the one who seeks, finds;

and to the one who knocks, the door will be opened.

Which one of you would hand his son a stone

when he asked for a loaf of bread,

or a snake when he asked for a fish?

If you then, who are wicked,

know how to give good gifts to your children,

how much more will your heavenly Father give good things

to those who ask him.

“Do to others whatever you would have them do to you.”

(Matthew 7:7-12)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Unemployed’

#### *See*

- Am I unemployed? Do I know someone who is unemployed? How long have I / they been unemployed?
- Can I / they access training programs to do the work I / they are seeking?
- Do I / they receive the Newstart Allowance, or a Disability Pension? Is this benefit sufficient to live on?
- Do I / they experience social isolation? Or depression? Or discrimination? Do I / they receive personal support from family and friends, or professional support?

#### *Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

#### *Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?

### REVIEW OF LIFE

Observations on personal issues and ongoing actions that occurred during the past week, and information regarding other events or points of interest of the past week.



## GENERAL BUSINESS

Record of the Previous Meeting (Attendance & Resolutions)

## CLOSING PRAYER

“The opposite of a just and right situation in this field is unemployment, that is to say the lack of work for those who are capable of it. It can be a question of general unemployment or of unemployment in certain sectors of work. The role of the agents included under the title of indirect employer is to act against unemployment, which in all cases is an evil, and which, when it reaches a certain level, can become a real social disaster. It is particularly painful when it especially affects young people, who after appropriate cultural, technical, and professional preparation fail to find work, and see their sincere wish to work and their readiness to take on their own responsibility for the economic and social development of the community sadly frustrated. The obligation to provide unemployment benefits, that is to say, the duty to make suitable grants indispensable for the subsistence of unemployed workers and their families, is a duty springing from the fundamental principle of the moral order in this sphere, namely the principle of the common use of goods or, to put it in another and still simpler way, the right to life and subsistence.”

(*Laborem Exercens*, 'On Human Work,' Pope John Paul II, 1981)

“In order to achieve social justice in the various parts of the world, in the various countries, and in the relationships between them, there is a need for ever new movements of solidarity of the workers and with the workers. This solidarity must be present whenever it is called for by the social degrading of the subject of work, by exploitation of the workers, and by the growing areas of poverty and even hunger. The Church is firmly committed to this cause, for she considers it her mission, her service, a proof of her fidelity to Christ, so that she can truly be the "Church of the poor". And the "poor" appear under various forms; they appear in various places and at various times; in many cases they appear as a result of the violation of the dignity of human work: either because the opportunities for human work are limited as a result of the scourge of unemployment, or because a low value is put on work and the rights that flow from it, especially the right to a just wage and to the personal security of the worker and his or her family.”

(*Laborem Exercens*, 'On Human Work,' Pope John Paul II, 1981)

“However, it is also a fact that, in some instances, technology can cease to be man's ally and become almost his enemy, as when the mechanization of work "supplants" him, taking away all personal satisfaction and the incentive to creativity and responsibility, when it deprives many workers of their previous employment, or when, through exalting the machine, it reduces man to the status of its slave”

(*Laborem Exercens*, 'On Human Work,' Pope John Paul II, 1981)

“Many practical problems arise at this point, as well as legal and economic ones; but the community, that is to say, the public authorities, associations and intermediate groups, business enterprises and the disabled themselves should pool their ideas and resources so as to attain this goal that must not be shirked: that disabled people may be offered work according to their capabilities, for this is demanded by their dignity as persons and as subjects of work.”

(*Laborem Exercens*, 'On Human Work,' Pope John Paul II, 1981)



### 3.11 Week Three: My Work

#### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

#### GOSPEL REFLECTION (John 15:1-8)

Jesus said to his disciples:

“I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower.

He takes away every branch in me that does not bear fruit,  
and everyone that does he prunes so that it bears more fruit.

You are already pruned because of the word that I spoke to you.

Remain in me, as I remain in you.

Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own  
unless it remains on the vine,

so neither can you unless you remain in me.

I am the vine, you are the branches.

Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit,  
because without me you can do nothing.

Anyone who does not remain in me

will be thrown out like a branch and wither;

people will gather them and throw them into a fire  
and they will be burned.

If you remain in me and my words remain in you,  
ask for whatever you want and it will be done for you.

By this is my Father glorified,  
that you bear much fruit and become my disciples.”

#### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: ‘Working at Home’

See

- Am I a family carer? Do I know a family carer?
- Is my / their lifestyle their choice, or satisfying? Can I / they afford this? Do I / they have much contact with other adults?
- Do I / they have a car available? If not is the public transport sufficient?
- Do I / they need any help from other family members in caring? Or community agencies? Is the parish community able to help in any way?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?





## REVIEW OF LIFE

Observations on personal issues and ongoing actions that occurred during the past week, and information regarding other events or points of interest of the past week.

## GENERAL BUSINESS

Record of the Previous Meeting (Attendance & Resolutions)

## CLOSING PRAYER

“In the relationship between the family and work, particular attention must be given to the issue of the work of women in the family, more generally to the recognition of the so-called work of “housekeeping,” which also involves the responsibility of men as husbands and fathers.”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)

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“When Jesus arrived at Peter’s house, Peter’s mother-in-law was sick in bed with a high fever. But when Jesus touched her hand, the fever left her. Then she got up and prepared a meal for him.

That evening many demon-possessed people were brought to Jesus. He cast out the evil spirits with a simple command, and he healed all the sick. This fulfilled the word of the Lord through the prophet Isaiah, who said, ‘He took our sicknesses and removed our diseases.’” (Matthew 8: 14-17)

\*\*\*\*\*

“Toil is something that is universally known, for it is universally experienced. It is familiar to those doing physical work under sometimes exceptionally laborious conditions. It is familiar not only to agricultural workers, who spend long days working the land, which sometimes “bears thorns and thistles”, but also to those who work in mines and quarries, to steelworkers at their blast-furnaces, to those who work in builders' yards and in construction work, often in danger of injury or death. It is likewise familiar to those at an intellectual workbench; to scientists; to those who bear the burden of grave responsibility for decisions that will have a vast impact on society. It is familiar to doctors and nurses, who spend days and nights at their patients' bedside. It is familiar to women, who, sometimes without proper recognition on the part of society and even of their own families, bear the daily burden and responsibility for their homes and the upbringing of their children. It is familiar to all workers and, since work is a universal calling, it is familiar to everyone.”

(*Laborem Exercens*, ‘On Human Work,’ Pope John Paul II, 1981)



## 3.12 Week Four: My Work

### WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

### GOSPEL REFLECTION

Jesus said to his disciples:

"You have heard that it was said,

*You shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy.*

But I say to you, love your enemies,

and pray for those who persecute you,

that you may be children of your heavenly Father,

for he makes his sun rise on the bad and the good,

and causes rain to fall on the just and the unjust.

For if you love those who love you, what recompense will you have?

Do not the tax collectors do the same?

And if you greet your brothers and sisters only,

what is unusual about that?

Do not the pagans do the same?

So be perfect, just as your heavenly Father is perfect."

(Matthew 5:43-48)

### SOCIAL ENQUIRY: 'Retired'

*See*

- Am I retired? Do I know people who are retired? Do I / they have family?
- Do I / they have sufficient income for a reasonable lifestyle? Is the Aged Person pension sufficient?
- Am I / are they healthy? Is my / their partner in need of care? Is the public health system adequate?
- Do I / they find retirement isolating? Am I / are they involved in social or recreational activities?

*Judge*

- What do you think about all of this? Why?
- What do your values, your belief, your faith say?
- What do you think should be happening?

*Act*

- What exactly would you want to change in the long term?
- What action are you going to take now?
- Whom can you involve in your action?

### REVIEW OF LIFE

Observations on personal issues and ongoing actions that occurred during the past week, and information regarding other events or points of interest of the past week.



## GENERAL BUSINESS

Record of the Previous Meeting (Attendance & Resolutions)

## CLOSING PRAYER

“The elderly constitute an important school of life, capable of transmitting values and traditions, and of fostering the growth of younger generations, who thus learn to seek not only their own good but also that of others. If the elderly are in situations where they experience suffering and dependence, not only do they need health care services and appropriate assistance, but — and — they need to be treated with love.”

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“Only love can completely transform the human person. Charity inspires a life of self-giving: ‘Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it’ (Lk 17:33)”. Nor can love find its full expression solely in the earthly dimension of human relationships and social relations, because it is in relation to God that it finds its full effectiveness. “In the evening of this life, I shall appear before you with empty hands, for I do not ask you, Lord, to count my works. All our justice is blemished in your eyes. I wish, then, to be clothed in your own justice and to receive from your love the eternal possession of yourself” (Saint Thérèse of the Child Jesus, in *Story of a Soul*).”

(Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*, 2004)



## 4 Appendices

### Appendix A: Australian YCW Enquiries

#### 4.1.1 School to Work Transition Enquiry

When a person leaves high school there are numerous changes to be dealt with. Loss of high school friends and routine, leaving a school community, loss of student identity, coping with unemployment, higher level study, joining the workforce, leaving home, less restricted social life and legal responsibilities at age 18.

#### **Worker Story**

Peter left school and was accepted into a university course. He was not really interested in the course, just received the right marks to get into it. After 6 months he decided that he would drop out of the course and take the rest of the year off. This year he is trying to find work.

Peter is not even sure about how to go about finding work, so asked his dad to help him find work, as he was experienced in the world of work. He was successful in finding a job. The job only lasted 2 weeks, as it was boring and repetitive, and he was not enjoying it. Now Peter is trying to evaluate what he really wants out of life and in terms of work and study.

Peter is now exploring all avenues of study and work and is grateful of the assistance his father is giving him.

#### **What are your reflections on this young worker's story?**

#### **See:**

- What are the challenges for you now that you have left school?
- How has your relationship with your parents and others changed since leaving school?

#### **Judge:**

- What should work or study ideally be?
- Now that you have left school what is the relationship you wish to cultivate with your parents and others?

#### **Act:**

- What steps do you need to take to manage the school to work transition?
- Can you reach out and develop positive relationships with your parents and other school leavers?

### 4.1.2 Pressure in Life Enquiry



Pressure affects all people and most of us deal with it in different ways. This enquiry has been developed to help you identify the pressure you feel in your life and to consider how you might reduce the pressure you feel.

#### **Worker Story**

Rebecca is a casual worker who has recently left home. She lives with a friend. Recently she has been experiencing financial hardship with the amount of income she receives compared to the bills she needs to pay.

Rebecca has always lived at home up until now and has always had money. She did not want to borrow money from anyone especially from her parents as she wanted to be independent.

Rebecca worked out a way to pay parts of her bills with the money she had and negotiated an extension to pay the remaining bills. She felt by careful planning and strict budgeting, she achieved her independence.

#### **What are your reflections on this worker story?**

##### **See:**

- What kind of pressure do you feel in your life?
- What are the causes of this pressure?
- How does it affect you?

##### **Judge:**

- What are the underlying values and events that have brought about this situation?
- Is this pressure brought about by your own doing or by external influences?
- What would you like to change? What realistically can you change?

##### **Act:**

- From your reviews you may have decided to take an action to respond to a situation in your life. If you wish you could use some of the ideas below. Remember that the primary method of the YCW is to form young workers is not dialogue but action.
- Keep a diary over one week indicating how you spend your time and your feelings in terms of pressure. Use this information to reflect on your life and share your conclusions with your group.
- Interview a member of an older generation and ask them how pressure today compares when they were younger. Make conclusions and share this with your group.
- Speak with a young worker you are in contact with about the pressure they feel in their life and how they handle it. Share this with your group.



### 4.1.3 Safety at Nightclubs Enquiry

Members of the YCW have attended nightclubs to dance, enjoy themselves and pick up. There are some dangers to be kept in mind.

#### **Worker Story**

Belinda went to a nightclub and got carried away drinking too many shots. She lost one of her shoes, collapsed in the car park and was taken to hospital where she was put on a drip. Her mother attended the hospital and took her home, once her blood alcohol level had reduced.

Belinda reflected deeply about her loss of dignity in front of her peers and her mother and about the unsafe situation she had created for herself.

After this experience, Belinda is watching her drinks and being more careful when night clubbing.

#### **What are your reflections on this worker story?**

##### **See:**

- What are the dangers at nightclubs?
- What preparation can you make prior to going to the nightclub to be safe?
- What items can you take with you and what will you wear to keep yourself safe?
- How will you behave at the nightclub to keep yourself safe?

##### **Judge:**

- Do you think it is safe enough to go to nightclubs?
- What should be your attitude towards your personal safety?
- What does your faith say about this situation?

##### **Act:**

- Can you practice better safety next time you go to a nightclub?
- Can you talk to any of your friends about this?

The Cardijn Community Australia website has more recent enquiries. It is available at: [What is an Enquiry – Cardijn Community Australia](#)

## Appendix B: Notes on CCI and CCA



### Notes on the History of Cardijn Community International (2001 – 2011) and Cardijn Community Australia (2008 – 2011)

#### Cardijn Community International: 2001 – 2011

During the 1990s, many former YCW members came together in a project to write the history of the International Young Christian Workers (IYCW). Although the history project ended in 2000, it highlighted the need to preserve and promote the heritage of Cardijn and the lay movements inspired by his method and spirituality.

Subsequently several history project participants again met at a “Networking for Development” conference in July 2001 in Bangkok sponsored by [CCFD](#) France. There it was decided to launch the Cardijn Liaison Committee (CLC) which set itself the initial task of building links among those who had been formed by the various Cardijn movements (YCW, YCS, MIJARC, etc.) or who identified with Cardijn's mission and vision.

At the request of Karen refugee groups on the Thai-Burma border, CLC also organised several small-scale leadership training programs for young refugees in Thailand, including training in the See. Judge. Act. method.

In 2002, CLC organised its first major event, an international conference on the theme “Vatican II in the age of globalisation” to mark the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Council (V2+40) and to highlight Cardijn's contribution.

At that time, CLC also changed its name to Cardijn Lay Community to better represent its identity.

In 2003, CLC members also helped host the first Young People for Development (YPD) International Exchange and Training Program which brought together sixty young people from Southeast Asia and from France. This led to the emergence of an ongoing YPD network which continues.

In 2005, CLC launched the New Pentecost program as a follow up to V2+40 based on Pope John XXIII's hope that Vatican II would lead to a “New Pentecost” in the Church and world. Chico Whitaker, a former member of the University YCS in Brazil, and co-founder of the World Social Forum, toured Southeast Asia, Australia, and New Zealand for that event.

In 2006, CLC again changed its name to Cardijn Community International to reflect the fact that it was also open to clergy and religious.

It organised an International Year of Cardijn in 2007 to promote Cardijn's thought which included the holding of events in India.

The first CCI General Assembly was held in Chennai, India in February 2008 with participants from several Asian countries and Australia.

Today, CCI has groups and members in approximately fifteen countries. It has published two books and several pamphlets as well as publishing many original Cardijn documents and resources on the web.

CCI celebrated its 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year and is currently developing a campaign to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vatican II and to study and highlight Cardijn's role at the Council.



### Cardijn Community Australia: 2008 – 2011

Cardijn Community Australia (CCA) originated in 2008 at a small seminar in Melbourne attended by Bishop Costelloe, retired Bishop Hilton Deakin, former and current YCW and YCS leaders, and some young Asians from the World Youth Day in Sydney. A committee formed, originally called 'Cardijn Community International – Australia' to explore what Cardinal Joseph Cardijn had described as the “urgent need for an apostolate among adults.” “Unless such an apostolate exists,” Cardijn wrote, “all the efforts of the young people will lead to a dead-end.” (*Laymen into Action*)

In 2009 a larger conference hosted by Cardijn College in Noarlunga and endorsed by Adelaide’s Archbishop Wilson, brought together several former and current YCW and YCS members of the ‘Cardijn family’ from across Australia. This was followed in 2010 by a successful Workshop on the Cardijn method at the Adelaide Diocesan Centre.

In Melbourne 4-6<sup>th</sup> November 2011 CCA held a national conference entitled “Cardijn in Australia: Planning for the Future”. As part of it looking forward the conference also acknowledged the achievements of those YCW and YCS veterans, many of whom gave their best years to the movement. This recognition included a presentation to the Melbourne Diocesan Historical Commission of the historical notes compiled by early YCW secretary Ted Long shortly before he died. Among other things, Ted Long was prominent in the YCW’s pioneering of the co-operative movement in Victoria.

Former Melbourne YCW full-timer and lawyer Stefan Gigacz, who wrote the official history of the international YCW, tells us that in its heyday Melbourne was the largest YCW in the world. We believe that the stories of these pioneers can enrich and encourage the Church laity as it confronts the new challenges of our changing world.

Catholic parishes provide a base for significant community leadership and mentoring. A base for responding to the question “Who is my neighbour?”

An increasing percentage of those who populate our parish churches are adults, and retirees. We believe that Cardijn’s methods have potential to spiritually develop individuals, build the Church, and to help its members engage with and provide leadership in the world, especially local communities.



## Appendix C: Extracts from The Young Worker Faces Life



**Extracts from Joseph Cardijn's book, 'The Young Worker Faces Life.'**

### **Formation**

Leaders do not grow like mushrooms—they must be formed. Their formation must be constantly intensified and deepened. There must be incessant search for the best means of forming them. Being a leader becomes more difficult every day, but it is not less necessary, because it is more difficult.

#### **They are formed first by getting them to act.**

They are formed first by getting them to act, giving them small responsibilities. It is not necessary to take them apart and give them a course of doctrine. That is to no purpose. It does not matter what responsibility they are given, provided it is some responsibility. First the action and the responsibility, and only afterwards the talk.

Even so this by itself is not enough. It would be rash to throw someone into the water and hope that he will then learn to swim. If a lad were given responsibility and nothing more, it would not be surprising if he did not persevere, for what had been done to form him?

#### **They must know the purpose of what they are being taught.**

It is because he is a human being, that his formation is essential. Animals can be broken in and trained to perform tricks. But human beings are not animals. They have intelligence, and their intelligence must be developed. They must know the purpose of what they are being taught to do and the reason they must do it. You can break animals in – but not human beings.

For 25 years now under certain political regimes, men, women, and children have been broken rather than educated. The science and technique of taming people has been developed, as never before in history. This is highly dangerous, and to meet it there is only one solution. It is necessary to give not merely a teaching or a doctrine, but a formation which is quite a different thing. People must be taught to act for love, and freely suffer and fight for what they are taught. There is no other remedy against the regime of the dictator.

#### **The first means of forming a leader.**

The first means of forming a leader is to have personal contact with him, for personal contact supposes confidence. You form him by conversation and friendship. You speak to him and get him to speak, and see, and reflect. You get his opinion. Leaders are not mass produced like motor cars, but are formed personally, individually, one by one.

### **Three stages**

There is a Flemish expression which illustrates the three stages of formation: -

*Voordoën, meedoën, nadoën.*

*Voordoën*: one must do the work oneself before asking others to do it.

*Meedoën*: then it is necessary to do it with him.



*Nadoen*: one must get the work done by him but always explaining, helping, and supporting him.

All formation depends on these *three stages*. It is a method a mother uses with her child, or a craftsman with his apprentice.

Meetings of leaders are an essential part of their formation. Just as you cannot form individuals simply by action and responsibility alone, so you cannot form leaders simply by the action of one person or another, because they must share their difficulties, learn to lead, to act on others, and to win them. No one works alone in the church because all are in the Mystical Body. There is no way of working alone it is contrary to Christianity.

There are all kinds of gatherings which do by the names of meetings study circles, leader's meetings, formation meetings, action meetings. Different movements use different words to describe their meetings. In the YCW there must be real leader's meetings in which they learn to undertake responsibilities and to perform action. To do this they must receive a religious and social doctrine, and much more than a doctrine, a life.

### **Review**

Hence there is in every leader's meeting what we call the review, the review of action, of influence, of responsibility, of facts. During the review facts and problems are brought up, and then the leaders are given new responsibilities.

.....**through Action**

### **Then there is a religious Enquiry**

Then there is a religious Enquiry, but one based on their own life. You do not speak about God merely for the sake of speaking about God. That might serve seminary students, but not young workers. They need the formation based on life and designed for life.

When I began the YCW and came to speak about to the first leaders, I did not ask them for a definition of prayer. I said to them "I am going to pray with you and in front of you." I knelt and said, "Lord Jesus we have spoken about so and so; such a thing is not going well; there are difficulties; you must help us." They were surprised.

Sometimes I suggested going into the church. In the darkness of the evening, I would open the tabernacle and kneel on the steps of the altar "Lord you are there. You come in the host to me." So, they began to discover the Blessed sacrament for themselves.

### **One discovery after another**

Or I would be preparing for the Mass next day. We would prepare it together. I would ask them if they would care to come to it. And would tell them they could get around the altar and be priest with me and offer their small hosts side by side with the big host, their suffering, and prayers at the side of our Lords. Thus, the first YCWs learned what the Mass is, simply and concretely. There were never any long discourses from me; they would only have been bored. For them it meant one discovery after another; and they would come again next day. Such were the first leader's meetings, and such are what leader's meetings should be.



## **Campaign Enquiries**

Leaders must have their Bulletin and campaign Enquiries, but they need not be slaves to them. On the contrary, they should be adapted to the use of the laity. They are not ends in themselves but means in the hands of a good leader.

Besides these meetings, leaders should have retreats and days of recollection. Based as they must on real life, these retreats and days of recollection supernaturalise the lives of the leaders. Through them they discover Our Lord and learn to love Our Lord.

The Priest who conducts the retreat must understand the leaders thoroughly and must adapt himself to them. He must use his insight and must adapt himself to them. He must use his insight and what must be said and how it should be said.

He must treat them with respect as persons, with due regard for their personality. He must not think he can say anything that comes into his head and talk on and on without attempting to fathom the personalities of the people he is supposed to be forming.