

RESTORATIVE JUSTICE RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

ABOUT THIS RESOURCE

Catholic Mobilizing Network (CMN) seeks to support Catholic educators looking for ways to incorporate the topic of restorative justice into their curricula. **Here is what you need to know about this resource:**

WHAT: A collection of resources and activities that serves as a general introduction to the concept of restorative justice as it aligns with Catholic Social Tradition.

WHO: Intended for educator use in Catholic grade schools, colleges, and universities. Best suited for classes on theology or social justice.

WHERE: May be applicable anywhere in the United States with additional information included about your state or jurisdiction for context.

WHEN: Recommended for a single class or unit on the topic of restorative justice. For additional information on curriculum development or the application of restorative practices in school discipline, you may also wish to visit the [Restorative Justice Network of Catholic Campuses](#).

HOW: It aims to be streamlined and simple. All resources are hyperlinked to their original source and CMN handouts can be downloaded from our website.

NOTE: The content includes stories of violent and non-violent harm and victimization. Consider ways to preface and adapt presentation of material to account for potential trauma responses of students.



For questions about this resource, please contact Caitlin Morneau, CMN's Director of Restorative Justice, at caitlin@catholicmobilizing.org.



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INSTRUCTION SUPPORT

[Introduction to Restorative Justice Prezi Workshop \(One Hour\)](#)

[Frequently Asked Questions \(5 min read\)](#)

POTENTIAL SPEAKERS

Reach out to a local restorative justice organization and ask for a member of the staff, a volunteer facilitator, or impacted person (process participant) to speak to your class. A list of organizations that CMN has a relationship with can be found on CMN's ["Find a Circle Trainer"](#) page (catholicismobilizing.org/find-circle-trainer).

HANDOUTS

[What Is Restorative Justice?](#) (One page front and back)

[Catholic Social Teaching and Restorative Justice](#) (2 pages front and back)

[Restorative Question Cards](#) (8 cards per page, front and back)

ARTICLES

[Restorative Justice](#) (16 pages total, broken up into 7 sub-articles)

Intersections: Mennonite Central Committee theory & practice quarterly

Compiled by Lorraine Stutzman and Stephen Siemens

[Reckoning with Violence](#) (20 minute read) Michelle Alexander / The New York Times

SHORT BOOKS

[Harm Healing, and Human Dignity: A Catholic Encounter with Restorative Justice](#)

Adapted by Caitlin Morneau (55 pages)

[The Little Book of Restorative Justice](#)

By Howard Zehr (112 pages)

[Little Book of Circle Processes: A New/Old Approach to Peacemaking](#)

By Kay Pranis (80 pages)



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LONG BOOKS

[Changing Lenses: Restorative Justice for Our Times](#)

By Howard Zehr (336 pages)

[Redemption and Restoration: A Catholic Perspective on Restorative Justice](#)

Edited by Trudy Conway, David Matzko McCarthy, and Vicki Schieber (306 pages)

[Until We Reckon: Violence, Mass Incarceration, and a Road to Repair](#)

By Danielle Sered. (336 pages)

VIDEOS

[A New Story of Justice: Nonviolence and Restorative Justice](#)

MettaCenter (3:31 min)

[Restorative Justice: Why Do We Need it?](#)

Brave New Films (3:01 min)

[Precious Blood Center's Peacemaking Circle](#)

Precious Blood Ministry of Reconciliation (2:07 min)

[Bridges to Life Restorative Justice Program](#)

Bridges to Life (4:20 min)

[Restorative Justice Ministry: SR- Victims, Community and Offenders](#)

Archdiocese of San Francisco (3:45 min)

[A Catholic Family's Journey - Kate and Deacon Andy Grosmaire](#)

Catholic Mobilizing Network (Approximately 1 hour)

[Healing Justice](#)

World Trust (Approximately 1 hour)



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ACTIVITIES

What is Justice?

Using a whiteboard or Zoom chat, ask students to write/type the first words that come to mind when they hear the word "justice." This often elicits a wide range of responses depending on prior knowledge and experience. To wrap up the exercise, pose to the class that Catholic teaching defines justice as being in "right-relationship with God, one another, and creation" (Open Wide Our Hearts: An Enduring Call to Love, USCCB).

Describe to students that our traditional criminal legal system tends to define justice as punishing the person who is guilty. A restorative justice approach focuses on healing and repair for all those involved.

Our Shared Connections

It can be powerful to visually demonstrate how we are each connected to/impacted by the criminal justice system, and harm more generally. It is important to emphasize that all responses are voluntary. You are also encouraged to adapt the statements according to the level of trust and vulnerability that is established among your group.

If in a physical classroom, invite students to stand, raise their hand, or walk to another space in the room if each of the following statements is true for them. If on Zoom, start the exercise with all videos off. If a statement is true for that person, invite them to turn their video on.

- A member of my family works in law enforcement, corrections, or is a member of the legal community
- I or a family member is a volunteer or minister inside of prisons or with people/families impacted by incarceration.
- I or someone I know is currently or formerly incarcerated
- I or someone I know has been a victim of crime
- In my lifetime, I have done or said something that cause harm to another person.

Each statement deepens in level of vulnerability and personal experience. It should not be surprising at the last statement when every person acknowledges truth in the statement for themselves. End the activity by acknowledging how we are all impacted by the justice system and harm more generally in one way or another and the lessons of restorative justice are not limited to crime alone.



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REFLECTION/DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

The following questions could be used in a large group, small group, pair share, journaling exercise, or follow up assignment.

- How does restorative justice differ from our current legal system? Does our current legal system work?
- Where could you see this philosophy/these practices being applied within or outside of the criminal justice system?
- Offer an (age appropriate) crime case study, or invite students to select their own. Using CMN's ["Restorative Questions Card,"](#) ask students (or groups) to reflect on the questions from the perspective of the person harmed, the person who caused the harm, or a community member.
- Offer an (age appropriate) crime case study, or invite students to select their own. Assign a principle of Catholic Social Teaching and ask students to reflect on what a restorative response of that principle might look like.



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SUGGESTED SEQUENCE - HIGH SCHOOL

1. **Pre-Reading:** "What is Restorative Justice" handout and "Catholic Social Teaching and Restorative Justice" handout
2. **Activity:** What is Justice?
3. **Video:** A New Story of Justice
4. **Content Review:** Restorative Justice and Catholic Social Teaching
5. **Pair share:** How does restorative justice differ from our current legal system? Does our current legal system work?
6. **Large Group:** Offer a video or written crime scenario of example case and hand out Restorative Questions Card.
 - a. Count off by threes: Ones = Victim; Twos = Offender; Threes = Community Members
 - b. Ask each small group to reflect on the questions from the perspective of the persons in the case (Note: Community group has to be a little extra imaginative)
 - c. In a large group, invite participants to report out major themes
7. **Assignment:** Choose a school policy and consider what a restorative or relationship-centered approach to a violation of this policy might look like (While reflecting on Restorative Questions Card).



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SUGGESTED SEQUENCE - COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY

1. **Pre-Reading:** "Harm, Healing, and Human Dignity", "Intersections" Article, and/or "Reckoning with Violence"
2. **Activity:** What is Justice?
3. **Video:** A New Story of Justice
4. **Content Review:** Catholic Social Teaching and Restorative Justice Handout
5. **Small groups:** Give the whole group a video or written crime scenario. Assign each group a principle from Catholic Social Teaching to read and analyze together and reflect upon what a restorative response with that principle might look like.
6. **Large Group:** Watch "Precious Blood Center's Peacemaking Circle"
 - a. Discussion: Where could you see this approach being applied within or outside of the criminal legal system? How would it meet the needs of those involved/impacted?
7. **Assignment:** Consider an actual or hypothetical example of harm in a community, organization, or group you have been a part of. What might a restorative or relationship-centered approach look like? (While reflecting on Restorative Questions Card.)

