



30-minute Catholic Social Teaching web-based home session for families
Theme: Poverty and Inequality in the U.S., and our response as Catholics

Play “Spent” (7-10 minutes)

- + Ask student to log on to “Spent”: <http://www.playspent.org>
- + Together, move through the simulation, which invites you to imagine that you are living in poverty here in the U.S. You will be prompted to make decisions about work, money, your family, and more. Make your choices together and see what happens.
- + Play a few times, choosing different options each time.

Discuss the Game (5 minutes)

- + What was playing the game like? Was it frustrating? Difficult?
- + No matter how you play, you end up in very challenging circumstances. What do you think the game is trying to teach us?
Possible answer: It is very difficult to break out of poverty, even if someone works hard and makes the right choices.
- + What do you think would be the hardest part of living in poverty here in the U.S.?

Watch “Tour of Poverty, USA” (5 minutes)

- + Introduce it. Say something like: “Now, we’ll watch a video that talks about some of the things we saw happening in the Spent game.”
- + Ask student to log on to “Poverty, USA”: <http://www.povertyusa.org>
- + On the bottom-left of the screen, click the video in the box titled “Watch the Poverty, USA Tour”.

Read Scripture: Matthew 25:31-40 (5 minutes)

- + Key line: *For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me.*
- + Say: Jesus tells us that whenever we see someone in poverty, we see Jesus himself. He also tells us that to be his followers, we must work to end things like hunger, homelessness, and poverty.

Act: Send an Email to an Elected Official (5 minutes)

- + Introduce it. Say something like: “One way we can follow Jesus’ command is to provide meals for hungry people. Another way we can follow it is to ask our elected leaders in government to pass laws that help people lift themselves out of poverty.”
- + (1) Ask student to scroll up to top of Poverty, USA website. (2) Hover cursor over “Get involved” button. (3) Select “Act.” (4) Click “Action Alerts.” (These are campaigns run by the U.S. bishops that ask Catholics to contact their legislators about key issues.) (5) Click “Action Center”. (6) Click “Congress Must Develop Bipartisan Solutions That Protect Poor and Vulnerable People”.
- + Read letter aloud. Discuss any parts the student doesn’t understand.
- + Ask student of fill out contact information, and click submit.

Close in Prayer (1 minute)

Christ, who showed great compassion to the poor, give us compassion toward those in poverty. Your wish is for all of your children to live with adequate food, shelter, health care and education. Help us take up your work as a community of faith and guide us as we seek just solutions to the poverty in our midst. Amen.