

Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd Position on Economic Justice



1. Despite the year-2000 Jubilee call for redistribution and inclusiveness, recent decades of global economic expansion have created a privileged group into extreme wealth with a concurrent entrapment of peoples and communities living in conditions of extreme poverty. Global political and economic systems and structures have largely disregarded the calls for the restoration of justice, reconciliation among all humanity, welcome of the stranger, or cancellation of debt burdens. Within the inextricable maze of poverty and of abundance of global resources, the gap between rich and poor continues to grow.

2. The disparity between the accumulation of extreme wealth and the inescapability of extreme poverty offends the dignity of human beings, is an affront to the common good, and tends toward disastrous cyclical misery. Extreme amassment of wealth and refusal to share resources and material goods are both cause and effect of social and spiritual ills. The effects of poverty are both blatant and insidious: malnutrition, ill health, illiteracy, unemployment, homelessness, family rupture, social exclusion, social violence, desperate migration and constant anxiety for children's future. Such degradation violates Human Rights, as attested by articles 22, 23, 25 & 26 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR.) Women and children are the ones who bear the heaviest discrimination and burdens of poverty, including victimization in phenomena such as trafficking and the prostitution of women and girls.

3. We have a vision that all persons, with special awareness of women and girls, ought to share in the economic, social and spiritual benefits of our global wealth. This conviction rests on Judaic-Christian Scripture, Catholic Social Teaching, the UDHR, and the universal ethical code to treat others as you yourself would like to be treated.

4. We work to eradicate poverty while supporting decent work, sustainable and environmentally sound economic growth, reduction of inequalities, responsible production and consumption, and human development. We perceive this as a call to personal and communal conversion, aware of our own wealth and privileges. We also understand that there is a prophetic call to stand against systems and structures of economic injustice, some of which we are a part of.

5. As we increase our capacity to understand the dynamics of global economic exclusion and to advocate for economic improvement and social transformation, we are committed to expand programs and initiatives that bring practical relief from poverty. Programs that generate income for women and families and actions that support grassroots civic empowerment of communities and individuals are the focus of many recent initiatives. These include education, development of skills training, personal growth projects, micro-enterprise projects, micro-credit approaches, local co-operatives, international marketing of goods, and a variety of means to join with women and their families who struggle for a way out of poverty. Our projects include many forms of community building, social supports and personal empowerment opportunities.

6. In responding to Economic Justice, it is critical to:

a. Develop sustainable strategies for economic development with local communities, ensuring that income generation is pragmatic and effective for women and families. This will include a diversity of models, responsive to local situations and will move women toward inclusion into mainstream economies.

b. Know the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Use SDG 1 and its targets (especially 1.3), the ILO Recommendation 202 on National Floors of Social Protection, and SDGs 8, 10, and 12 for all planning and education in communities and ministries.

c. Develop programing that uses human rights and empowerment models. Support literacy education, employment skills training, business & finance education for women, and labor rights for families.

d. Educate, in communities and programs, to unmask the systemic roots and discriminatory effects of extreme poverty; this will expose poverty as violence to the human spirit sustained by factors such as greed, inhumanity, and political corruption. Understanding how weak rule of law, inadequate government systems, unethical trade systems and corporate practices underpin and sustain poverty is essential for analysis, education and advocacy. Likewise, it is essential to recognize the abilities and contributions of those in extreme poverty (including migrants) toward human enrichment.

e. Increase awareness of consumerism – individually, communally, and systemically. Link personal purchasing and communal investments with production, labor rights and environmental sustainability. Ensure awareness of the many poor practices of international production and global supply chains as well as support for principles of fair trade are essential to environmental sustainability. Evaluate our own participation in and complicity with unjust structures.

f. Create and/or participate in networks and campaigns that call for economic justice and social responsibility. Support responsible policies such as Social Protection Floors that define national sets of inclusive social security guarantees over the life cycle so that all have access to essential life security: food, water, sanitation, shelter, health, education, and social supports. This may require re-envisioning family bonds to extend beyond currently defined boundaries of kinship.

g. Study and apply the economic principles of Pope Francis’ exhortation, *Evangelii Gaudium* and encyclical *Laudato Si* to all aspects of life and ministry.

i. Use the provisions of Human Rights - the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, and the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) - to increase public awareness of injustice. Do advocacy and lobbying based on the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights that support fair trade, rights of laborers, migrants’ rights, sustainable environment, and gender justice. Include gender and economic analysis in all human rights reporting about the conditions of girls, women and families.



Glossary of acronyms used in OLCGS Position Papers

Alphabetically listed

CEDAW	Conventions on the Eliminating of all forms of Discrimination against Women
CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
FGM	Female Genital Mutilation
GSIF	Good Shepherd International Foundation
GSIJPO	Good Shepherd International Justice Peace Office
GFMD	Global Forum on Migration and Development
GCM	Global Compact on Migration
GCR	Global Compact on Refugees
IDP(s)	Internally displaced person(s)
ILO	International Labor Organization
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
OLCGS	Our Lady of Charity of the Good Shepherd
PP(s)	Position Paper(s)
SDG(s)	Sustainable Development Goal(s)
TIP	Trafficking in Persons
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UDHR	Universal Declaration of Human Rights
UN	United Nations
US	United States
UNFAO	United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization

Mission Development Process –
a diagram for Implementation of OLCGS Position Papers

The implementation of the OLCGS Positions in Mission and Ministry requires effective program development. The diagram below, based on the work of the GSIF and adapted by the GSIJPO, provides interrelated elements necessary for an integrated process of mission development. It can be adapted and enhanced for all levels of programs, communities, and formation. Groups can analyze their own strengths and needs by consideration of the total framework. Development can take any starting point along the schema and will necessarily move to interact with and include all elements, resulting in a dynamic process of ongoing learning, change, and development. Some elements will require technical help and professional training; many will challenge a sense of security or routine. All are critical to meet the mission demands of today.

