ILLINOIS HOLOCAUST MUSEUM & EDUCATION CENTER

ARCHDIOCESE OF CHICAGO

In Our Voices

PRE - & POST- VISIT ACTIVITIES FOR CATHOLIC EDUCATORS (GRADES 7-12)

Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center and the Archdiocese of Chicago Office of Catholic Schools invite teachers to make use of the following activities and resources as they align their instruction of the Holocaust to the Archdiocese of Chicago Religion Curriculum Priority Standards for Grades PK-8 (2020). We encourage educators to explore these suggested activities to incorporate into their interdisciplinary instruction—using all of them or only a few, and implementing them as-written or with modifications to meet students' specific needs. Through these lessons and activities, students will gain a deeper understanding of the human dimension of the Holocaust, while exploring topics through the lens of Catholic faith, tradition, and values.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ABOUT THE MUSEUM

Likely the last international institution of its kind built with the active participation of Holocaust Survivors, Illinois Holocaust Museum & Education Center is the largest facility in the Midwest (and the third largest in the world) dedicated to preserving the memories of those lost in the Holocaust and to teaching current generations to fight hatred, prejudice, indifference, and genocide in today's world.

Through world-class exhibitions and programs, the Museum inspires individuals and organizations and provides a universal wake-up call to action: Take history to heart. Take a stand for humanity.

GENERAL ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #1

BEFORE YOUR IN-PERSON FIELD TRIP OR VIRTUAL FIELD TRIP

Invite students to bring a family or school picture to school and share with the class. Analyze these primary resources as a class:

- What do students observe in each photo?
- What sort of inferences can be drawn from what is observed?

DURING YOUR FIELD TRIP

Assign students to identify various photos they see in the exhibition. Analyze these primary resources using similar questions:

- What do you observe in each photo?
- What sort of inferences can be drawn from what is observed?

AFTER THE FIELD TRIP

Assign students to choose 3-4 pictures from the Gallery of Holocaust Images (usf.edu) Analyze these primary resources, make connections, and reflect on the following questions:

- Why did you choose these pictures?
- What do you observe in each photo?
- Why is it important to witness and listen to the experiences of others?
- What does the Catholic Church teach us about our responsibility to respond to systemic violence and injustice?

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.02.A, 7.04.B, 7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.04.A, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #2

DEFINE THE FOLLOWING TERMS

a. Martyr
b. Persecutor
c. Upstander
d. Bystander

Click here for definitions.

VIEW & DISCUSS THE FOLLOWING MEDIA SITES

- U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum: *Learn about antisemitism and the roots of systemic violence against Jews.*
- U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum: *Learn about the German Churches and the Nazi State.*
- Jewish Federation for the Righteous: *Although religion is not listed, the rescuers in Poland, Hungary, Czech Republic, Slovakia, and Lithuania were Catholic.*

THINK & DISCUSS

- In what ways were Catholic individuals martyrs, persecutors, upstanders, and bystanders during the events of World War II? Give examples from your research.
- What did martyrs and upstanders choose to do to save strangers, neighbors, and friends? What did they risk by doing so?

- Are actions or inactions of persecutors or bystanders “sinful”? Explain.
- Why is it important to take responsibility for our actions and commit ourselves to be “people of good will”?

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.02.A, 7.04.B, 7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.03.C, 8.04.A, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.A, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #3

Prompt students to research the experience of the following people. Invite students to share their findings with the class in the form of a media presentation or small group discussion.

a. Edith Stein (St. Theresa Benedicta of the Cross)
b. St. Maximilian Kolbe
c. Monsignor Hugh O’Flaherty
d. Corrie ten Boom
e. Dietrich Bonhoeffer
f. Fr. Alfred Delp
g. Franz Jägerstätter

Think, Write, Discuss:

- What does it mean to be a “person of good will?” How were these individuals “people of good will?” Justify your response using examples from their life and experiences.
- Identify someone in your own life who embodies the qualities and moral values of a “person of good will”. Write a letter to that person, identify the values you see in them, and explain what you learn from them.

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.02.A, 7.04.B, 7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.03.C, 8.04.B, 8.05.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.A, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #4

Read “First They Came” by Martin Niemoller. Discuss who Martin Niemoller was. Discuss the message of the poem/statement. What message does it have for us today?

Write a song, poem, or create a piece of art with an upstander message.

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.04.A, 7.04.B,7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.04.A, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.A, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #5

Learn and connect Seven Themes of Catholic Social Teaching to events of WWII and today.

- How were these themes both upheld and denied during WWII?
- How are these themes both upheld and denied in the world today?

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.04.A, 7.04.B, 7.04.C, 7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.03.C, 8.04.A, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.A, 8.06.C

As a class, choose one (or more) themes and design a social action plan for your school and/or community.

Consider:

- *What problem or social justice issue will your plan address?*
- *What change or action do you hope to bring about with your plan?*
- *How will your plan address this topic? What actions will you take and/or what message will you send?*
- *What resources do you have to carry out this plan? (Resources can be people's talents, skills, or interests; partners in the community; rooms or materials at school that are available for use, etc.)*

ACTIVITY #6

Scripture connections: What can we learn about being either an upstander or bystander in the following Scripture passages? What do they teach us about servant leadership? How are we called to act?

- Moses and the Burning Bush (Exodus 3)
- Queen Esther (Esther 2-7)
- Joseph and Brothers in Egypt (Genesis 41-45)
- Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25-37) Addendum
- Washing of Disciples' Feet (John 13: 1-15)

- Judgment of Nations (Matthew 25: 31-46)
- The Greatest Commandment (Mark 12: 28-34)
- Conduct of Guests and Hosts (Luke 14: 7-14)
- Beatitudes (Matt 5: 1-12)

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.01.C, 7.04.B, 7.04.C, 7.05.A, 8.01.A, 8.04.A, 8.04.B

ACTIVITY #7

Confirmation connections: Review the Gifts of the Holy Spirit with students.
Think, Write, Discuss:

- How did upstanders and martyrs during the Holocaust reveal one or more of the Gifts of the Holy Spirit through their actions?
- How can the Gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to make courageous choices centered on our values and moral integrity?

Consider praying this Holy Spirit Prayer of St. Augustine with students:
Holy Spirit Prayer of St. Augustine (*Loyola Press*)

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.03.A, 7.05.A, 8.02.A, 8.03.A, 8.03.B, 8.03.C, 8.04.B

ADVANCED ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY #8

Students and teachers may choose to read the following Church statement together:
"We Remember: A Reflection on the Shoah" (1998)
This text was written by the Pontifical Commission for Religious Relations with the Jews and approved by St. John Paul II.

In class discussion or as writing prompts, consider the following questions:

- What do you think is the message of this text?

- This text references a duty of remembrance regarding the Holocaust. Why do Christians have a duty to remember? What other obligations do Christians have according to this text? Why?
- According to this text, how did long-standing anti-Judaism in Europe contribute to and support Nazi antisemitism?
- What hope for the future is shared in this text? How will that hope be achieved?

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.04.B, 7.04.C, 7.05.A, 7.06.C, 8.04.A, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #9

Invite students to study the biographies of the two recent popes in Church history. Each pontiff experienced the Nazi regime and horrors of World War II from a unique perspective.
St. John Paul II
Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI

Highlight significant events from each pope's early life in Poland and Germany. Facilitate a conversation and/or writing task using the following guide questions:

- What is the meaning of "freedom"...in our own society and in a totalitarian state?
- Can freedom ever be taken away from us? Why or why not?
- Are there instances when we are not totally culpable for our actions (or inactions)? Explain.

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.02.A, 7.05.A, 7.06.C, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #10

Invite students to read notable quotes from Pope Francis's most recent encyclical, Fratelli Tutti (*On Fraternity and Social Friendliness*). Compare and contrast how Pope Francis's words are relevant in connection to circumstances, social attitudes, and events in the early 20th century and contemporary times today.

Invite students to share their analysis and response in the form of a media presentation, essay, or small group dialogue.

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.02.A, 7.04.A, 7.04.B, 7.04.C, 7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.03.C, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.A, 8.06.C

ACTIVITY #11

Invite students to explore the life, experiences, conversion, and work of St. Francis of Assisi. *Facilitate a conversation and/or writing task using the following guide questions:*

- Can people really change?
- What is required for personal and social transformation?
- What role does reconciliation play in this?

Videos to consider: When a former Nazi meets a Holocaust Survivor (Jewish Journal)
Healing Wounds of Rwanda's Genocide Through Reconciliation (PBS)

Religion Curriculum Priority Standards: 7.01.B, 7.02.A, 7.05.A, 7.05.B, 8.01.B, 8.04.A, 8.04.B, 8.05.C

ACTIVITY #12

Learn about the "See, Judge, Act" model (aka "The Pastoral Circle") model of theological reflection. Use the following questions from Franciscan Mission Service to facilitate a conversation and/or writing task with students:

- Identify an issue of social concern in your school or community.
- Explore your experience, including your own assumptions and feelings and how they have changed over time.
- Analyze by looking at the historical context, current reality, cultural attitudes, economic factors, power relationships and other systems in place relative to the issue.
- Reflect theologically – What does Scripture have to say? Tradition? Catholic Social Teaching?
- Act by looking at your options and making a plan to affect positive change. Be sure to put your plan into action! (Refer to activity 5 for questions to help guide development of an action plan.)

Religion Curriculum Standards: 7.04.A, 7.04.B, 7.04.C, 7.05.A, 7.05.C, 7.06.C, 8.03.C, 8.04.B, 8.05.C, 8.06.C

SUGGESTED READING LIST – *Excerpts from Educators*

Make Catholic connections to the search for GOD.

Fishman, K. Heidi. *Tutti's Promise*. MB Publishing, LLC, 2017. ISBN-13: 978-0990843016. Grade Level: 5-9.

Lowry, Lois. *Number the Stars*. HMH Books for Young Readers, 2011. ISBN-13: 978-0547577098. Lexile: 670L. Grade Level: 5-7.

Spiegelman, Art. *Maus*. Pantheon, 1986. ISBN-13: 978-0394747231. Grade Level: 9.

Wiesel, Elie. *Night*. Hill and Wang, 2006. ISBN-13 : 978-0374500016. Lexile: 570L. Age 13+.

Wiesenthal, Simon. *The Sunflower*. Schocken, 1998. ISBN-13 : 978-0805210606. Lexile: 1160L.

Yolen, Jane. *The Devil's Arithmetic*. Puffin Books, 2004. ISBN-13: 978-0142401095. Lexile: 730L.

Zapruder, Alexandra. *Salvaged Pages*. Yale University Press, 2002. ISBN-13: 978-0300205992. Grade Level: Middle-High School.

Zusak, Markus.*The Book Thief*. Knopf Books for Young Readers, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0375842207. Lexile: 730L. Age 12-14 years.

Resources to assist with Catholic prayer for peace and justice:
Prayers for the Church and World (U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops)
Justice Prayers (Jesuit Resources at Xavier University)
Prayer for Peace in Our Communities (Catholic Charities USA)

Per the age group identified for the "In Our Voices" tour, activities included in this resource are aligned to the Archdiocese of Chicago Religion Curriculum Priority Standards for Grades 7-8.

Click HERE to view standards for all grade levels.

Catholic high schools that make use of the USCCB Doctrinal Elements of a Curriculum Framework may opt to connect field trip activities to the USCCB framework and courses offered at the local high school.