

# CHAPTER 6

## RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES



“ The Catholic tradition teaches that human dignity can be protected and a healthy community can be achieved only if human rights are protected and responsibilities are met. . . . Corresponding to these rights are duties and responsibilities—to one another, to our families, and to the larger society (*Sharing Catholic Social Teaching: Challenges and Directions* 5). ”

As Catholics, we are called to act in order to ensure that the rights of all people are protected. Begin by naming those who suffer from injustice. Then consider how to act.

## Promoting the Rights of All

1. Arrange a youth mission trip. Plan to spend a week away from home helping residents trapped in poverty. Projects could include painting, replacing doors and windows, roofing, and repairing foundations. Group Workcamps offers summer mission experiences for church youth groups. For more information call 1.888.761.6616 or go to [groupmissiontrips.com](http://groupmissiontrips.com).
2. Get involved with Habitat for Humanity. For more information on how to volunteer with Habitat, go to [habitat.org](http://habitat.org).
3. Organize a “Random Acts of Kindness” day. Offer to help older parishioners with yard cleanup in the spring and fall. Although most seniors are able to live independently, tasks such as raking and trimming bushes can be too difficult. Advertise your free labor in the parish bulletin. In addition, your pastor or pastoral minister can help identify people in need. Be sure to include those who are recently widowed.
4. Encourage youth to participate in an urban immersion retreat. These experiences help raise awareness of various urban issues as well as agencies that serve lower income families and people in need. Contact your diocesan Youth Ministry or Social Justice Office to learn about opportunities in your area.