

UNCC300 MODULE 3:

PRINCIPLES OF ADVOCACY

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MODULE 3: PRINCIPLES OF ADVOCACY - SUBSIDIARITY AND SOLIDARITY

We now move on to the third and final major topic for UNCC300, advocacy. This unit began by examining different examples of Community Engagement; considering the importance of doing more than simply responding to the material needs of others but rather building relationships founded on equality and interdependence.

Learning Outcomes

Building upon the learning outcomes of UNCC100, upon successful completion of this unit, you should be able to apply knowledge of Catholic Social Thought to:

1. Describe how the efforts of public, private, not-for-profit agencies, faith based groups and you as a professional, can result in the realisation of a more just global community.
2. Critically analyse the challenges with realising aspirations of the common good in your professional community, locally and globally.
3. Critique a global issue where shared responsibility for the common good is not being realised, and propose ways to address this challenge.

WARNING

Topics considered in UNCC LEO materials and in class discussions may be disturbing for some students.

If you are affected, please contact your Campus Leader and or the [University Counselling Service](#).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders are advised that this site may include voices or images of people who have passed away. It may also contain links to sites that may use images of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people now deceased.

7.1 WHAT IS ADVOCACY?

In the first section we examined examples of community engagement from programs originating out of ACU and also the work of agencies and organisations working around the globe.

We saw that initiating true community engagements requires more than merely responding to the needs of others from a positions of relative power, instead it is a process of meeting others on equal terms - in successful community engagement all involved are equal but bring different gifts to the relationship.

We all have something to contribute to the common good, and all may benefit from the gifts that we bring to the shared table of human community and solidarity. ¹

The second of our major topics was human dignity. In this section we discussed the basis of our belief in the innate dignity of all human beings.

Next we turn our attention to the topic of advocacy. You began an exploration of advocacy in UNCC100. In this unit we will continue and further your appreciation of the role of advocacy in promoting the common good, protecting the dignity of vulnerable and giving a voice to those being overlooked or ignored.

You are of course now familiar with the principles of Solidarity and Subsidiarity; principles of Catholic Social Thought of particular relevance to the topic of advocacy.

"Solidarity is a single word that captures a complex of meanings. It calls attention to the readily observable and indisputable fact that people are interdependent; they rely on each other for almost all their biological and emotional needs." ² It is this principle of solidarity that leads us to accept our responsibility to advocate on behalf of those who have been silenced in some way, or have had their needs dismissed.

"Our common humanity issues a moral imperative to practice a deep solidarity that cannot tolerate the exclusion or marginalization of any of our brothers and sisters." ³ And it is subsidiarity that guides our advocacy, ensuring that when ever possible, decision making left in the hands of those who will be most affected.

"While it is not always immediately clear which level applies best to a given task, the rule of thumb laid out in Catholic social teaching is to rely as much as possible on those solutions that are closest to the people affected and that employ the smallest groupings and mechanisms that are still effective and efficient." ⁴

7.1.1 ADVOCACY IN YOUR LIFE

Video source: [YouTube](#) ([transcript](#) available)

Watch the video above and think about the following questions:

- Where does advocacy fit in your life?
- Can you identify where you have benefited from the advocacy of others?
- Have you ever been called on to advocate for others?

¹ Massaro SJ, Thomas. Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015. Kindle edition.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

7.2 MALALA'S STORY

The following videos highlight two individuals who became strong advocates for their communities. As you watch, try to identify where the common good is being compromised or overlooked:

Video source: [YouTube](#) ([transcript](#) unavailable)

Video source: [YouTube](#) ([transcript](#) available)

Malala's story is one of extraordinary courage and commitment to principle. In many instances of advocacy the advocate is someone with power who speaks on behalf of the less powerful. Is this the case here? When she began her campaign, Malala wasn't rich, famous or politically powerful yet she managed to raise an issue and build momentum for her cause. Would you describe Malala as a powerful person, if so what type of power does she have?

Although she may never have imagined it, Malala's advocacy attracted global attention. Usually, advocacy takes place on a far smaller scale: it is often local or even personal. However being on a smaller scale does nothing to detract from its importance.

Mother Teresa (1910 - 1997), a hero to millions, was famous for challenging her admirers to "find your own Calcutta." By this she meant that it is important, wherever one finds oneself, to take advantage of whatever opportunities arise for social involvement and to work ardently for justice. ⁵

⁵Massaro SJ, Thomas. Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015. Kindle edition.

7.3 FROM LITTLE THINGS BIG THINGS GROW

People find themselves in the role of advocate for a number of reasons. One significant reason is recognising injustice in the status quo.

7.3.1 THE WAVE HILL WALK OFF

This video covers the story of Vincent Lingiari and the Wave Hill walk off.

Video source: [YouTube](#) (transcript currently unavailable)

The song From Little Things Big Things Grow, written by Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody has become an anthem for Indigenous land rights in this country. It also has a broader significance for our discussion of advocacy. Advocacy often involves starting small and trusting in the rightness of the cause to help build momentum. The example of Malala Yousafzai showed how a just cause can expand and create ripples across the globe.

The links below explain the stories of two other important initiatives taken by Indigenous Australians to call out inequality and prejudice. In each story the challenge of becoming an advocate is taken up by individuals then passed forward to a new generation.

7.3.2 WHAT WAS AUSTRALIA'S FREEDOM RIDE

In 1965 a courageous group of University of Sydney students travelled by bus through New South Wales to raise awareness of the poor state of Aboriginal health, education and housing, and to encourage and support Aboriginal people to resist discrimination.

Read the article [Explainer: What was Australia's Freedom Ride?](#)

7.3.3 THE DAY NICKY WINMAR DREW THE LINE

In 1993 AFL player Nicky Winmar took a stand and exposed the level of racial abuse endured by Indigenous players.

Read the article [The day Nicky Winmar drew the line](#)

The task of being an advocate is often a shared task. It is the combined efforts of a number of advocates that finally achieves success. This may take many generations and require the advocacy batten being passed through many hands.

- What are the challenges to the common good being addressed by Malala Yousafzai and Vincent Lingiari?
- In what ways are their challenges similar and in what ways are they different?

7.3.4 READY TO WRITE?

By now you should be well advanced in your preparation for assessment task 2, the Op Ed piece. Read the instructions for this assignment carefully. If you are not familiar with writing in the style of an opinion piece look at the examples provided in LEO. You should also talk to your tutor about any questions you have.

To help sharpen your skills in identifying challenges to the common good, list a number of challenges you noticed in the stories above.

8.1 CASE STUDIES OF ADVOCACY

We will now look at a particular example of advocacy. Examining this piece will assist you in your preparation for AT2. Some of you may have first read this paper on justice for refugees and asylum seekers from the Australian Bishops Conference in UNCC100. You will need to read the paper and consider its claims - pay particular attention to the way in which it does the work of advocating for refugees.

Once you have read the paper you will need to compare the claims it makes against the evidence. To do this you can follow the links below to various resources which should help you have a better understanding of Australia's treatment of refugees. You will also have no difficulty finding numerous editorials and opinion pieces on this topic, we have included a link to one but a quick web search will give you access to any number of others.

8.1.1 FOR THOSE WHO'VE COME ACROSS THE SEAS

Read: [For those who've come across the seas](#) by Bishop Vincent Long

The notes below highlight some of the key points in For those who've come across the seas. Use to help navigate the paper.

What's wrong here? The paper suggests that wealthy countries like Australia need to do more to address the world's refugee crisis. "Developing countries host 86% of the world's refugees and this proportion has increased by 16% over the past two decades. The available food, shelter, security and medical care are inadequate, and people have no chance of getting on with their lives and raising a family with dignity. Many people have spent years in such appalling conditions." [6](#)

The paper also makes claims that, in particular, Australia's treatment of children seeking asylum falls short of what we should expect. "Australia is the only nation that detains child asylum seekers as a matter of course. Most of the countries have far more humane policies towards those who seek protection. The United Kingdom, for example, detains people only when absolutely necessary before they are to be removed from the country; children may be detained for only 72 hours or, with the Minister's approval, for a maximum of a week." [7](#)

That most of those seeking asylum and being sent to offshore processing are in fact genuine refugees with a right to claim asylum. "About 90% of boat arrivals who have been processed in the past have been found by our rigorous refugee status determination process to be genuine refugees in need of protection. This alone should tell us that 'turning back the boats' is harming genuine refugees." [8](#)

It questions if, in Australia, our way of life or security is really under threat from asylum seekers arriving by boat? "Today, the panic and mistrust that is stirred up by this debate are out of all proportion to the true scale of the issue in Australia." [9](#)

"It is an indifference to the reasons behind people's flight from persecution, to the human dignity of every person, and to our once proud tradition of protecting and supporting victims of war and violence." [10](#) Is Australia's treatment of asylum seekers one of indifference? Have we become a less welcoming nation?

Who does it affect? How could the situation be improved? The paper points to the principle of solidarity as key to the issue along with a need to focus on the common good. "In Catholic teaching this is expressed in the principle of solidarity. Because we depend on one another and our relationship to one another makes us human, we have a responsibility to build society together that will benefit all people. We do not seek simply our own good but look to the common good." [11](#)

Who should help? The paper also makes the point that refugees are our equal in worth and that genuine assistance is no more than we would expect for ourselves. "People who come to Australia claiming protection are not aliens, but our brothers and sisters. If they cannot find protection in their own countries, they are entitled to claim it from other nations, including our own." ¹² And also: "It seems Australia is losing sight of the dignity of the person seeking asylum and our obligation to assist and protect." ¹³

The paper also reminds the reader that: "At the end of the Second World War when millions of people were displaced, national leaders committed themselves to care for refugees. Australia helped draft the United Nations Convention on the status of refugees and signed it in 1954. We willingly took up our responsibilities: to recognise the right of individuals to seek asylum in a country bound by the Convention, not to penalise people because of their mode of arrival, and to undertake not to return people to a country where they have a well-founded fear of persecution." ¹⁴

Why should we care? The paper suggests: "Each of us possesses an inestimable value that we refer to as our human dignity." ¹⁵ "Our neighbour is the person before us in need. Those Faceless and nameless behind the veil of border security operations are now revealed to be a brothers and sisters – the mother and child fleeing war, the father desperate to secure future for his family." ¹⁶ And also: "We do not open our hearts and our homes to vulnerable people simply because they are 'deserving' of charity or compassion. We take them in, provide shelter and bandaged their wounds because they are equal to us in dignity." ¹⁷

8.1.2 BEING A REFUGEE IS NOT A CHOICE: CARINA HOANG AT TEDX PERTH

Watch this TEDx talk where the experience of seeking asylum by boat is brought to life.

Video source: [YouTube](#) ([transcript](#) available)

8.1.3 ACTIVITY

In this week's tutorial you will watch a short video about children in detention and will be asked to think about how this issue might relate to your future profession.

In preparation for your tutorial read the  [Children in Detention Hot Topic](#) and brainstorm how you might address this issue in the context of your future profession.

⁶ [For those who've come across the seas](#), Australian Catholic Bishops Conference, p8

⁷ Ibid p13

⁸ Ibid p11

⁹ Ibid p3

¹⁰ Ibid p3

¹¹ Ibid p7

¹² Ibid p7

¹³ Ibid p9

¹⁴ Ibid p15

¹⁵ Ibid p5

¹⁶ Ibid p7

8.2 ADVOCACY LINKS AND RESOURCES

The following article links and organisations may be useful in writing your final assessment.

[Australia's offshore processing of asylum seekers in Nauru and PNG: A Quick Guide to statistics and resources](#)
Australian Parliament website

[Refugee and Humanitarian Programme](#)
Australian Government Department of Immigration and Border Protection

[The 1951 Refugee Convention](#)
UNHCR website

[Australian Catholic Social Justice Council](#)
ACSJC website

[UNHCR Mission to Manus Island, Papua New Guinea 15-17 January 2013](#)
Refworld website

[Australia's inhumane offshore detention of asylum seekers must end](#)
The Age editorial opinion piece

[Kidz4Kidz Australia video](#)
Via the Kidz4Kidz Facebook page

8.2.1 PROPOSE SOLUTIONS

As part of your preparation for assessment task 3, create a mind map in [Padlet](#) around the issue you intend to cover and try to brainstorm as many positive actions towards solutions as you can.

Remember you are working towards AT3 in which you will extend some aspects of the Op Ed piece you wrote for AT2. Of particular importance will be your ability to propose possible solutions to the issue you are discussing.

9.1 EVERYTHING IS CONNECTED: CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

An issue that is strongly connected to that of refugees and displaced persons, is that of climate change and our care for our common home. The question we might ask ourselves is: if we fail to live up to our responsibilities in caring for the environment, who pays? The simplest answer is that we all pay. However, the greatest burden will be placed on those who come after us, future generations, and those most vulnerable; those who have the least resources to help them adapt; those living on land that barely sustains them even before the impacts of climate change are felt.


Environmental issues are not simply about our impact on the planet, they are also issues of human dignity, flourishing and the common good. They are issues that disproportionately impact on people living in poverty. The causes of these issues are connected to greed and lack of concern for humanity just as much as they are connected to a lack of care for the natural environment. Any attempts to mitigate the damage caused by our use of the world's resources should be motivated by solidarity with all who we share this planet with, as well as those who will come after us.

The article [Top Ten Takeaways from "Laudato Si'"](#) from America Magazine suggests 10 main points made by the encyclical.

The breakthrough 2015 document of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, develops these themes and adds many more to the inventory of Catholic social teaching on creation. Bearing the subtitle "On Care for Our Common Home," this first papal encyclical ever to focus squarely on the environment in a sustained way offers a stern challenge to change our individual and collective way of thinking about the material world, and thus to rouse the energy to reform social structures, corporate practices, and public policies to protect our fragile world. ¹⁸

Here is the encyclical in full: Pope Francis. (2015). [Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home](#) (Encyclical).

9.1.1 ACTIVITY

In this week's tutorial the discussion will be around the encyclical by Pope Francis "On care for our common home". The Montara Oil Spill will be used as a case study. In preparation for class, read the  [Montara Oil Spill Handout](#) and do some investigating of your own on the Montara Oil Spill.

You may consider the following questions:

- How are the economic benefits of oil exploration at sea balanced against the possibility of environmental damage and adverse effects on innocent victims, their health and livelihood?
- How have relations between Australia and its neighbour, Indonesia been affected?
- What harm has been caused to the citizens of Indonesia and the environment?
- How do these environmental disasters caused by man impact on our fellow human beings?

¹⁸ Massaro SJ, Thomas. *Living Justice: Catholic Social Teaching in Action*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2015. Kindle edition. Two New Challenges: The Environment and Globalization > Location 3451

9.2 TWO MODERN CHALLENGES

Read these two articles that explore different aspects of climate change:

- [Climate change: the poor will suffer most](#) by Suzanne Goldenberg is an article from The Guardian draws attention to the disproportionate impact of climate change on the poor.
- [Climate change in Australia](#) is a very useful resource for CSIRO on the scientific basis for concerns over climate change.

9.2.1 ACTIVITY

Consider the issue of climate change in relation to each of these principles:

- The Common Good
- Dignity of the Human Person
- Preferential Option for the Poor
- Solidarity

What could be brought to the debate on how best to tackle environmental issues by the principles of CST?

10.1 YOUR FINAL ASSESSMENT TASK

10.1.1 REFLECTION ACTIVITY

Take time to reflect on what you have done throughout this unit. It may be useful for you to consider what you have achieved in relation to the learning outcomes:

1. Describe how the efforts of public, private, not-for-profit agencies, faith based groups and you as a professional, can result in the realisation of a more just global community.
2. Critically analyse the challenges with realising aspirations of the common good in your professional community, locally and globally.
3. Critique a global issue where shared responsibility for the common good is not being realised.

You might also like to reflect on how the material covered over the course of the unit has impacted on you personally. You may have found some of the issues covered at times confronting. Hopefully, you now feel more empowered to help promote the common good. We have looked at many examples of individuals making a positive contribution and no matter what our situation we can all contribute to the common good in one way or another.

10.1.2 ASSESSMENT TASK 3

You should be well underway in your preparation for your final assignment. The activities you have completed in LEO were all designed to assist you with completing all three assessment tasks.

Assessment Task 3: Extending your work from Assignment 2, write a 1200 word paper that briefly critiques a global issue (i.e., the issue or challenge you chose for Assessment 2) where shared responsibility for the common good is not being realised (approx. 300 words) and then, propose ways to address this challenge (approx. 900 words) in your professional community, locally and globally.

As the unit's title Justice and Change in a Global World suggests, in UNCC300 we were particularly concerned with looking outwards: examining the part we can all play in creating a fairer more inclusive world. This seems a very appropriate focus for those of you about to graduate and begin new careers. The unit has hopefully provided you the opportunity to pause for a moment and reflect on what lies ahead.

It has hopefully encouraged you to consider what great scope there is for all of us to contribute to the common good, both locally and globally.

Over the course of the unit we worked through three main themes. We began with an examination of Community Engagement. Here we asked what the hallmarks of good community engagement are; what sort of relationships should we aim to build with partners in CE; and what problems should we be wary of. To help answer these questions we looked at successful models of community engagement, some based out of ACU, but we also looked at the inspirational work of agencies working to improve conditions for individuals and communities around the globe.

The next theme was Human Dignity. You began your investigation into Human Dignity in UNCC100. We looked in particular at how dignity is understood to be grounded - is it something connected to our being human or is based in our actions? And what happens when it is dismissed or denied?

In the final section we considered the importance of advocacy - another concept introduced in UNCC100. We look here at particular examples of advocacy and the importance of giving a voice to those who are being silenced. Simply by speaking up on behalf of a group or an individual suffering injustice we make a powerful affirmation of their worth and of our solidarity with them.

The aim of this unit was to pick up on the work you began in UNCC100 and take it further to a deeper more sophisticated level. You were asked to look outwards to identify issues that impact on the common good and you were asked to consider ways, big or small, of addressing those issues. As we saw in our discussion of advocacy, great change can come from humble beginnings.

Hopefully, one message that comes through in ACU's Core Curriculum subjects, is that everyone has something to contribute and everyone has something to learn.

"From little things, big things grow": Paul Kelly & Kev Carmody remember Gough in song

Video source: [YouTube](#) (transcript unavailable)