CATECHETICAL MATERIAL ON LOVING AND RESPECTING THE COMMUNITY HELPERS IN SCHOOL

Part I: Introduction
This catechetical material is designed for the Grade Six pupils to provide an opportunity for them to experience the work of the community helpers especially the janitors and canteen crew. This aims to encourage the pupils to love and treat them with respect.

Topic: Loving and Respecting the Community Helpers in School

Kind of Material:
This is an in-campus exposure module for Grade Six pupils. This is a whole day activity. This material has two parts. First is the exposure proper wherein the pupils will mingle and experience the work of the janitor and canteen crew. Second there will be sharing and processing of the pupils’ experiences using Scripture passages and Church teachings.

Audience:
Grade Six pupils of private Catholic co-ed schools, mostly coming from well to-do families.

Situation
The pupils already have an understanding of love and respect. However, they tend to limit this love to those people in authority and those they look up to like their parents, teachers and friends. They often fail to show this love and respect to the community helpers in school namely: the janitors and canteen crew. Oftentimes, they treat them as merely servants. Thus, their recognition of the worth and dignity of the community helpers are lessened. Usually, there’s a gap between their faith-life and the way they relate with the community helpers.

Problem: How to encourage pupils to love and respect the community helpers in school using the pupils’ experience of interacting and working with them.

Objectives:
This module aims to encourage the pupils to:

Morals: strive to love and respect the community helpers in school.

Doctrine: understand that the love and respect due to others is based on our being God’s children whose dignity and intrinsic worth come from God who created us.

Worship: pray to the Holy Spirit to inspire us to love and respect one another.

Significance of the Material

Objective Significance: The act of loving and respecting is rooted in Jesus’ Greatest Commandment of Love. This expression of love is based on our intrinsic worth and dignity as children of God.

Subjective Significance: The pupils’ understanding of Jesus’ great Commandments may deepen through their direct experience with the community helpers. They can learn to love and respect the community helpers by interacting and working with them. Through this, the pupils may recognize and appreciate the dignity of the community helpers’ work. They may also realize that these people too are children of God with dignity and equally important in building God’s Kingdom. This realization may lead them to mature in faith and grow in their relationship with God and with one another.

Scope and Limitations
This module is directly intended for the Grade Six pupils in the Catholic private schools as reinforcement of their lesson about the Greatest Commandment of Love. Thus, this material may lead the grade six pupils to have a deeper appreciation and value of the dignity of the different community helpers in school.

Using the account from the Gospel of Matthew 22:39 – “You shall love your neighbor as yourself”; Genesis 1:27 – “God created man and woman in His image and likeness ...”; Romans 12:10, 16 – “Love another with the affection of brothers... have the same regard for all; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly” in the light of CFC 747, GS 24 and the life-story of Mother Teresa of Calcutta which they have already learned, this in-campus exposure focuses on developing love and respect for the community helpers in school, particularly for the janitors and canteen crew.

Methodology
This catechetical material uses the NCDP’s Source Integration (Scripture, Church Teaching, and Human Experience). Specifically, this uses the pupils’ experience of interacting and working with the janitors and canteen crew reflected on in the light of human dignity and Jesus’ call to love.

OUTLINE
(Orientation- given a day before the exposure)
I. Opening prayer
II. Introduction: Situation
III. Exposure proper:
• Short interaction with the assigned community helper
• The pupils experience the work of the non-teaching personnel like: janitors, canteen crew. (whole morning)

IV. Processing of experience
• DYAD sharing – “kwentonong eya”
• Big group sharing
Father, you created us out of love. Jesus, you taught us how to love. Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Love, inspire us to love. In Your presence and in your name—Father, Son and Holy Spirit, we begin our activity. May all our thoughts and aspirations have their origin in You and be directed to Your glory. Amen.

b. Interactive Reading of the Scripture
   Let us read the Word of God.
   (Gen. 1:27-28)

c. Reflection Questions:
   In the silence of our hearts, let us ponder on
   the Word of God using the following questions.
   1. What is the image of God who created
      you?
   2. What does it mean to be created in
      God’s image and likeness?

   God is a loving God, who created us with dignity.
   We are called to love one another; this love is manifested
   in the way we relate with others. Here in our school, there
   are also people whom we don’t recognize but who are also
   made in the image and likeness of God. They too, have
   dignity and deserve our love and respect. Today, we hope
   that through this activity, we may put this love into action
   in the way we relate with them.

Part II: The Material for Pupils

Situation:
In your class, you have learned the commandments of love—love of God and love of neighbor. You have been taught that this love should be manifested in our actions and in the way we relate with others. However, we notice that there are times that you tend to show your love only to your parents, teachers, classmates and friends. How do you show love and respect to the community helpers—the janitors and canteen crew? Do we often look down on them? Why do we need to love them? How can we concretely show this love to them?

Thus, we hope that through this activity, you will strive to love and respect the community helpers in school because they are human beings too. This love is rooted in our intrinsic worth and dignity as God’s children.

Exposition:
I. Introduction
   Our God is the God of all our experiences. He speaks to us in all the events of our day. God is calling us into community; to be in communion with everybody not only with our classmates, friends, teacher but to everyone who forms part of our community.
   a. Opening Prayer
      Let us remember that we are always in the loving presence of God and let us call Him as we say: In the name of the Father...
   b. Reading and Reflection
      For our reading and reflection, we will use the following guide questions:
      1. What is your name?
         2. What do you do as janitor/canteen crew?
         3. How long have you been working in this area?
         4. What difficulties or problems do you encounter in your work?
         5. What advice can you give to us?

   We also encourage you to feel free to ask other questions about their families, dreams, hopes, etc.

III. Exposure proper
   Pupils, you may now proceed to your respective areas.

IV. Processing
   A. “Kwentong Erya” – Group yourselves into four members. Share your answers to the following questions:
      1. Where is your area of responsibility?
      2. What kind of work did you do?
      3. What difficulties did you encounter?
      4. How did you feel about your work?
      5. What struck you most with your encounter with Manong/Manang?

   B. Big Group Sharing (random sharing of answers)
      Our Manongs/Manangs work in the comfort rooms, corridors, canteens and in many other places in school. But oftentimes, we don’t appreciate or even recognize them. They do very difficult and tiresome work. Sometimes, they are disrespected through our irresponsible actions like throwing our garbage and leaving our mess anywhere.
      In our encounter with them, we realize that they also get hurt when we ignore and disrespect them.
C. Deepening / Processing of Experiences
   a. Why should we love and respect the community helpers?
   b. How do we show our love and respect to them?

   From our experience, we realize that the Manongs/Manangs are the members of our community whom we often pass by, easily ignore and disrespect because they are not in authority. Hence, we make their work even more difficult. At times, we treat them with lesser importance and we feel that we are the masters while they are only our servants. In reality, they are also human beings like us who deserve love and respect.

   We are all created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). This is also true to our community helpers. They have this intrinsic dignity and value given to them by God. They are reflections of our Creator who is love. If we love and respect our parents, teachers and friends, only because they are close to us; is this real love and respect? True love and respect is based on the inherent dignity as children of God. So, we are called to love our Manongs/Manangs because they are loved by God. It is the Father’s love in the Spirit that touches each of us personally so we are called to share this love for all people. It is commanded by Christ our Lord, “Love your neighbor as yourself” (Matthew 22:39).

   Our Manongs/Manangs play an important role in our community. They are the people who prepare our food, sweep the floor, wipe off the dust on our chairs and cabinets, disinfect the comfort rooms and clean up the canals so that we will not get sick. They make sure that our surroundings are clean. They make our lives here in school comfortable. They look after our welfare and security. It is their right to be loved and respected regardless of their status and the kind of work they are into because it is due to them.

   Hence, we are called to show our love and respect to our Manongs/Manangs by talking to them politely, saying “po” and “opo”, greeting them cheerfully by their names, saying “Thank you” in every favor that we ask, being responsible of for own mess and help them in our own little ways. God is constantly calling us to “love one another with the affection of brothers and sisters...have the same regard for all; do not be haughty but associate with the lowly” (Romans 12:10,16).

V. Synthesis: The example of Mother Teresa of Calcutta

   Mother Teresa showed great love for God by loving her neighbor, especially the poorest of the poor. She knew that all persons have dignity because they are all created in the image and likeness of God (Genesis 1:27). Therefore, if God created us in His own image and likeness out of sheer love, as images of God we are created to love and be loved. And since the community helpers are made in God’s image, we must therefore love them, too. Through the Holy Spirit, the spirit of love, we will be inspired and we can genuinely love and respect others.

Love in Action: “My Plan of Action"
   - Mother Teresa said, “Put love into action”. In this activity, you are going to make your plan of action as your commitment in response to the difficulties that our Manongs/Manangs encounter in their work. This is your way of responding to God’s call of loving and respecting our Manongs/Manangs. This will be followed up in your CLE classes.

VI. Closing Paraliturgy

   Let us close this activity by thanking God for this great opportunity to mingle and integrate with our Manongs/Manangs. Let us now sing our Opening Song.
   a. Opening Song: Send Your Spirit
   b. Body Prayer: Prayer to be like Jesus
      As the body part is mentioned, bless each other’s body part.

   O Loving Father, we pray that we may be like Your Son Jesus. We do not want only to follow Him, we want to imitate Him. We do not want to impersonate Him, we pray that we may be another Him. Please help us to be just like Him.

   Let us be His eyes, full of compassion, clearly seeing other peoples’ needs, and aware of the goodness in them. So cleanse our eyes and keep us from judging others. Grant that we may not be blinded by power or popularity.

   Let us be His lips, speaking words of affirmation and support. Uttering what is morally right, and expressing only the truth. So cleanse our lips from ill and offensive words. Stop them from spreading intrigues and gossips. Make them repeat His teaching.

   Let us be His heart, always ready to love, tirelessly forgiving, beating with kindness and compassion. So cleanse our heart from bitterness and envy. Heal and fill it with love.

   Let us be His hands, always reaching out to help, always there to give support, and ready with a healing and caring touch. So cleanse our hands and keep us from using them to inflict harm on others. Grant that we may always use them in the service of our brothers and sisters.

   Let us be His feet, going out of our way to be with people, helping them in their hour of need. So cleanse our feet and stop them from running away from responsibilities and obligations. Keep them from turning us away from Him. Make them follow His footsteps.

   We ask these, through Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

   (adopted from the Prayer for Children)
   c. Offertory
      (Instrumental music will be played while offering the output of “My Plan of Action” activity in the sacred space)
   d. Closing Song: Prayer for Generosity
VII. Integration

DOCTRINE: The love and respect due to others is based on our being God’s children whose dignity and intrinsic worth come from God who created, redeemed and continues to empower us.

WORSHIP: The Holy Spirit in us, inspires us to love and respect one another.

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